

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

**WRITTEN REPLY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA
CONCERNING THE LIST OF ISSUES (CRC/C/Q/TUN/2)
TO BE TAKEN UP BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF
THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SECOND PERIODIC REPORT
OF TUNISIA (CRC/C/83/Add.29/Add.1)**

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PART I

1. Data and statistics for 1999, 2000 and 2001
2. *Please provide demographic data on the under-18 population, disaggregated by sex, age and governorate.*

Every ten years the Ministry for Economic Development (National Statistical Institute) carries out a population census (the most recent one was carried out in 1999). It also publishes updated data on the population, disaggregated by sex, age group, governorate and economic region every year. As the data for 2001 are not yet available, and as the differences between the 1999 and 2000 figures are insignificant, the figures for the year 2000 are herewith submitted to the Committee.

The National Statistical Institute (INS) uses a classification comprising an age group 0-19 years. The adjustments required to provide data on the 0-18 age group in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been made. The 0-18 age group is referred to as the *Child population*

In 2000 the estimated child population consisted of 3,701,800 individuals, comprising 38% of the total population of Tunisia. Male children made up 51.2% of the total child population. The largest age groups were those consisting of children between ages 10-14 and 5-9 years, comprising 28.9% and 25.9% of the total respectively. The most densely populated economic regions were the Nord-Est and Centre-Est regions.

There is a difference between the size of the 0-9 age group (1,784,200 children) and that of the 10-18 group (1,917,600 children). The difference (133,400 children) is due to the decline in the birth rate and the demographic and epidemiological changes which Tunisia is currently experiencing.

Table 1

Distribution of the population in the 0-18 age group by governorate and age group
Year 2000 (in thousands)

Governorate	Ages 0-4	Ages 5-9	Ages 10-14	Ages 15-18	Total
Tunis	64.1	75.1	86.0	70.4	295.6
Ariana	28.9	32.6	38.6	32.9	133.0
Ben Arous	36.8	42.7	46.4	36.4	162.3
Manouba	26.0	28.2	32.9	28.2	115.3
Nabeul	51.9	59.0	67.6	55.5	234.0
Zaghouan	13.7	15.4	17.8	14.2	61.1
Bizerta	41.6	48.2	54.7	46.3	190.8
Béjà	24.0	27.8	31.5	27.7	111.0
Jendouba	38.6	45.1	49.5	38.9	172.1
Le Kef	22.1	26.9	31.5	24.7	105.2
Siliana	22.8	26.2	28.4	23.7	101.1
Kairouan	53.2	63.3	69.1	52.1	237.7
Kasserine	45.2	52.3	53.4	38.1	189.0
Sidi Bouzid	37.7	48.0	53.1	37.9	176.7
Sousse	42.7	47.8	51.4	41.8	183.7
Monastir	41.1	44.3	43.7	33.8	162.9
Mahdia	37.4	42.3	46.1	34.2	160.0
Sfax	66.9	77.6	85.6	67.2	297.3
Gafsa	27.0	34.1	40.9	32.0	134.0
Tozeur	8.5	9.8	11.2	8.7	38.2
Kebili	11.6	15.7	19.2	15.3	61.8
Gabès	28.8	35.6	40.9	31.4	136.7
Medenine	37.5	45.3	52.0	40.4	175.2
Tataouine	14.8	18.0	19.8	14.5	67.1
Total	822.9	961.3	1071.3	846.3	3701.8

(Source: National Statistical Institute.)

Table 2

Distribution of Tunisian population in 0-18 age group by governorate and by sex
Year 2000 (thousands)

Governorate		Boys	Girls	Total
Tunis		150.9	144.7	295.6
Ariana		70.0	63.0	133.0
Ben Arous		83.6	78.6	162.3
Manouba		59.3	56.0	115.3
Nabeul	122.1		112.1	234.0
Zaghouan		31.3	29.6	69.1
Bizerta	96.4		94.3	190.8
<u>Nord-Est</u>				
Béja		56.8	54.1	111.0
Jendouba		89.5	82.5	172.1
Le Kef		54.9	50.3	105.2
Siliana		51.2	50.3	105.2
<u>Nord-Ouest</u>				
Kairouan		118.9	119.0	237.7
Kasserine		96.2	92.7	149.0
Sidi Bouzid		90.7	85.9	176.7
<u>Centre-Ouest</u>				
Sousse	95.5		88.3	183.7
Monastir		83.8	79.2	162.9
Mahdia		82.5	77.5	160.0
Sfax		151.6	145.7	297.3
<u>Centre-Est</u>				
Gafsa		67.7	66.3	134.0
Tozeur	19.4		18.7	38.2
Kébili		31.7	30.1	61.8
Gabès		69.9	68.8	136.7
Medenine		89.1	86.1	175.2
Tataouine		34.2	32.9	67.1
<u>Sud</u>				
Total		1897.2	1804.4	3701.8

Source: INS.

3. **In the light of article 4 of the Convention, please provide additional information and disaggregated data (by age and sex) on the amount and proportion in percentages of the national budget devoted to children at central and local levels (1999-2001).**

- (1) Education (pre-primary, primary and secondary education, salaries, preservation of school buildings, etc.)

The budget allocations for the education sector have always represented a substantial proportion of the overall State budget. To complement the information already supplied in the report, we submit to the Committee the operating budget (salaries), which takes up some 95% of the overall budget, and the investment budget (maintenance and equipment). The distribution at central and regional levels is of little significance, since only the investment budget is decentralized. It should be noted that **4.4%** of GDP is earmarked for education.

Table 3
Distribution of Ministry of Education budget
(in millions of dinars)

Type of budget	1999	2000	2001	2002
Heading I*	1047.0	1177.4	1267.9	1358.3
Heading II*	95.1	104.3	161.7	112.7
State budget	9248.0	10510.2	10820.0	11533.0
% EducTI/State budget	21.9	22.2	22.8	22.9

(Source: Ministry of Education.)

- (2) Health care (different types of health services: primary health care, vaccination programmes, adolescent health care and other health care services for children)

The health of children is protected by a number of national programmes established within the framework of the policy on primary or basic health care. These include the National Vaccination Programme, the National Anti-diarrhoea Programme, the programme to combat acute respiratory infections, the programme to combat acute rheumatism, health education, the monitoring of the growth of children under age 6, etc.

In addition, within pre-school and school environments children are covered by school health programmes from age 3 up to age 25 if they are studying at university.

*Heading I: operating budget

*Heading II: equipment budget

Table 4

National budget allocations for specific health programmes for children at the level of the DSSB* (in millions of dinars)

Year	1999	2000	2001
Amount of budget allocation for children's health	3,474	3,098	3,259
Budget allocation for school and university health programmes	0.775	0.815	1,055
Proportion of national budget allocated to children as percentage of budget allocation for basic health care (%)	52.5%	42.7%	38.0%

(Source: Ministry of Public Health.)

The budget allocation for national programmes specifically for children has remained practically unchanged in value terms over the past three years. The fact that it has declined as a proportion of the total budget for basic health-care programmes generally is due to the reduction in the size of the 0-24-months age group and the substantial increase in the anti-HIV-Aids programme.

The budget allocation for school and university health programmes has increased eightfold over the last 12 years. It is designed to cover needs in the areas of continuing education, health education and equipment and transport facilities. It does not cover operating expenditure or the salaries of the central, regional and local teams.

*DSSB: Directorate for Basic Health-Care

(3) Children with disabilities

The budget allocations made by the Ministry of Social Affairs for programmes for the protection and promotion of disabled persons of all ages during the last three years can be disaggregated as follows:

Table 5

Budget allocations for programmes for the protection and promotion of disabled persons

Institutions for the protection of the disabled	1999 child	Alloc*.	2000 child	Alloc.	2001 child	Alloc.
Institute for Disabled Persons	0.329	0.131	0.453	0.182	0.350	0.070
Centre for Promotion of Persons with Motor Disabilities	0.402	0.08	0.288	0.115	0.310	0.062
Medical and Education Centre for Persons with Motor Disabilities in Nabeul	0.067	0.014	0.037	0.008	0.051	0.011
Vocational Training Centre for the Deaf in Ksar Hellal	0.072	0.015	0.061	0.012	0.073	0.015
Sened Centre	0.711	0.532	0.757	0.605	0.665	0.532
Centre for the Mentally Handicapped in Manouba	0.647	0.518	0.763	0.610	0.865	0.692

(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs.)

In addition, children benefit from subsidies granted to associations from the State budget and social security funds (see data on page 10.).

(*) Amount allocated for children, 1999-2001 (in millions of dinars)

(4) Social welfare support to families, day care centres, foster families and institutions

Families in need:

Tunisia grants a considerable number of benefits within social action programmes targeting vulnerable families; care centres for children have their own specific needs.

There are 114,300 families, comprising 389,000 persons in all, receiving permanent assistance under the National Programme of Assistance for Needy Families. The children in these families (62,430 in number) make up 16% of all the persons targeted. Their distribution is as follows:

Table 6

Numbers of children receiving benefit under the National Programme of Assistance for Needy Families

Age group	Boys	Girls	Total
0 - 4	421	404	825
5 - 9	3,838	3,728	7,566
10 - 14	12,602	11,707	24,309
15 - 18	15,115	14,615	29,730
Total	31,976	30,454	62,430

(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs.)

Table 7

Trends in permanent assistance, 1999-2001 (in millions of dinars)

Programme	National Programme of Assistance to Needy Families		Assistance Programme for Disabled Persons in Need		Programme for Promotion of Children of Pre-school Age	
	No. of families	Amount	No. of disabled persons	Amount	No. of children	Amount
1999	113,800	46,763	2,831	1,185	10,080	2,258
2000	113,800	49,616	3,331	1,142	10,050	2,392
2001	114,300	51,357	3,456	1,543	10,200	2,265

(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs.)

It should be mentioned that all needy families receiving permanent assistance are given free treatment cards entitling them to the various medical benefits available in public hospitals.

The State also provides certain social benefits at the start of the school year or on the occasion of national and religious festivals.

Table 8

Trends in occasional assistance, 1999-2001 (in millions of dinars)

Programme	Social aid on occasion of start of school year		Social aid on occasion of religious festivals		
	Year	No. of payments	Total (MD)*	No. of payments	Total (MD)*
	1999	410,000	10.0	326,543	8.777
	2000	413,000	10.4	320,131	10.283
	2001	407,734	10.599	319,351	10.237

*MD: millions of dinars

(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs.)

Although the Ministry of Health does not offer any direct subsidies to needy families, medical treatment is provided free of charge to low-income families. In addition, all health activities in schools and universities are provided without charge to attenders. Spectacles are provided for pupils with poor eyesight from needy families: this programme takes up 10-20% of the school health budget and assists 4,000 persons annually.

Protection and social defence institutions

The budget credits allotted by the Ministry of Social Affairs for protection and social defence institutions between 1999 and 2001 can be disaggregated as follows:

Table 9

(in millions of dinars)

1999	2000	2001	Total
1.143	1.215	1.324	3.682

(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs.)

Replacement protection institutions

The Integrated Centres for Children and Juveniles, placed under the authority of the Ministry for Youth, Infancy and Sports, admit children without family support and children in danger: in 2001 there were 19 of these centres. Units working in the natural environment (there were 60 such units in 2001) provide material and educational support for almost 5,000 neglected children or children belonging to disadvantaged families.

Table 10

Numbers of children benefiting from the budget credits allocated to replacement protection institutions (in thousands of dinars)

Institutions	No. of children benefiting	Budget credits	
		2000	2001

Integrated Centres 1,000 2.300 2.505

(Source: Ministry for Youth, Infancy and Sports.)

(5) Juvenile justice

The overall budget of the Ministry of Justice for the year 2002 amounts to 103.474 million dinars.

It is to be noted that, following the promulgation of the Child Protection Code, juvenile justice has developed considerably. The essential feature of these developments has been the establishment of specialized courts for children at the levels of courts of first instance and courts of appeal.

The staff of the minors=courts comprises 80 judges out of a total of 1,500.

With the foregoing information in mind, the proportion of the total budget of the Ministry of Justice devoted to juvenile justice may be estimated at 6%.

(6) State allocations paid as subsidies to the private sector and NGOs and criteria for payments

There are in all 164 NGOs active in the health sphere which receive subsidies. The following table presents the budget and the share allocated to each type of NGO according to the nature of their activity.

Table 11

Trends in the budget for subsidies awarded to associations active in the field of child health

Year	1999		2000		2001	
	No. of NGOs	Budget (dinars or % budget)	No. of NGOs	Budget (dinars or % budget)	No. of NGOs	Budget (dinars or % budget)
Total subsidies	164	125,000	164	133,000	168	140,000
Subsidies to NGOs concerned solely with children	12	10.4%	11	8.3%	12	9.9%
% subsidies to NGOs concerned, inter alia, with children (indirectly)	15	16.2%	15	17.5%	19	20.5%
Total %age of subsidies paid to NGOs concerned with children	27	26.6%	26	25.8%	31	30.7%

(Source: Ministry of Public Health.)

The above figures show that on the average 30% of subsidies are earmarked for children and are shared by 17-18% of NGOs. The amounts of the subsidies are usually quite small in order to provide support to the greatest possible number of NGOs. But where an event (symposium, congress, study) is organized the amount of the subsidy may be doubled or even trebled. The Ministry of Public Health pays the registration fees of health personnel taking part in congresses organized by scientific societies (by definition, the amount involved varies considerably from year to year).

The criteria for payment of subsidies are the aims and purposes of the organization and the monitoring and evaluation of its activities in cooperation with the Ministry of Public Health.

In the area of promotion of the handicapped there are 36 associations managing 203 education and rehabilitation centres; in 2001 these centres admitted 11,755 children. The amounts of the subsidies allocated to these associations by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Social Security Funds were as follows:

- (1) 1999: 7.649 million dinars
- (2) 2000; 7.825 million dinars
- (3) 2001: 8.605 million dinars.

Any association active in the field of promotion of the handicapped and offering education, rehabilitation and training facilities will receive subsidies of this kind subject to a standard list of conditions.

The criteria for the award of these subsidies are laid down in regulations, which stipulate in particular the shares of the contributions to be paid by the social security funds (in the case of persons affiliated to the social security scheme) and by the State (in the case of non-affiliates).

A programme establishing common standards to be met by education and rehabilitation centres managed by associations has been set up. A subsidy of 5.2 million dinars has been granted to them for the upgrading of their premises and the development of their equipment.

These associations also receive a specific annual subsidy of 3,000 dinars for each specialized teacher recruited. In addition, with a view to expanding the coverage of needs for specialized education facilities to large numbers of handicapped persons, the State makes a fleet of buses available to the specialized centres for their daily transport; there are at present 154 buses in the fleet.

The subsidies awarded by the Ministry of Social Affairs to associations active in the field of protection of children in difficulty during the period 1999-2001 were as follows:

Table 12

1999	2000	2001	Total
64	67	85	216

(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs; figures in thousands of dinars.)

During the last three years (1999-2001) the Ministry for Youth, Infancy and Sports has awarded subsidies totalling 195,000 dinars (65,000 each year) to promote pre-school education (associations sector). These subsidies have been awarded under an agreement concluded between the Ministry and three NGOs (the Tunisian Social Solidarity Union, the Tunisian Organization for Education and the Family and the National Union of Tunisian Women).

The same Ministry has also allocated 75,000 dinars (25,000 in each of the years 1999-2001) as a contribution to the subsidies for the programmes of associations concerned with the promotion of children.

3. Please provide disaggregated data (by age, sex and types of violations reported) on:

(1) child abuse and neglect and sexual abuse:

Cases handled by the Child Protection Delegates:

Table 13

Cases of children in danger handled by the Child Protection Delegates in 2000 and 2001

Years	No. of cases handled By CPDs	% of cases of negligence	% of cases of ill-treat- ment	% of cases of sexual abuse
2000	1,500	29.36%	11.68%	2.6%
2001	2,781	30.16%	13.70%	2.88%

(Source: Ministry for Youth, Infancy and Sports (MJES).)

Table 14

Cases of children in danger handled by the Child Protection Delegates in 2001, by age (%)

Age group	% of children
0-4 years	20.15
5-12 years	40.75
13-15 years	22.00
16-18 years	17.10
Total	100.0

(Source: MJES.)

Table 15

Cases of children in danger handled in 2001, by sex (%)

Sex	% of children
Male	42.75
Female	57.75
Total	100.0

(Source: MJES.)

Cases dealt with by the courts

Table 16

Cases of maltreatment, negligence or sexual violence

Type of case	1999-2000		2000-2001	
	M	F	M	F
Maltreatment	41	51	39	45
Negligence	506	471	666	551
Sexual violence	4	11	9	17
Total	551	533	714	613

(Source: Ministry of Justice.)

- (2) Number of complaints received by the Child Protection Delegates per year between 1999 and 2001

Table 17

Numbers of reports received annually by the Child Protection Delegates, 1999-2001

Year	No. of reports
1999	1,067
2000	3,142
2001	4,179

(Source: MJES.)

The above figures show that the numbers of reports rose very rapidly (fourfold, in fact) between 1999 and 2001. This is due to the fact that a substantial body of information concerning the institution of Child Protection Delegate (DPE) was promoted. In addition, the DPEs have succeeded in forging close links with judges, social workers, the medical profession, associations (NGOs), etc.

- (3) the number and percentage of reports which have resulted in either a court decision or other types of follow-up by social public or private welfare institutions at the national or local levels

Table 18

Types of legal and social measures taken following court decisions concerning children in conflict with the law, 1999-2001

Nature of judgement	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Sentencing and consignment of child to parents	2,366	5,475	4,949
Acquittal	1,573	1,606	1,451
Placing of child in establishment for reeducation	1,443	1,471	1,329
Reeducation in prison block	432	443	399
Caution	420	427	387
Consignment to parents	420	429	387
Stoppage of proceedings	302	307	278
Fine	222	229	205
Freedom under observation	39	40	36
Other cases (modification, review)	1,325	1,351	1,222
Total	11,542	11,778	10,643

(Source: Ministry of Justice.)

There are prevention and protection programmes conducted jointly by the Ministries of Social Affairs, Public Health and National Education. These programmes are designed to detect, diagnose and cater for children in educational, social or psychological difficulties. The programme of social action in schools consists at present of over 1,600 School Social Action Units (CASS) in the different primary and secondary establishments.

Mention should also be made of the existence of other parallel programmes for monitoring and preventive work among children in difficulty, and in particular:

- S the Listening and Counselling Offices Programme (mental health);
- S the Reproductive Health Programme for juveniles, with Reproductive Health Information and Counselling Units and consultations on problems of adolescents.

These three types of structure are receiving in increasing numbers complaints from pupils and students; some of them may arise from negligence or sexual abuse (including within the family). For the moment there are between one and three such cases (no specific count is made) each year. In addition, from time to time a case of this kind is encountered in records of suicides or suicide attempts among pupils and students.

The public institution involved in care for children in conflict with the law is the Pilot Centre for Observation of Minors (established by Act No. 94 of 26 October 1992), which observes delinquent children aged between 13 and 18 years in custodial environments and takes into care delinquent children referred to it by a minors-judge for short periods (one month, extensible by court decision once only by one month). It submits reports on the children concerned to the courts; the reports include in particular proposals concerning appropriate educational measures to be taken for the children.

During the period 1999-2001 the centre admitted 589 children; 419 of them (approximately 71%) were freed by the courts on the recommendations of the centre. With a view to facilitating their reintegration into society they are kept under observation by the social services in their respective regions.

4. Provide statistical data on education

(1) Rates of literacy below and over 18 years

According to the mini-census carried out by the National Statistical Institute (INS) in 1999, the illiteracy rates for children below and persons above age 18, disaggregated by sex and environment, were as follows:

Table 19

Age group	Number	Percentage
10-14 years	53,170	4.9
15-29 years	295,760	10.7
30-49 years	658,120	27.9
50+ years	1,043,242	74.2
Total	2,050,301	27.0

(Source: INS.)

Table 20

Gender	Communal	Non-communal
Males	11.8%	28.2%
Females	26.4%	53.2%
Total	19.0%	40.8%

(Source: INS.)

The fact that 4.9% of children between ages 10 and 14 are illiterate can be explained by the following factors:

- S the very small proportion of children not attending school (0.1% of all children of school age) in 2000-2001;
- S children disabled to a medium or severe degree (particularly the mentally handicapped and children suffering from multiple disabilities, who are unable to attend regular schools);
- S early dropout from school; the rate is falling rapidly, but it still (in 2000-2001) involves 1.9% of pupils in the first cycle of basic education.

(2) enrollment in percentage of children in preprimary and primary schools

During the school year 2000-2001 the process of integration of preparatory classes into basic education was begun; 386 classes were created, mainly in disadvantaged rural areas. This brought 7,667 children between ages 5 and 6 into the preprimary school system. It is planned to establish preparatory classes everywhere by 2006.

In any case, the numbers of children attending pre-school classes have increased significantly during the three years under consideration:

Table 21

Numbers of children in kindergartens (private sector)

Year	Boys	Girls	Total	Attendance rate
1999	44,209	36,803	79,012	13.16%
2000	44,406	41,134	85,540	14.25%
2001	46,622	42,867	89,489	16.25%

These attendance rates will improve considerably as a result of the programme to integrate preparatory classes into the basic schooling system, which in 2001-2002 alone has brought the attendance rate up to nearly 20%.

Within teaching itself there are well-known trends: firstly, a downward trend in the numbers of pupils, particularly in the first cycle, and secondly, an improvement in efficiency (rates of taking and passing examinations). The decline in the numbers of pupils began in 1995-1996 and will continue during the 10th Plan period (2002-2006).

Between 1996-1997 and 2001-2002 the numbers of pupils in the first cycle declined by 8.74%. In the light of the decline in population growth, the number is expected to decline by 10% between 2002-2003 and 2006-2007.

As a result of this decline, a considerable number of classes are without pupils. They will be used to develop cultural and recreational activities (children's clubs).

The numbers of pupils in the second cycle of basic education will increase by an estimated 3.6% during the 10th Plan period (2002-2006) as against 6.8% during the most recent Plan period (1997-2001).

As regards efficiency, the dropout and repeat rates are falling sharply, especially during the first cycle.

Table 22

Year	Dropout rate	Repeat rate
1996-1997	3.3%	-
2000-2001	1.9%	9.6%
2006-2007	0.8%	3.0%

(Source: Ministry of Education.)

5. Data on children with disabilities, disaggregated by sex and age

Table 23

Numbers of children with disabilities (source: national population and employment inquiry (INS, 1999))

	Motor	Mental	Hearing	Sight	Multiple	Total
O - 4	355	296	495	121	175	1,442
5 B9	996	1,102	1,128	176	434	3,836
10 - 14	1,667	1,963	1,358	463	438	5,889
15 - 19	2,030	4,362	1,593	789	410	9,184
Total	5,048	7,723	4,574	1,549	1,457	20,351
%	24.8	37.9	22.5	7.6	7.2	100.0

(Source: INS.)

The above data reveal that children with disabilities make up 19% of the disabled population. Approximately two-thirds of children with disabilities are suffering from motor or mental deficiencies. 26% of all children with disabilities are under age 10.

- (1) Children with disabilities living with their families
- (2) children with disabilities in institutions

In Tunisia the family is still the basic unit which looks after its vulnerable members and members with specific needs. To that end it is given support and assistance by the national community as represented by the State and civil society. There are only about 100 handicapped children (most of them wards of the State) in specialized public centres.

- (3) Children with disabilities attending regular schools

During the school year 2000-2001 there were 6,500 children with disabilities attending regular schools.

- (4) Children with disabilities attending special schools

During the school year 2000-2001 there were 12,092 children with disabilities attending special schools (11,755 of them in centres managed by associations).

6. Disaggregated data (including by sex, age and region) on adolescent health, including early pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/Aids, drug and alcohol abuse covering the period between 1999 and 2001.

Particular attention is paid to the health of adolescents in the school environment. The different activities organized within the national programme focus on five aspects: detection, admission into care, continuing training, the retraining of teams and research.

An inquiry into the health of adolescents was undertaken in 1999-2000; the findings are being analysed. A second inquiry is being undertaken on the reproductive health of adolescents; it comprises elements of both research and action and seeks to improve the

accessibility and quality of reproductive health services for young persons at school. It began in 1999 and will continue until 2003.

A third inquiry into the prevalence and habits of lower secondary school pupils (ages 13-15) is being undertaken with the Atlanta disease control centre. The three inquiries are being conducted in cooperation with WHO, which is participating in their financing.

Pregnancies among adolescent girls (and particularly pregnancies which run to full term) are encountered among school attenders only in exceptional cases. Abortions are not disaggregated by age and matrimonial status in the public sector and are not counted at all in the private sector.

7. Appropriate disaggregated data (including by sex, age, type of crime, type of sanction) covering the period between 1999 and 2001.

(1) Number of minors who have allegedly committed a crime, reported to the police

There were 11,752 such cases in 1999, 11,535 in 2000 and 11,152 in 2001. The numbers are showing a tendency to decline as a result of the efforts being made in the programmes providing support for children in difficulty.

(2) Minors who have been sentenced and type of punishment or sanctions

Table 24

Trends in the numbers of correctional offences involving children between 1999 and 2001

Category of offence	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Offences against the person	4,317	4,596	4,145
Offences against property	4,848	4,697	4,127
Offences against public morals	1,177	1,339	1,227
Offences against public authorities	669	585	654
Financial and economic offences	58	71	78
Offences against the family	69	68	38
Offences affecting health	23	20	27
Traffic offences	381	402	347
Total	11,542	11,778	10,643

(Source: Ministry of Justice.)

Table 25*Trends in numbers of criminal cases involving children between 1998-1999 and 2000-2001*

Category of offence	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001
Offences against the person	46	47	66
Offences against property	92	149	168
Offences against public morals	178	245	302
Offences against public authorities	6	6	10
Financial and economic offences	0	0	0
Offences against the family	0	0	0
Offences affecting health	0	0	0
Traffic offences	0	0	0
Total	322	447	546

(3) Number and capacity of detention centres for children in conflict with the law

There are six reeducation centres in Tunisia for children in conflict with the law.

Table 26

Capacity of establishments

Name of centre	Capacity
Gammarth	200 (boys)
Naâssan	100 (boys)
Mghira	100 (girls)
Mjez El Bab	100 (boys)
Sidi El Héni	200 (boys)
Agareb	150 (boys and girls)

(4) Numbers of minors placed in detention centres for minors in conflict with the law

Table 27

Numbers of children placed in reeducation centres as of 13 April 2002

Name of centre	Number of children placed
Gammarth	156 (boys)
Naâssan	59 (boys)
Mghira	33 (girls)
Mjez El Bab	52 (boys)
Sidi El Héni	108 (boys)
Agareb	87 (boys and girls)
Total:	486

(5) Rate of recidivism

The overall rate of recidivism observed in 2001 was 22.45%.

- (6) Number of reported cases of maltreatment of children occurring during their arrest or detention

There are no recorded cases of maltreatment of children during their arrest or detention. This is the result of the strengthening of human rights guaranteed by the Constitution and ensured by the code of conduct for officials responsible for the enforcement of human rights legislation.

8. Special protection measures for the period 1999-2001; annual statistics disaggregated (including by sex, age, urban/rural areas) on the number of children:

- (1) Involved in sexual exploitation (prostitution, pornography and trafficking)

See above, Tables 13 and 16.

- (2) Involved in sexual exploitation who have received social (re)integration treatments

See above, Table 27.

- (3) Involved in child labour who are under 16

As stated in the report submitted to the Committee (VIII.C., paragraphs 585-607) and following Tunisia's ratification of International Labour Convention No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment ((by Act No. 95-62 of 10 July 1995), Act No. 96-62 of 15 July 1996 amending certain provisions of the Labour Code raised the general age of admission to employment in all activities regulated by the Labour Code to 16 instead of 15.

Tunisian law provides for certain derogations from the minimum age for admission to employment: these are enshrined in international labour standards, in particular Convention No. 138. Thus the age of admission is lowered to 13 years in agriculture and in non-agricultural and non-industrial activities provided certain strict conditions are met: the duties must be light and not harmful to the health and normal development of the children and must not affect their school attendance and ability to study or their participation in vocational guidance or training approved by the competent public authorities (Labour Code, articles 55 (new) and 56 (new)).

Likewise, no child aged under 16 years of age may perform light work for more than two hours per day, on schooldays as well as holidays, or spend more than seven hours per day in total at school or performing light work (Labour Code, article 56 (new)). Under the same article, the employment of children on light work on weekly rest days and public holidays is prohibited.

In Tunisia the problem of child labour does not arise for several reasons, the main ones being:

- S the introduction of compulsory basic education until age 16 in 1991; education is free, and parents attach great importance to their children's schooling. The overall

attendance rate is 99.1%.

In addition, persons who fail to enrol their children for basic education or withdraw them before they reach age 16 are liable to criminal penalties (article 32 of Act No. 91-65 of 29 July 1991). This measure is designed to prevent children under the legal minimum age from taking employment;

- S the dropout rate in primary education, which is low and has been in decline since the introduction of compulsory education up to age 16;
- S the strict regulation of child labour, in keeping with international labour standards, which deters employers from using children;
- S Tunisians=deep-rooted respect for Arab-Muslim culture, human rights values in general, and children's rights in particular. Cases of child abandonment are rare, and many programmes exist to prevent abandonment and delinquency. The social action groups in schools help pupils at the social level, and a corps of child protection delegates has been set up in order to intervene preventively in all cases where it appears that a child's health or physical or moral integrity is being threatened or placed at risk because of his or her environment or activities.

Mention should also be made of an article entitled *Child Labour Today: Facts and Figures* published by the ILO in the magazine *Labour* (Vol. 16, June-July 1996), which states that the proportion of children aged 10-14 engaged in work in Tunisia in 1995 was zero.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that by Act No. 1 of 24 January 2000 the Government of Tunisia ratified International labour Convention No. 182 concerning the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour.

2. General implementation measures

1. Further information about measures taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee set out in its concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.9, 21 June 1995)

With a view to disseminating greater awareness of the content of the Convention among professional groups, the Ministry of Social Affairs has organized training sessions on the Convention and the Child Protection Code for social workers employed in institutions and structures for the protection of children.

As regards the principle of non-discrimination against children born out of wedlock, Act No. 98-75 of 28 October 1998 concerning the assignment of a patronymic family name to abandoned children or children of unknown descent was promulgated in 1998. Thus a mother with custody of her under-age child of unknown descent must give him or her a name and a patronymic family name or apply to the court of first instance for the grant of a patronymic family name. In such cases the identity of the biological father is determined by admission, evidence or analysis of genetic imprints.

The granting of a patronymic family name confers an entitlement to maintenance, and

also a right of supervision such as guardianship and custody until the child has reached the age of legal majority, or beyond that age in cases defined by the law (see the report submitted to the Committee, I.A.7, paragraphs 35-36).

Tunisia ratified ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment by Act No. 95-62 of 10 July 1995. Tunisia has also ratified Convention No. 182 concerning the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour by Act No. 1 of 24 January 2000.

The Child Protection Code (CPE 1995) reinforces the parental function and the responsibility of parents by its content and by the creation of the function of Child Protection Delegate. In practice, for purposes of the protection of children in danger, the CPE gives priority to agreed measures implicating the family and the negotiation with the family of the solutions most favourable to the interests of the child. In addition, in cases of protection of delinquent children, the mediation provided for under the CPE and implemented by the DPEs involves parents, who negotiate and sign the mediation agreement.

One of the aims of the Ministry for Women's and Family Affairs is to contribute to the dissemination of human rights culture generally, in particular by working to promote the incorporation and strengthening of the practice of those rights within the family.

As part of the National Plan of Action for the family, and more specifically as part of the campaign entitled 'Civic behaviour begins in the family' and after the broadcast of two spots encouraging dialogue within the couple and between parents and children, the Ministry for Women's and Family Affairs produced an awareness-promoting spot encouraging communication and dialogue between parents and adolescent children and broadcast it during prime time on the television channels. The spot also conveys messages promoting the right of self-expression for the adolescent as an essential precondition for the start-up and practice of dialogue. A version for radio was also produced and widely broadcast on national and local radio channels.

In February 2000 the Ministry for Women's and Family Affairs began to implement a programme targeting journalists, producers of broadcasts and commentators on radio and television programmes and designed to develop their skills and knowledge on this field and their approach to subjects relating to the socialization of children within the family, and particularly matters relating to the role of fathers and mothers, educational methods, the rights of children and non-discrimination on a gender basis.

In October 2001 the Ministry for Women's and Family Affairs began a new phase of its national communications strategy by launching a bi-monthly television magazine aimed in particular at parents and broadcast during prime time on the principal television channel. The initial stage will concentrate on relations within the family with a view to promoting dialogue and solidarity between the different members of the family on the basis of their respective rights as laid down in the Personal Status Code. Initially 12 broadcasts will be devoted to the socialization of children and the promotion of socialization based on modern educational, psychological and physiological principles and respect of the rights of the child as defined in the Child Protection Code (CPE).

The listening and orientation unit in the Ministry for Women's and Family Affairs is

also continuing, on the basis of over 1,000 requests received each year, to promote dialogue within the family on the basis of the same principles.

2. Situation regarding reservations and declarations

As regards the procedure for the withdrawal of Declaration No. 2 and Reservation No. 2, provided for in Act No. 2001-84 of 1 August 2001, the instrument of withdrawal was deposited by the Government of Tunisia, through the Permanent Mission of Tunisia in New York, with the United Nations Secretariat-General (Office of Legal Affairs, Treaty Section) on 26 February 2002.

The other declarations and reservations are being reviewed by the competent authorities.

3. Information on cases where the Convention has been invoked in the courts

It should be pointed out that the Child Protection Code promulgated in 1995 is substantially based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Today the Code is well established in the case-law of the courts.

4. Further information on the steps taken to establish a coordinating mechanism across sectors

In addition to the annual report on the situation of the child in Tunisia (discussed under question 5), the Government of Tunisia, in a desire to ensure better coordination between the different sectors in matters regarding children, enhanced the status of the National Council for Children by converting it into a Higher Council under Decree No. 2002-574 of 12 March 2002.

The new elements introduced by the establishment of this mechanism can be summarized as follows:

S the Higher Council for Children is presided over by the Prime Minister;
S the Council ensures:
\$ monitoring of the implementation of national plans relating to children;
\$ coordination of the programmes of the different departments, structures and institutions concerned with children.

S The Council also examines the annual report on the situation of the child, which is then submitted to the Council of Ministers, presided over by the President of the Republic.

5. Information on the effectiveness of the preparation of the Annual report on the situation of the child highlighted in paragraphs 53 and 54 of the report, as a tool for data collection and monitoring

The Annual report on the situation of the child is designed to follow up and report on the progress achieved and the problems encountered in the implementation of the national plan of action concerning children. It is prepared by all the sectors concerned with children under the overall responsibility of the Ministry for Youth, Infancy and Sports.

The data from which the report is made up comes from the sectoral information systems existing within the different departments concerned and includes statistical data obtained from periodic studies and inquiries carried out by the National Statistical Institute (INS).

Since independence Tunisia has developed a relatively large-scale and reliable system of data collection and analysis for purposes of designing and monitoring five-year plans; it is directed by the National Statistical Institute, which is attached to the Ministry for Economic Development and has official responsibility for all data collection and publication in Tunisia and the different ministerial sectors (health, education, social affairs, women and the family, agriculture, etc.).

In creating the institution of the Annual report on the situation of the child@Tunisia has established and strengthened a system of intersectoral monitoring of the implementation of the National Action Plan for children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The recent creation of the **Information, Training, Documentation and Study Observatory for the Protection of the Rights of the Child** in February 2002 will permit intersectoral monitoring through the creation of a data bank. It also has the task of carrying out research and evaluation and forward-looking studies relating to the protection of the rights of the child.

6. Progress made in the establishment of an Observatory on the Rights of the Child

The Information, Training, Documentation and Study Observatory for the Protection of the Rights of the Child was established by Decree No. 2002-237 of 24 February 2002. It is a public establishment of an administrative character and is placed under the authority of the Ministry for Youth, Infancy and Sports. It is headed by a Director-General.

The Observatory has a number of tasks to perform, namely:

- S the collection of data and information concerning children and analysing and classifying it in databases established for the purpose;
- S the conduct of evaluation or forward-looking studies and research relating to the protection of the rights of the child;
- S the organization of apprenticeship and training seminars.

The establishment of this observatory strengthens the machinery already set up (annual report, child protection delegates, Higher Council for Children) for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

7. Impact of the recommendations of the Committee formulated in its concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.39, 21 June 1995)

- (1) The level of public awareness and the nature of public debate which followed the dissemination of the concluding observations

The initial report of Tunisia on the implementation of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and the concluding observations of the Committee formulated in June 1995 were widely disseminated among:

- S the ministries concerned with children;
- S members of the legislature;
- S governors;
- S university teachers;
- S the mass media;
- S NGOs with responsibilities for children.

Tunisia's commitment to the promotion of the child was as consolidated by the establishment of monitoring machinery in June 1995; this comprised an annual report on the situation of children and the ratification by Act No. 1 of 24 January 2000 of ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age of admission to employment and Convention No. 182 concerning the worst forms of child labour.

The withdrawal of a reservation and a declaration (removal of part of the reservations and declarations) by Act No. 2001-84 of 1 August 2001 also marks the culmination of a thoroughgoing review undertaken after the dissemination of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

/b) Degree of effectiveness of the State's public awareness-raising campaigns on the Convention, particularly with respect to professionals working for and with children and the public at large, including children themselves

As stated in the report submitted to the Committee (I.C., paragraphs 102-126), every sector, including civil society, has made every effort to promote the Convention and disseminate a culture of the rights of the child.

The results of the enquiry survey on the rights of the child conducted in 1998 and described in the report (paragraph 110) yielded a substantial body of qualitative information on the living conditions of children, their levels of knowledge concerning children's rights and their priority aspirations.

A communication and promotion strategy concerning the rights of the child was drawn up in 1999 in cooperation with UNICEF.

This strategy is designed to strengthen the efforts to circulate information conducted between 1992 and 1997, and in particular by means of an information campaign developed in cooperation with the media, information seminars organized by various ministries and NGOs and the travelling exhibition which has visited over 15 governorates.

The strategy recommended for the attainment of this objective focuses on two aspects:

- S a promotional aspect, which seeks to mobilize the targeted public around the rights of the child. This aspect will concentrate on the participation of civil society in action for the defence and promotion of children's rights;

S a communication aspect, designed to develop awareness of the principal values to be promoted and support for them among the general public. The campaign is based on the production of audio-visual material designed to disseminate and consolidate the culture of children's rights.

Two sketches and a clip have already been produced and broadcast. The first sketch is about country girls who drop out of school; the second is about the best interests of the child. The clip is about participation.

The impact of the campaign has not yet been evaluated; evaluation will take place during the next few years (2003-2004).

9. Information on the legal status of non-governmental organizations in Tunisia and the involvement of civil society throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention, including decision-making.

Non-governmental organizations are associations governed by the Act of 7 November 1959 as complemented by Act No. 88/90 of 2 August 1988 and Act No. 92/25 of 2 April 1992.

Since the amendment of 2 August 1988 the only requirement for the creation of an association has been the submission of a declaration to the competent authority. The Minister of the Interior or the governor competent for the territory concerned may not object to the creation of an association save by duly motivated decree. Like any administrative act, such a decree may be appealed against before the administrative tribunal on grounds of *ultra vires*.

The number of associations working for the promotion of children has steadily risen during the last ten years. There are today 333 charitable organizations primarily concerned with children and 50 others acting directly to promote their development in the capacity of associations of friends of children.

These figures do not include the hundreds of associations looking after school environments, the principal activities of which are the establishment of canteens in schools in disadvantaged areas, agricultural micro-projects and EDP units.

The work of these associations has a considerable impact on school attendance, particularly among small girls in rural areas.

PART II

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been published in the official gazette of the Republic of Tunisia in Arabic (the official language) and French.

PART III

1. New institutions in the health field

(1) At hospital level

As part of the improvement of the quality of services and the refurbishing or replacement of old and decrepit hospital premises, several extensions or new services or pediatric units have been established ; in addition, two new out-patient hospitals have been created at Ariana and Ben Arous (district of the capital) which provide consultations for children, among others.

(See in annex, Table 1 on the creation of new pediatric services.)

(2) At the level of the Regional School and University Medical Centres (CRMSUs)

Regional School and University Medical Centres (CRMSUs) are second-line health centres which only admit cases referred to them by school authorities (cases of illness detected in school environments). Treatment and consultations there are entirely free of charge.

Since 1999 there have been nine of these centres (see in annex: Table 2 showing distribution by region). The minimum of out-patient services available is dental consultations, but other specialities, and in particular ophthalmology and, during the last few years, adolescentology consultations, are gradually being introduced.

The first centre was established in 1996 at the CNMSU in the capital; the services it offered were essentially gynaecology, psychiatry and psychology.

The first region outside the capital to undertake a similar experiment was Mahdia, where a gynaecological consultation centre for adolescents was set up (in the hospital) in 1999; an adolescent psychiatric unit was established in 2001.

In 2001 Nabeul and Sfax established similar consultation units as part of an active research project for the improvement of availability and quality of reproductive health services for school and university pupils.

(See in annex:

Table 2 on trends in adolescentological consultations by region and year;

Table 3 on the structures of available specific services in school environments.

2. At the level of national education

(1) Creation of preparatory classes

As part of the strategy of the Ministry of Education to improve the efficiency of the educational system and to consolidate the principle of equality of opportunity for all Tunisian children, preparatory classes were introduced for the first time in the school year 2001-2002. These classes are open to children aged 5 years. The preparatory year will gradually be made general during the Tenth Plan period in cooperation with the private sector and the associations.

The following are statistics for the public sector:

- S Number of primary schools: 362, of which 202 are situated in non-communal areas;
- S Number of groups: 386;
- S Number of children enrolled: 7,667, of whom, 5,075 from non-communal areas; i.e., an average of 21 children per school and 20 per group; 48.2% of them girls;
- S Number of teachers: 386, i.e., one teacher per group.

3. At the level of social action

A number of new measures were taken in the period 1999-2001, viz.:

- (1) Promulgation of Act No. 98-75 of 28 October 1998 concerning the assignment of a patronymic family name to abandoned children or children of unknown descent

Among other things, this Act led to the creation of a national commission and regional commissions for the implementation of its provisions.

During the period October 1998-September 2001, the cases of 3,182 births out of wedlock were examined by the different commissions with the following results:

\$ 954 cases were settled by recognition on the part of the father and the granting of the patronymic to the child;

\$ 1,417 children were rescued from abandonment and taken back by their biological mothers.

- (2) Promulgation of Act No. 74 of 11 July 2001 establishing the status and organization of the social protection institutions and Decree No. 2906 of 20 December 2001 establishing the administrative and financial organization of those services

- (3) Promulgation of Decree No. 1449 of 27 June 2000 establishing the administrative and financial organization of the social defence and integration centres and their methods of operation

The number of these centres increased from 5 in 1996 to 9 by the end of 2001 and 10 in 2002.

- (1) Creation of a specific programme for the legal and social protection of children whose physical and psychological integrity is threatened on account of the breakdown of family relationships and the inadequacy of the social and educational framework of their environment

In 1999, to guarantee the protection of children against maltreatment, Tunisia proceeded to implement a Presidential decision to establish a specific programme for the legal and social protection of children whose physical and psychological integrity is threatened on account of the breakdown of family relationships and the inadequacy of the social and educational framework of their environment.

The programme is implemented by social defence and integration centres which undertake the functions of protection, conduct educational support activities and provide psychological and social counselling. They coordinate their activities with the families of the children concerned and the child protection delegates; in accordance with the provisions of the Child Protection Code, they operate under the authority of the family judges.

4. The Children's Parliament

A new Act has just been adopted by the Chamber of Deputies establishing a forum of dialogue known as the Children's Parliament. This forum offers children an opportunity to organize themselves in order to express their opinions on all matters of concern to them and to develop the habit of exercising the responsibilities of citizens in order to promote a civic sense in them and to implant the values of democracy and the culture of the rights of the child and human rights.

The children's parliament has 186 members between ages 12 and 16, i.e., the same number and distribution as in the adult parliament.

As regards membership, 50% are elected from among children active in municipal councils and 50% are designated on the basis of excellence and creativity in schools and socio-educational institutions in accordance with the principle of gender parity.

The children's parliament holds two sessions yearly, during the November and March school holidays.