



# Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

### List of issues and questions in relation to the ninth periodic report of France\*

#### Visibility of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto

1. The State party stated in its report that the recommendations of the Committee in 2016 were widely publicized among administrations, the media, civil society actors and citizens (para. 3).<sup>1</sup> Please provide information on the following:

(a) Measures taken to raise awareness specifically among women, including women from different socioeconomic backgrounds, women affected by poverty, women with disabilities, rural women and migrant women, regarding their rights under the Convention; and please indicate the steps taken to make the Convention available in accessible formats;

(b) Capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and other professionals, such as law enforcement officers, and social services and asylum services, on the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto;

(c) Decisions in which judges have referred to provisions of the Convention to decide court cases, including family law, criminal law, civil law and labour law cases.

#### Women's rights and gender equality in relation to the pandemic and recovery efforts

2. In line with the Committee's guidance note on the obligations of States parties to the Convention in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, issued on 22 April 2020, please indicate the measures implemented by the State party to redress long-standing inequalities between women and men and to give a new impetus to the implementation of gender equality by placing women at the centre of the recovery as a strategic priority for sustainable change, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals; to meet the needs and uphold the rights of women and girls, including those belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups and women in situations of conflict or other humanitarian emergencies; and to ensure that, in the

\* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 3 March 2022.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, paragraph numbers refer to the ninth periodic report of the State party (CEDAW/C/FRA/9).



context of lockdown measures, whether partial or total, and in post-crisis recovery plans, women and girls are not relegated to stereotypic gender roles. Please indicate the measures in place to ensure that all COVID-19 crisis response and recovery efforts, including the recovery and resilience plan, (a) address and are aimed at effectively preventing gender-based violence against women and girls; (b) guarantee the equal participation of women and girls in political and public life, decision-making, economic empowerment and service delivery and, in particular, the design and implementation of recovery programmes; and (c) are designed so that women and girls benefit equally from stimulus packages, including financial support for unpaid care roles, that are aimed at mitigating the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic. Please explain how the State party is ensuring that measures taken to contain the pandemic, such as restrictions on freedom of movement and physical distancing, do not limit access for women and girls, including those belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups, to justice, shelters, education, employment and health care, including sexual and reproductive health-care services.

### **Access to justice**

3. Please provide data on the number of complaints and prosecutions in relation to discrimination on the grounds of sex in the past five years, the sentences imposed on the perpetrators and the reparations provided to victims, as well as data on the consideration by courts of cases of intersecting forms of discrimination. The report mentions a new law, No. 2016-1547, which facilitates group actions on discrimination (paras. 215–216). Please provide information on the number of actions that followed and on the outcomes.

### **National machinery for the advancement of women**

4. The State party created, in 2020, a delegated ministry responsible for equality between women and men, diversity and equal opportunities, placed under the authority of the Prime Minister, as well as an interministerial committee on women's rights and equality between women and men, chaired by the minister (paras. 22–23 and 32). Please provide information on human, technical and financial resources allocated to coordinate gender equality plans, policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels of government and on any national gender equality strategy or action plan to address the structural causes of persistent gender inequalities.

5. Please provide information on progress made in the implementation of Act No. 2014-873 on substantive equality between women and men to ensure the equal treatment of women and men and to promote gender equality. Law No. 2017-86 of 27 January 2017 on equality and citizenship establishes a High Council for Equality between women and men (paras. 22–23 and 32). Please provide information on the adoption and implementation of the recommendations of the High Council for Equality.

### **Stereotypes**

6. The interministerial committee on women's rights and equality between women and men and its strategy to transmit and disseminate a culture of equality were announced in March 2018 (para. 38). Please provide information on monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the strategy, measures adopted to advance gender equality and activities undertaken by various ministries to promote gender equality. In October 2017, the Superior Audiovisual Council published a study on the representation of women in television commercials, which shed light on types and recurrences of sexist stereotypes and mobilized advertising sector actors against sexual, sexist and gender stereotypes (paras. 47–48). Please provide information on positive outcomes resulting from this initiative.

7. In December 2019, the State party, providers of Internet access and operators signed a charter of commitments for the prevention of exposure of minors to online pornographic content, which aims towards protecting girls and boys by limiting their access to pornography (para. 51). Please inform the Committee of positive outcomes resulting from this initiative. In 2019, the Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports and the National Agency for Territorial Cohesion launched the “educational cities” system to step up educational support for children in 80 labelled territories where public resources are concentrated. In some cities, this will include a programme in favour of girl-boy equality. Please provide information on the aforementioned programme and on any efforts made to analyse and address gender-based stereotypes as a root cause of gender-based violence against women, including harmful practices.

### **Harmful practices**

8. The national action plan focused on eradicating female genital mutilation (2019) aims at raising awareness, better training professionals to prevent female genital mutilation and developing prevention tools (para. 55). Please provide information on initiatives and measures taken to implement the plan and on its leverage effect in the fight against child and/or forced marriages. Please explain how the State party makes information on ways to combat such practices widely available. The draft bioethics law adopted in second reading in July 2020 provides for the care of children with a variation in genital development and provides that the consent of those minors must be sought systematically if they are able to express their will and participate in the decision (para. 57). Please provide an update on the draft law and its adoption.

### **Gender-based violence against women**

9. Various measures aim at tackling gender-based violence against women (paras. 58–68). Please provide information on:

(a) Number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed in cases of gender-based violence against women, disaggregated by the age of the victim, the type of violence and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, in the past five years;

(b) Prosecutions and convictions of perpetrators of femicide, disaggregated by the age of the victim, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator and the type of sentence imposed, in the past five years;

(c) Number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed on perpetrators in cases of anti-religious, antisemitic, racist and xenophobic, and sexist acts against women and girls;

(d) Latest results of studies produced by the ministerial statistical service for internal security on victims of sexism in the State party (paras. 25–28).

### **Extraterritorial State obligation**

10. The State party informs that it assesses the risk that exported materials could be used to commit serious acts of violence based on gender or serious acts of violence against women or children (paras. 7–8). Please provide information on assessments undertaken in the past five years with regard to arms transfers and on measures taken to assess the risk of violations of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, opinion and association, when authorizing the export of surveillance and biometrics technologies.

### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

11. The Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings completed its evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in France in 2021 and published its report in February 2022. This detailed report presents recommendations covering about 20 thematic areas. What is the State party doing to implement those recommendations?

12. Act No. 2016-44 of 13 April 2016 criminalizes the purchase of sexual services and penalizes clients. Please report on the human and financial resources allocated for its implementation. Has an assessment of Act No. 2016-44 been carried out and if so what are the results? What are the consequences for women in prostitution, particularly in terms of exposure to all forms of violence, including exploitation? What financial resources are allocated for women who wish to leave prostitution? The National Sexual Health Strategy 2017–2030 and the 2018–2020 sexual health road map deploy a range of sexual health services for women in prostitution. Please provide information on the deployment of sexual health centres developing a specific approach for this target population and of new projects adopting innovative actions to promote risk reduction for women in prostitution.

### **Participation in political and public life**

13. Women account for 39 per cent of members of parliament, 32.9 per cent of members of the senate, 47 per cent of members of government and 19.8 per cent of mayors. The Act of 27 January 2011 relating to the balanced representation of women and men on boards of directors and supervisory boards, and professional equality, sets 40 per cent as a target quota for women on administrative and supervisory boards as of 1 July 2017 and extends to national public enterprises, public industrial and commercial establishments and mixed public establishments whose staff are subject to rules of private law and whose members are appointed by decree. Please:

(a) Provide information on measures taken to ensure parity in the representation of women, including women from different socioeconomic backgrounds, in elected and appointed political positions and the penalties imposed for non-compliance with this requirement;

(b) Provide information on representation of women on boards of directors and supervisory boards in public and mixed public establishments in the past five years and the sanctions applied in the past five years against employers who violate the Act;

(c) Provide data on the extent of online harassment, notably through social media, against women who take public positions on certain societal issues and describe the State party's legal framework, policies and processes with regard to cyberharassment and measures taken to protect the rights of victims.

### **Education**

14. The Hypatia project has introduced more than 3,000 high school students since 2016 to the diversity of scientific and technological fields. Please provide information on the results of the project and the next steps. The National Sexual Health Strategy 2017–2030 deploys sexuality education in all schools and aims at developing the psychosocial skills of children and adolescents, in mutual respect, equality between girls and boys and consent in relationships with one another. Please report on the roll-out of the Strategy and its results thus far.

15. Please provide information on the impact of the “no to harassment” programme established in 2017, with a free toll-free number, a dedicated website and an

awareness campaign. Please report on steps taken to overcome discrimination in access to education for girls with disabilities and girls belonging to disadvantaged groups.

### **Employment**

16. The Interministerial Plan for Professional Equality between Women and Men (2016–2020) has come to an end. Please provide information on the impact of the Plan, lessons learned and the next steps towards promoting access to employment for women in non-traditional fields. The above-mentioned Act of 27 January 2011 relating to the balanced representation of women and men on boards of directors and supervisory boards, and professional equality sets 40 per cent as a target quota for women on administrative and supervisory boards in the private sector as of 1 July 2017. This obligation has been extended to companies with more than 250 employees since 1 January 2020. Please provide information on the representation of women on boards of directors and supervisory boards in private sector enterprises in the past five years and the sanctions applied in the past five years against employers who violated the Act.

17. Law No. 2018-771 of 5 September 2018 on the freedom to choose one's professional future requires employers to eliminate the pay gap between women and men and establishes a mandatory gender equality index for companies. This obligation has been extended to all companies with at least 50 employees as of 1 March 2020. Please provide updated data on the percentage of companies with at least 50 employees that have published their gender equality index, the average score obtained and the penalties imposed, if any, on enterprises. As of 1 July 2021, paternity leave has been extended from 14 to 28 days, including 7 compulsory days to be taken at the birth of the child. Please inform the Committee of measures taken to encourage men to take paternity leave and provide statistics on the percentage of men who have done this. Please inform on measures taken to promote equal access to the labour market for women belonging to minority groups, women with disabilities, and migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women.

### **Health**

18. The 2018–2020 sexual health road map, which has been adopted to improve the general sexual health care offered in the territories, includes several structures such as free information, screening and diagnostic centres and family planning and education centres. Please provide data on the number and coverage of structures providing sexual and reproductive health-care services, particularly in overseas territories. The National Health Strategy 2018–2022, which aims at improving the state of health of mothers and children in the overseas territories, is coming to an end. Please provide information on the results of the Strategy, lessons learned and the next steps and information on the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for mercury poisoning of indigenous populations in French Guiana, which affects the health of women and girls.

19. The Commission on Improving Compensation for Victims of Nuclear Tests, established by law No. 2017-256 of 28 February 2017 on programming relating to substantive equality in the overseas territories, presented its conclusions which were intended to improve the situation of victims of nuclear tests. Please provide information on the processing of claims for compensation of women and girls in French Polynesia.

**Economic empowerment of women**

20. Please inform the Committee on the support provided to women entrepreneurs and women-owned start-up businesses, including microcredits and appropriate technology for establishing and developing small and medium-sized enterprises, in the past five years.

**Rural and marginalized groups of women**

21. The Interministerial Committee for Ruralities sets 40 per cent as the target for women among business creators in these territories, relying in particular on the women's equality guarantee system, the national system dedicated to women entrepreneurs which facilitates access to bank credit to finance the creation, takeover or development of their business. Please provide data on women entrepreneurs in rural areas and information on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Controller General for places of detention in her 2016 report, in particular with regard to gender equality in those particular settings. The national strategy for the reception and integration of refugees, adopted in 2018 (para. 15), aims towards guaranteeing appropriate care for vulnerable refugee women. Please provide information on the implementation of the strategy, including on training provided to staff in the asylum chain, information provided to applicants and reporting of vulnerabilities between the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) and the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII).

**Climate change and disaster risk reduction**

22. The State party has led efforts towards the adoption of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Please provide information on climate change policies and on measures taken to ensure that they take into account the differentiated and disproportionate impact of climate change on women in order to better integrate a gender perspective into relevant policies and programmes and to ensure the effective participation of women in decision-making processes on climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and land and environmental resource management at the local and national levels, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change.

**Marriage and family relations**

23. A number of customary laws or practices in force in some non-metropolitan territories contain discriminatory provisions with regard to marriage and family relations which are incompatible with the Convention. In the light of the Committee's previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/FRA/CO/7-8](#), para. 49), please inform on the review of the discriminatory provisions relating to marriage and family relations, including marriage contracts, the dissolution of marriage, the custody of children and inheritance, to bring them into conformity with the Convention.