



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

### Concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovenia\*

1. The Committee considered the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovenia ([CEDAW/C/SVN/5-6](#)) at its 1341st and 1342nd meetings, on 30 October 2015 (see [CEDAW/C/SR.1341](#) and 1342). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in [CEDAW/C/SVN/Q/5-6](#) and the responses of Slovenia are contained in [CEDAW/C/SVN/Q/5-6/Add.1](#).

#### A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State party of its combined fifth and sixth periodic reports, the State party's written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group, the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided orally in response to most of the questions posed by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its delegation, which was led by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Martina Vuk, and included other representatives of the Ministry, as well as representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

#### B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2008 of the State party's fourth periodic report ([CEDAW/C/SVN/4](#)) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of the following legislation:

(a) Amendment to the Marriage and Family Relations Act, in 2015, to recognize various forms of family relations;

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its sixty-second session (26 October-20 November 2015).



(b) Amendment to the Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act, in 2014, to introduce measures that more equally distribute parental protection and childcare between both parents;

(c) Rules on cooperation between the police and other authorities in the detection and prevention of domestic violence, in 2010, to regulate the conduct of the police when treating domestic violence;

(d) Family Violence Prevention Act, in 2008, to define forms of family violence and determine the role, tasks and cooperation of the various State authorities and non-governmental organizations in dealing with family violence, in addition to measures for the protection of victims of family violence.

5. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, such as the adoption of the following:

(a) National programme for equal opportunities for women and men, covering the period 2015-2020, in 2015;

(b) Development strategy for gynaecology and obstetrics, in 2013;

(c) National action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, in 2010;

(d) National programme on the prevention of domestic violence, covering the period 2009-2014, in 2009.

## **C. Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

### **Parliament**

**6. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see the statement by the Committee on its relationship with parliamentarians, adopted at the forty-fifth session, in 2010). It invites the parliament, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the next reporting period under the Convention.**

### **General context**

7. The Committee notes with concern that austerity measures, adopted in an effort to stabilize public finances, have had a detrimental and disproportionate impact on women in many spheres of life. The Committee also notes that very few studies and evaluations have been conducted to monitor the gender-specific effects of such measures. The Committee wishes to emphasize that the concerns expressed below take into account the exceptional circumstances that the State party has faced in recent years and is still facing. The Committee reminds the State party, however, that, even in times of fiscal constraints and economic crisis, special efforts must be made to respect women's human rights, sustain and expand social investment and social protection and employ a gender-sensitive approach, giving priority to women in vulnerable situations.

**8. The Committee recommends that the State party conduct a comprehensive study on the consequences of the austerity measures on women**

**and design an action plan to mitigate the adverse effects of such measures, as well as seek assistance and support from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund for its implementation.**

#### **Constitutional and legislative framework and access to justice**

9. The Committee notes that both direct and indirect discrimination are prohibited under the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment Act (2004) and that the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (2002) is aimed at improving the situation of women and creating equal opportunities. The Committee regrets, however, the lack of information on the number of reported cases of sex-based or gender-based discrimination under those laws, including intersecting forms of discrimination. It is concerned about the complexity and length of legal proceedings, the introduction of labour court fees, which may deter women from claiming their rights, and the restrictions imposed on non-governmental organizations wishing to assist women in court proceedings, which should be lifted according to the information provided by the delegation.

**10. In line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice, the Committee recommends that the State party review its legal definition of discrimination against women with a view to including intersecting forms of discrimination. It also recommends that the State party provide free legal aid to women without sufficient means and facilitate the work of non-governmental organizations assisting women in proceedings before the judicial authorities, including the higher courts and the Constitutional Court. It encourages women to report cases of sex-based discrimination to the police and judicial and quasi-judicial bodies.**

#### **Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations**

11. The Committee notes that the State party's fourth periodic report and the translated concluding observations issued by the Committee have been published on the website of the Office for Equal Opportunities. The Committee remains concerned, however, that the provisions of the Convention, which is directly applicable in the State party, have not been invoked before the national courts.

**12. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Further strengthen legal training and capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors and lawyers on the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto, the Committee's general recommendations and the Committee's views on individual communications and inquiries, to enable them to apply, invoke and/or refer to the provisions of the Convention directly and to interpret national legislation in line with the Convention;**

**(b) Raise awareness among women about their rights under the Convention.**

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

13. The Committee notes that the Sector for Equal Opportunities of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is the competent authority for shaping gender equality policies and that it performs tasks defined in

the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act. While noting the need for a clearer delineation of statutory functions and powers between the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Advocate of the Principle of Equality, the Committee is concerned about the discrepancy in the human, technical and financial resources allocated to the Advocate compared with the Ombudsman, even after the planned increases for the former.

**14. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Strengthen the authority and visibility of the national machinery for the advancement of women in the institutional structure and provide it with adequate human, technical and financial resources to enable it to effectively coordinate and promote the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes across all sectors and levels of government;**

**(b) Consolidate gender mainstreaming activities by ensuring the effective implementation of the national programme for equal opportunities for women and men (2015-2020);**

**(c) Expedite the adoption of the bill on protection against discrimination, to establish an independent Advocate of the Principle of Equality with a strong mandate to address all cases of sex-based or gender-based discrimination, in both the public and private sectors, and ensure that it is provided with adequate human, technical and financial resources in order to fulfil its expanded mandate and continue to promote gender equality, respect for women's rights and the implementation of the Convention.**

**Temporary special measures**

15. The Committee notes the types of measures taken to increase the political participation and representation of women and the more general measures aimed at promoting women's employment and entrepreneurship. It is concerned, however, that temporary special measures as such remain underutilized by the State party to accelerate de facto equality and to address the situation of disadvantaged and marginalized women who are subjected to intersecting forms of discrimination, such as Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities, migrant and refugee women and older women.

**16. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Adopt further temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, as part of a necessary strategy to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality of women and men, including in the areas of employment, education and health, and to target disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women, including Roma women, rural women, women with disabilities, migrant and refugee women and older women;**

**(b) Evaluate the impact of such measures and make the findings, including gender-relevant statistics, available to the Committee and the general public;**

**(c) Educate and raise the awareness of politicians, in particular parliamentarians, and journalists, teachers and the general public, especially men, of temporary special measures as a necessary strategy to accelerate the**

**achievement of substantive equality of women and men in all areas of the Convention in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged.**

**Stereotypes**

17. The Committee welcomes the various educational, awareness-raising and training measures taken to eliminate discriminatory stereotypes and encourage equal sharing between women and men of household duties and parenting responsibilities, including the “Daddy, get active!” media campaign and the “We are all active” project, which promotes the reconciliation of work and family life. The Committee is concerned, however, about the persistence of stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society that perpetuate traditional roles of women as mothers and housewives and undermine women’s social status and their educational and career prospects.

18. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Further develop and implement a comprehensive policy with proactive and sustained measures, targeting women and men and girls and boys, to overcome stereotypical attitudes towards the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, and engage civil society organizations and the mass media in its implementation;**

(b) **Adequately integrate the principles of non-discrimination and equality of women and men into educational policies, the national core curriculum and related documents and into basic and continuous education for teachers and health-care professionals and other service providers;**

(c) **Use innovative measures that target children and parents, to strengthen their understanding of the principle of equality of women and men, and work through the educational system, both formal and informal, and the mass media, to enhance positive and non-stereotypical portrayals of women;**

(d) **Monitor and review all measures taken in order to regularly assess their impact and take appropriate remedial action.**

**Violence against women**

19. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Family Violence Prevention Act (2008) and a resolution on the national programme on family violence prevention, covering the period 2009-2014. It also welcomes the introduction of domestic violence as a specific criminal offence in the new Criminal Code (2008). It notes that, during the period from 2008 to 2011, the first national survey on the extent of and responsiveness to violence in the domestic sphere and in partnerships was conducted. The survey showed that the number of cases of domestic violence detected, identified and processed by the authorities had increased in recent years. The Committee notes with appreciation the various education and training courses for the judiciary, law enforcement officials, teaching staff and social workers to improve the capacity of the professionals responsible for the prevention of violence and to increase their gender sensitivity in dealing with women who are victims of violence. The Committee, however, notes with concern:

(a) The failure to comprehensively prohibit all forms of violence against women in both the public and private spheres;

(b) The lenient sentences imposed by courts on perpetrators of acts of domestic violence;

(c) The absence of a permanent mechanism to coordinate, monitor and assess the effectiveness of measures taken to tackle violence against women;

(d) The fact that the network of shelters and crisis centres does not cover the entire territory of the State party and that free counselling and assistance are not accessible to all women who are victims of violence, such as Roma women, migrant women, women with disabilities and older women;

(e) The limited effectiveness of the protection afforded to victims of domestic violence, including the lack of enforcement of restraining orders issued against alleged perpetrators;

(f) The limited access to comprehensive disaggregated data on complaints, investigations, prosecutions and convictions in cases of violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence.

**20. Recalling its general recommendation No. 19 (1992) on violence against women, the Committee urges the State party:**

**(a) To amend its legislation to include all forms of violence against women in both the public and private spheres, and adopt and implement a national programme on the prevention of domestic violence for the period from 2015 to 2020;**

**(b) To take all appropriate measures to ensure that all acts of violence against women, including domestic and sexual violence, are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted and that the sentences imposed on perpetrators are commensurate with the gravity of the crime;**

**(c) To establish a permanent mechanism to coordinate, monitor and assess the effectiveness of the measures taken to tackle violence against women and provide it with sufficient human, technical and financial resources;**

**(d) To ensure that the network of shelters and crisis centres meets the accommodation needs of all women who are victims of violence throughout the territory of the State party without discrimination and that the centres are staffed with qualified personnel and provided with adequate financial resources for their effective functioning;**

**(e) To ensure that restraining orders are effectively enforced and that women who are victims of violence have adequate access to shelters for immediate physical protection and legal, medical and psychological assistance, as well as effective remedies and adequate compensation;**

**(f) To establish a unified mechanism for the systematic collection of statistical data, disaggregated by sex, age and relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, on complaints, investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed on perpetrators of violence against women;**

**(g) To conduct training on the strict application of criminal law provisions on domestic violence for judges, lawyers, police officers and other law enforcement officials, as well as awareness-raising campaigns on the criminal nature of domestic violence for the general public.**

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

21. The Committee welcomes the amendment to the Penal Code to include provisions on trafficking in persons and the exploitation of victims of trafficking for prostitution and increase the sentences for such offences. It notes with appreciation the adoption and implementation of action plans developed by the Inter-ministerial Working Group for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, in addition to the education and training activities of the State party and non-governmental organizations targeting the judiciary and law enforcement personnel, border police officers and social workers. It welcomes the possibility for victims of trafficking to obtain temporary residence permits. The Committee is, however, concerned about:

(a) The absence of a comprehensive gender-sensitive law on trafficking in persons;

(b) The low rates of prosecution and conviction in cases of trafficking, the high number of reported victims notwithstanding;

(c) The lack of adequate mechanisms to identify and refer victims of trafficking in need of protection;

(d) The limited access to data on victims of trafficking, disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;

(e) The lack of systematically organized rehabilitation and reintegration measures, including access to counselling, medical treatment, psychological support and redress, including compensation, for victims of trafficking, in particular for non-Slovenian nationals and non-Europeans who are excluded from existing compensation schemes;

(f) The lack of alternative income opportunities for women and girls wishing to leave prostitution.

### **22. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt a comprehensive gender-sensitive law on trafficking in persons;**

(b) **Investigate, prosecute and punish all cases of trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, and ensure that the sentences imposed on perpetrators are commensurate with the gravity of the crime;**

(c) **Strengthen measures to identify and provide support to women at risk of trafficking, in particular Roma, migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women;**

(d) **Improve access to data on victims of trafficking, disaggregated by sex, age and nationality;**

(e) **Provide victims of trafficking with adequate access to health care and counselling and strengthen such services by providing enhanced human, technical and financial resources to the social work centres, in addition to targeted training for social workers;**

(f) **Amend the Crime Victims' Compensation Act to ensure that all victims of trafficking, irrespective of their nationality, obtain effective protection and redress, including rehabilitation and compensation;**

- (g) Enhance support services for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation;**
- (h) Provide alternative income opportunities for women and girls who wish to leave prostitution;**
- (i) Strengthen measures aimed at addressing the root causes of trafficking, such as poverty and high unemployment among women and girls;**
- (j) Pursue international, regional and bilateral cooperation efforts with countries of origin, transit and destination, including the exchange of information, to prevent trafficking and bring perpetrators to justice.**

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

23. The Committee acknowledges the successful implementation of mandatory quotas for national, local and European elections, which resulted in a significant increase in the representation of Slovenian women in the national parliament (35.6 per cent), local councils (31.8 per cent) and the European Parliament (50 per cent). It notes with appreciation that parity has been achieved in the Cabinet. The Committee is concerned, however, about the persistent and very low percentage of women in the National Council, among mayors, in management positions and on supervisory boards of companies. It also notes with concern that women in politics are often targets of ridicule and harassment because of their gender and are faced with negative cultural attitudes and gender stereotypes on the part of political parties, the media and voters.

#### **24. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) Consider reintroducing for adoption the proposal for amendments to the Elections to the National Assembly Act, which provides for an increase in the representation of each sex on candidate lists of political parties from 35 to 40 per cent, and introducing a zipper system for the first half of each electoral list;**
- (b) Expedite the preparation and adoption of measures, including temporary special measures, such as gender quotas, to increase the representation of women in management and on supervisory boards of companies;**
- (c) Introduce gender quotas of at least 35 per cent in all elected and appointed decision-making bodies at both the national and local levels, including in the National Council and mayoral positions, and adopt other temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, such as a gender parity system for appointments and accelerated recruitment of women to senior positions;**
- (d) Intensify awareness-raising campaigns for politicians, journalists, teachers and the general public, especially men, to enhance the understanding that the full, equal, free and democratic participation of women on an equal basis with men in political and public life is a requirement for the full implementation of women's human rights;**
- (e) Continue to provide training for women on leadership skills, campaigning and constituency-building to prepare them as candidates and for positions in political life in the various areas of public administration;**



**(f) Consider the adoption of legislative measures to combat political harassment, including through a specific law.**

#### **Nationality**

25. The Committee is concerned that, notwithstanding recently adopted measures and fast-track procedures to regulate the status of and provide redress and compensation to persons who were deleted from the register of permanent residents and transferred to the register of aliens following the State party's independence, a number of them, including women and girls in situations of vulnerability, have not benefited from improvements in their situation.

**26. The Committee urges the State party:**

**(a) To simplify the procedures for the issuance of permanent residence permits to all persons who were deleted from the register of permanent residents in 1992;**

**(b) To ensure that, in addition to receiving pecuniary compensation, all women and girls whose names were deleted from the register are entitled to payment of compulsory health insurance contributions, priority consideration in social assistance programmes and public funds, State scholarships, housing and access to the education system, on a basis of equality with Slovenian citizens, and to participation or priority treatment in integration programmes;**

**(c) Facilitate family reunification under more favourable conditions for such women and girls.**

#### **Education**

27. The Committee welcomes the high enrolment rate of women and girls at all levels of education, in particular tertiary education, where their participation is considerably higher than that of men. It notes the various activities carried out to reduce gender segregation in secondary and higher vocational education programmes. It also welcomes the measures taken under the strategy for education of Roma to include more Roma children, in particular girls, in education and to train and hire Roma assistants in schools. The Committee is, however, concerned about:

(a) The persistent segregation of fields of study at the tertiary level, with women being concentrated in traditionally female-dominated areas and underrepresented in the fields of mathematics, informatics, natural science and technology;

(b) The absence of a gender impact assessment of the implementation of the strategy for education of Roma and the lack of statistical data, disaggregated by sex and age, on school enrolment, attendance and dropout rates among Roma girls at the primary and secondary levels.

**28. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Eliminate traditional stereotypes and structural barriers that may deter girls from enrolling in traditionally male-dominated fields of study, such as science and technology, and step up efforts to provide girls with career counselling on non-traditional career paths, including non-stereotypical vocational training;**

(b) **Conduct a gender impact assessment of the implementation of the strategy for education of Roma, and provide statistical data, disaggregated by sex and age, on the rates of school enrolment, attendance and dropout among Roma girls at the primary and secondary levels.**

### **Employment**

29. The Committee welcomes the initiatives by the State party to increase the employability of registered long-term unemployed women and to promote their entrepreneurship and self-employment. It notes the relatively low gender wage gap in the State party (3.2 per cent) and the efforts to better reconcile work and family life and encourage shared parental responsibilities, including by instituting special forms of part-time work for mothers and fathers with children up to a certain age, introducing fully paid paternity leave and providing affordable high-quality childcare facilities. The Committee also notes the measures taken to include Roma women in active employment programmes implemented by the Employment Service. The Committee is, however, concerned about:

(a) The disproportionately high unemployment rate among women, in particular young and highly educated women, and the low percentage of female entrepreneurs compared with male entrepreneurs;

(b) The occupational segregation in the labour market, in particular in human sciences, health, social work and education, where women are overrepresented, and in the mining, quarrying and construction industries, where they are underrepresented;

(c) The significant wage gap in traditionally female-dominated sectors, such as human health and social work activities (25.1 per cent) or financial and insurances activities (24.8 per cent), and the limited access by women to skilled and better-paid jobs;

(d) The unequal division of household tasks between women and men, with women continuing to perform a larger share of domestic work, even when working full-time;

(e) The excessive use of consecutive short-term employment contracts for, in particular, younger female workers, which undermines their job security in case of pregnancy;

(f) The persistent marginalization and exclusion of Roma women and women belonging to other disadvantaged and marginalized groups from the formal labour market.

30. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Adopt measures, including temporary special measures in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, aimed at achieving substantive equality of women and men in the labour market, especially for young women with higher education, and establish special training programmes and counselling for different groups of unemployed women, including by promoting women's entrepreneurship;**

(b) **Adopt and implement policies, with time-bound targets and indicators, to reverse cultural patterns and transform traditional gender**

stereotypes and norms of sex-appropriate roles in society transmitted through schooling and parenting, in order to eliminate occupational segregation and achieve substantive equality of women and men in the labour market, including in traditionally male fields, through intensified technical and vocational training for women in those areas;

(c) Address the gender pay gap, taking into consideration the recommendations of the study conducted by the Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia and the Women's Lobby of Slovenia, entitled "Equal pay for equal work and the gender pay gap", in cooperation with those organizations, and improve access by women to skilled and better-paid jobs, including through the diversification of fields of study and vocational training for women and men and boys and girls;

(d) Strengthen awareness-raising and education initiatives for both women and men on the sharing of domestic and family responsibilities and provide incentives for active participation by men in such tasks; and increase the use of paternity leave by fathers and ensure that employers fulfil the legal obligation to make such leave available by introducing compulsory paternity leave;

(e) Closely monitor the working conditions of women on short-term contracts, including through labour inspections, and the reintegration in the labour market of women returning to work following periods of child-rearing;

(f) Increase access to formal employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women, including Roma women and women belonging to other disadvantaged and marginalized groups, and improve their possibilities to combine work and family life, including by expanding the number of childcare facilities;

(g) Implement existing legislation to ensure that women have access to effective mechanisms to complain about employment discrimination and guarantee the enforcement of adequate sanctions for employers engaging in discriminatory practices.

## **Health**

31. The Committee notes that special programmes have been developed to promote and protect the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women. It acknowledges that mandatory education on sexual and reproductive health and rights in primary and secondary schools and awareness-raising activities have played an important role in decreasing the adolescent abortion and teenage pregnancy rates. The Committee is concerned, however, that cuts in the health budget and the new requirement for women to cover 20 per cent of the cost of sexual and reproductive health-care services have negative consequences for women's health, in particular among adolescent girls and women from disadvantaged and marginalized groups, such as women living in poverty, asylum-seeking and refugee women, Roma women and women who are victims of violence.

32. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop a strategy for the protection and promotion of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and provide high-quality and accessible public sexual and reproductive health-care services covered by the compulsory health insurance, in particular for adolescent girls and women belonging to disadvantaged and**

**marginalized groups, such as women living in poverty, women asylum seekers and refugees, Roma women and women who are victims of violence.**

**Economic empowerment of women**

33. The Committee is concerned that austerity measures, in particular the reduction in child allowances and pension benefits, have had a disproportionate effect on women, given that they are the main recipients of the social services provided by the welfare State. It is also concerned that low levels of social benefits and very strict eligibility criteria result in a situation in which many women living in poverty, in particular single mothers, older women and those without previous employment, are excluded from social protection.

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Integrate a gender perspective into its austerity laws and policies, to ensure respect for women's human rights, in particular in times of fiscal constraints and economic crisis;**

(b) **Conduct a systematic assessment of the impact of such laws and policies on the lives of women and their families;**

(c) **Review the austerity laws that have disproportionately affected women, in particular those relating to child allowances, social benefits and pension schemes;**

(d) **Closely monitor the national social security programme and ensure that it is implemented in a gender-sensitive manner.**

**Rural women**

35. The Committee notes the various programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women. It is, however, concerned that only 27.3 per cent of family farms are run by women, as a result of traditional and social patterns by which husbands predominate as registered owners of farms.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop special policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women, including by promoting their ownership of land.**

**Refugee and asylum-seeking women**

37. The Committee notes that a number of refugees and asylum seekers have recently entered the State party and that priority has been given to the provision of shelters and basic services. The Committee is concerned, however, that the shelters are overcrowded and do not provide adequate medical care, sanitary conditions, psychological support and legal counselling, in particular for women and girls, who are affected disproportionately by the situation.

38. **The Committee urges the State party to ensure protection for all refugee and asylum-seeking women, strengthen its efforts to improve their living conditions by providing adequate health care, sanitary conditions, psychological support and legal counselling, especially for women with children, pregnant women or women at risk of trafficking or who are victims of violence, and take specific measures to reduce overcrowding in shelters. It also**

**urges the State party to uphold the principle of non-refoulement and to take a gender-sensitive approach to the continuing refugee inflows and to the asylum claims, including in procedural matters, in line with the rights covered in the Convention and its general recommendation No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women. It recommends that the State party consider ratifying the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.**

#### **Marriage and family relations**

39. The Committee welcomes the criminalization of child and/or forced marriage. It is concerned, however, about the inadequate response by the State party with respect to the prevention, prosecution and punishment of such offences, especially among the Roma population, and about the allegedly lenient approach of the social work centres in enforcing the prohibition. The Committee is also concerned about the inappropriate redress mechanisms available for victims of child and/or forced marriage, as well as the lack of data on the extent of that phenomenon.

**40. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Establish a system to track all cases involving child and/or forced marriage, especially among the Roma population;**

**(b) Effectively investigate and prosecute such cases to bring perpetrators to justice;**

**(c) Increase awareness-raising programmes, especially among the Roma population, on the harmful impact of child and/or forced marriage on the health, development and education of girls;**

**(d) Provide victims of child and/or forced marriage with appropriate rehabilitation and counselling services and shelters, and raise the awareness of the staff of social work centres regarding how to identify and deal with girls who are victims of harmful practices in a gender-sensitive manner;**

**(e) Conduct an in-depth study on child, early and forced marriage, in particular among the Roma population, to determine its root causes and assess its magnitude.**

41. The Committee notes that 71 per cent of maintenance recipients are single mothers, who constitute 84 per cent of all single-parent families. The Committee is concerned that the State party does not ensure effective enforcement proceedings in case of unpaid maintenance obligations, thus disproportionately affecting single mothers.

**42. The Committee recommends that the State party:**

**(a) Strengthen its efforts to secure child maintenance payments in adequate amounts and establish mechanisms to provide support to single-parent families and to children whose fathers or mothers have failed to fulfil their maintenance obligations;**

**(b) Consider ratifying the Hague Convention No. 23 on the Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions relating to Maintenance Obligations (1973).**

### **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

43. **The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in its efforts to implement the provisions of the Convention.**

### **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

44. **The Committee calls for the realization of substantive gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

### **Dissemination**

45. **The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement the provisions of the Convention. It urges the State party to give priority attention to the implementation of the present concluding observations and recommendations between now and the submission of the next periodic report. The Committee therefore requests that the present concluding observations be disseminated in a timely manner, in the official language of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the ministries, the parliament and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation. It encourages the State party to collaborate with all stakeholders concerned, such as employers' associations, trade unions, human rights and women's organizations, universities, research institutions and the media. It recommends that the present concluding observations be disseminated in an appropriate form at the local community level to enable their implementation. In addition, the Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and relevant jurisprudence, in addition to the Committee's general recommendations, to all stakeholders.**

### **Ratification of other treaties**

46. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments<sup>1</sup> would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which it is not yet a party.**

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<sup>1</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Follow-up to the concluding observations**

47. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 26 and 38 above.

**Preparation of the next report**

48. The Committee invites the State party to submit its seventh periodic report in November 2019.

49. The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents ([HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I).

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