



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
7 March 2022

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions in relation to the fifth periodic report of Albania*

Visibility of the Convention and the Optional Protocol

1. Please provide information on efforts to give visibility to the Convention, the communications and inquiry procedures provided for under the Optional Protocol and the Committee's general recommendations, so that they are made an integral part of the training of judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police officers and other law enforcement officials. Please also provide information on the measures taken to disseminate the Committee's previous concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/4](#)).

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 context of lockdown measures, whether partial or total, and post-crisis recovery plans, women and girls are not relegated to stereotypical gender roles. Please indicate the measures put 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, in particular in the design and implementation of recovery programmes;
- (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.

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



3. Please explain how the State party is ensuring that measures taken to contain the pandemic, such as restrictions on freedom of movement or 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.

Legislative framework and definition of discrimination against women

4. Please explain whether the legislation in force contains a definition of discrimination against women that covers direct and indirect discrimination in the public and private spheres, as well as intersecting forms of discrimination, in accordance with the obligations of the State party under articles 1 and 2 of the Convention.

Access to justice

5. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations ([CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/4](#), para. 13) and in line with its general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice, please indicate what measures have been taken to ensure access to affordable and, if necessary, free legal aid for women belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups, in particular in rural and remote areas and among the Roma and Egyptian communities and rural women. Please provide information on the legal remedies available to women for filing complaints of gender-based discrimination, and indicate what steps the Government has taken to reverse the burden of proof in civil law proceedings concerning cases of gender-based discrimination and violence against women.

National machinery for the advancement of women

6. Please provide a summary of the findings of the 2020 evaluation of the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality for the period 2016–2020, including the main successes and challenges. Please provide information on how local government units are implementing the provisions of the 2017 Law on Local Self-Government Finance regarding gender equality, including data on the percentage of overall expenditures allocated to the promotion of gender equality. Please also describe in further detail how collaboration is ensured between the Deputy Prime Minister, as the national coordinator on gender equality, the National Council on Gender Equality and gender equality officers at all levels, from the national to the municipal level. Please also indicate the role of Parliament in ensuring that national policies developed by the National Council on Gender Equality are implemented.

National human rights institution

7. Please provide information on the human, technical and financial resources allocated from the national budget to the Office of the People's Advocate in order to enable it to carry out its mandate effectively and independently.

Temporary special measures

8. Please provide details of any temporary special measures adopted in follow-up to the 2019 study on gender equality and discrimination in appointed bodies of local government carried out by the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, and as part of local gender equality plans. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations ([CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/4](#), para. 19), please provide comprehensive information on the use of temporary special measures, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and general comment No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, to

accelerate the achievement of substantive equality for women facing intersecting forms of discrimination, in particular Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons, in all areas in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

9. Please provide detailed information on measures taken to eliminate discriminatory stereotypes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, to address discriminatory gender stereotypes and to promote positive images of women as active participants in economic, social and political life, and on the impact of those measures. In the light of the Committee's previous recommendations ([CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/4](#), para. 21) and in line with joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, please provide detailed information on specific steps taken, particularly in rural and remote areas and among the Roma and Egyptian minority communities, to:

- (a) Implement effectively the prohibition of child marriage;
- (b) Prohibit other harmful practices, such as arranged marriages, as well as killings or other crimes committed in the name of so-called honour, and prosecute and adequately punish the perpetrators of such crimes;
- (c) Analyse and address gender-based stereotypes as a root cause of gender-based violence against women.

Gender-based violence against women

10. In line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, please provide information on the specific steps taken to:

- (a) Ensure that protection orders are issued on the basis of clear procedures and are effectively monitored and enforced;
- (b) Build the capacity of police and judicial personnel, such as court bailiffs, including by providing comprehensive training on gender-based violence against women, assistance and remedies for victims of violence, appropriate penalties for perpetrators and how to avoid revictimization in court, and addressing issues such as judicial gender bias and workload;
- (c) Hold law enforcement officials and judicial personnel accountable for failure to register complaints and to issue and enforce protection orders;
- (d) Make 24-hour helplines for counselling and reporting of gender-based violence and domestic violence, as well as local referral mechanisms, available and accessible in all areas of the country, and widely disseminate information on the existence and activities of such helplines;
- (e) Encourage early reporting of domestic violence and gender-based violence and ensure that reports are effectively investigated and that perpetrators are prosecuted;
- (f) Ensure that support services, shelters, medical, legal and psychosocial assistance and reparations are available to victims of gender-based violence against women, in particular women in rural and remote areas and those who face multiple forms of discrimination, such as older women, Roma and Egyptian women and women with disabilities;

(g) Provide sufficient levels of funding from the national budget to victim support services, in particular in rural and remote areas.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

11. Please provide information on the implementation of the national action plan against trafficking in persons for the period 2021–2023. Please indicate the measures taken to ensure that all women who are victims of trafficking are exempted from any liability and are provided with adequate protection, such as through witness protection programmes and temporary residence permits, irrespective of their ability or willingness to cooperate with the prosecuting authorities. Please specify the number of women and girls who have been identified as victims of trafficking and the support and reintegration services provided to them, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 38 (2020) on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration. Please provide information on measures taken to reduce the demand for commercial sex. Please indicate the results achieved in the implementation of the recommendations made to Albania by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings for the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in its report of December 2020.

Participation in political and public life

12. In the light of the low percentage of women administrators at the municipal level and the low number of women in the police force, please provide information on targeted measures taken, including temporary special measures, to promote the equal representation of women in municipal administrations and in the police force. Please indicate the measures taken to address the stagnant representation of women in senior management posts and their decreasing numbers in the civil service in general. Please provide information on the obstacles to participation in political and public life faced by Roma and Egyptian women and women with disabilities, as well as on the implementation of the relevant provisions of Law 96/2017 on the Protection of National Minorities.

Education

13. Please describe the measures taken, such as school fee waivers and scholarships and the provision of Braille textbooks and sign language interpretation to increase school enrolment and completion rates among Roma and Egyptian women and girls, women and girls with disabilities and rural women and girls, at all levels of education, and the outcomes achieved. Please provide information on measures taken to continue enhancing access for women and girls to career paths, in particular those in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics and information and communications technology. Please provide details of programmes and activities implemented to develop capacity for teaching women and girls with disabilities. Please also indicate school dropout rates, disaggregated by sex, race, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status and geographical location, and the measures being taken to address the problem.

Employment

14. Please describe the measures taken to reduce unemployment rates among women, including women with disabilities, enhance their access to formal employment, address occupational segregation and close the persistent gender pay gap, particularly in the manufacturing industry. Please indicate measures taken to extend labour and social protection to women working in the informal economy. Please provide information on measures taken to encourage women to seek employment in traditionally male-dominated professions, such as in the areas of

science, technology, artificial intelligence and engineering, and in management positions, and provide relevant statistical data. Please also provide information on the number of complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace lodged by women, and their outcomes, and on the number and outcomes of annual labour inspections conducted in the past two years in the State party.

15. Please provide updated information, disaggregated by age, urban or rural area, and disability, on the employment rate and women's employment across the various sectors of the economy, on the unemployment rate of women compared with that of men, and on the number of women in the informal sector of the economy.

16. Please describe the measures taken to ensure a work-life balance for women. Please indicate the measures in place to promote equal sharing of family and domestic responsibilities between women and men, such as access to childcare facilities in rural and urban areas and the use of parental leave by fathers.

17. Please provide information on the measures taken to reduce horizontal and vertical occupational segregation, to address the concentration of women in part-time and low-paid jobs and to increase women's access to social protection schemes, including non-contributory schemes for women with disabilities and women belonging to marginalized groups. Please indicate the measures taken to eliminate discrimination in the labour market against mothers and pregnant women in relation to hiring, career advancement, conditions of employment, pay and denial of paid maternity leave, in particular in the private sector, including measures for Egyptian and Roma women, women with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons, and women in rural and remote areas.

Health

18. Please indicate the measures taken to enhance access for women and girls to health care, including sexual and reproductive health-care services, in particular in rural and remote areas. Please provide updated information on the measures taken to ensure equal and full access to sexual and reproductive health information, affordable modern contraceptives and family planning services for all women and girls, including Roma and Egyptian women and girls.

Economic empowerment and social benefits

19. Please provide information on the following:

- (a) Measures taken to ensure access for women, particularly rural women, to bank loans and other forms of financial credit without collateral;
- (b) Measures taken to support women entrepreneurs throughout the State party, women-owned start-up businesses and women beneficiaries of finance schemes for businesses, including microcredits and appropriate technology for establishing and developing small and medium-sized enterprises, disaggregated by age, disability, urban or rural area, and migrant, refugee or asylum-seeking status;
- (c) Measures taken to encourage the active participation of women in the development of the private sector;
- (d) The levels of poverty affecting women of all ages and measures to combat the feminization of poverty and social exclusion of women, in particular older women.

Rural women

20. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, and in accordance with the Committee's general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women, please provide information on the following:

- (a) Measures taken to increase rural women's access to land ownership;
- (b) Mechanisms to mainstream gender equality and to consult rural women's organizations with regard to the protection and management of natural and other assets;
- (c) Measures taken to implement legal, financial, media and information technology literacy programmes for rural women.

Disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women

21. In view of the intersecting forms of discrimination faced by disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women in the State party, please provide information on the situation of the following groups of women: older women, Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, migrant and returnee women, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons, women in detention, secluded women and asylum-seeking women. In particular, please provide information on the following:

- (a) **Older women.** Please indicate whether the State party has integrated a gender dimension into its national policy document on ageing and the accompanying national action plan for the period 2020–2024, and whether it is undertaking a gender review of the country's pension system;
- (b) **Roma and Egyptian women.** Please provide updated and detailed information on the specific measures taken to address the inequalities faced by Roma and Egyptian women, which are compounded by intersecting forms of discrimination. Please indicate the steps taken to review laws and policies, with the participation of Roma and Egyptian women, to ensure that they can fully enjoy their rights to adequate housing, education, and family and private life without discrimination or fear of segregation, forced eviction or displacement;
- (c) **Migrant and returnee women.** Please provide information on the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan on Migration for the period 2018–2022 and on the Strategy for the Reintegration of Returnees and Repatriated Albanian Nationals 2010–2015, with a particular emphasis on the impact of those strategies on women;
- (d) **Women with disabilities.** Please describe the objectives of the national action plan for persons with disabilities for the period 2021–2025 and the extent to which the plan contains a comprehensive gender perspective. Please provide information on how the specific needs of women with disabilities were taken into account in activities conducted under the national action plan on women and peace and security for the period 2018–2020.

Marriage and family relations

22. Please provide information on measures taken to enforce the prohibition of polygamy, child marriage and forced marriage, in particular in rural areas and among minority communities, in line with joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
