



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Information received from Albania on follow-up to the
concluding observations on its fifth periodic report***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. The Republic of Albania submits this follow-up report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on the implementation of selected recommendations from the concluding observations on its Fifth Periodic Report ([CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/5](#)).
2. The report responds to the Committee's request for information within two years on measures taken regarding: revising the legal framework on gender equality; aligning criminal legislation with international standards on sexual violence, including a consent-based definition of rape; adopting temporary special measures for equal representation of women in public and political life; and strengthening women's health protection, including preventing sex-selective abortion and improving support services.
3. It was coordinated by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and other institutions, based on data collected and analysed for 2023–2025.
4. The report outlines key legislative, institutional and policy developments, reaffirming Albania's commitment to advancing gender equality in line with the Convention and its European integration agenda.

II. Follow-up information on the concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/5](#))

A. Information relating to paragraph 12 (a)

5. In response to the Committee's recommendation to revise the legal framework on gender equality, the Republic of Albania has undertaken a comprehensive legislative reform through the adoption of Law No. 64/2025 "On Gender Equality", which replaces Law No. 9970/2008 "On Gender Equality in Society".¹ The new law was adopted by the Assembly of Albania on 6 November 2025 and published in the Official Gazette No. 229 on 10 December 2025. The new law has entered into force from 25 December 2025. The new law aims to ensure the right of every individual to gender equality and effective protection from gender-based discrimination in both public and private life; to establish general and specific measures across all sectors based on differentiated gender needs; and to clearly define the responsibilities of public authorities in promoting and achieving gender equality.
6. The adoption of this law represents a key milestone in the implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021–2030, where the revision of the legal framework was identified as a priority measure to accelerate the achievement of both *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality. It also reflects Albania's commitment to align its legislation with international human rights standards and the European Union *acquis*.

Key innovations of the law "On gender Equality"

7. The reform addresses gaps in the previous legal framework and introduces innovations to strengthen gender equality in practice, shifting from formal to

¹ Law no.64.2025 "On gender equality", published in Official Gazette no.229 dated 10.12.2025, available at <http://qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2025/11/06/64>.

substantive equality. It applies to both public and private sectors, integrating gender equality across all policies and programmes.

8. A key innovation is a dedicated section on gender equality across sectors such as education, technology, media, agriculture, health, security, transport, environment and culture, requiring concrete measures and monitoring by public and private actors.

9. The law strengthens key tools, including gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive budgeting, gender-sensitive language, recognition of unpaid care work, and systems for gender data collection and analysis.

10. It also sets clearer rules on equal representation in decision-making, promoting gender parity (50/50) as a long-term goal.

Inclusive and participatory drafting process

11. The development of Law No. 64/2025 was carried out through a broad, inclusive and consultative process, ensuring the meaningful participation of a wide range of stakeholders. A series of inter-institutional consultations and technical working meetings were conducted with:

- Line ministries and central government institutions;
- Independent institutions, including the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination and the Ombudsperson;
- Regulatory and oversight bodies;
- Local government representatives;
- Civil society organisations active in gender equality and human rights;
- International partners and experts.

12. These stakeholders provided written comments and technical inputs, which were systematically reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the draft law, ensuring an iterative and evidence-based drafting process.

Budgetary allocation for implementation

13. The implementation of Law No. 64/2025 is supported by a dedicated financial framework based on a comprehensive costing analysis. The total estimated financial impact amounts to approximately ALL 911 million over a ten-year period (2025–2034), corresponding to around 0.03% of GDP (2025), with annual allocations distributed progressively in line with implementation priorities. Expenditures are integrated within the existing budget programmes of responsible institutions and are intended to guide medium-term budget planning.

14. Key budgetary allocations include investments in capacity-building and training of public administration and local government staff, including expertise for gender impact assessments and gender-responsive budgeting, as well as resources for periodic research, studies and gender impact analyses across sectors. Additional resources are foreseen for the development of gender statistics and post-legislative monitoring. The financial planning underpinning the law ensures that its implementation is both costed and sustainable, combining targeted new investments with the integration of gender equality objectives into existing public expenditure frameworks.

Measures undertaken to operationalise the new legal framework

15. Since the entry into force of Law No. 64/2025, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has initiated a series of measures to ensure its effective implementation. In particular, the preparation of the necessary secondary legislation is underway and is expected to be finalised by June 2026, with a view to operationalising the provisions of the law. In parallel, a draft decision of the Council of Ministers on the composition and functioning of the National Council on Gender Equality has been prepared, with the aim of its full institutionalisation by March 2026.

16. Steps have been taken to establish an inter-institutional working group on gender statistics and to strengthen the role of gender equality officers across central and local institutions. The Ministry has also launched an awareness campaign for public and private sectors on the law's scope and obligations, aiming to ensure coordinated and effective implementation.

B. Information relating to paragraph 24 (b)

Changes in the legal framework on violence against women

17. In line with the Committee's recommendation and General Recommendation No. 35 (2017), Albania has significantly strengthened its legal framework through the adoption of Law No. 11/2026 "On the Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence".² The new law marks a fundamental shift from a framework focused primarily on domestic violence to a comprehensive legal framework addressing all forms of violence against women. It expands its scope to both public and private spheres, including environments mediated by technology, and applies broadly to all victims.

18. A key innovation is the explicit recognition and definition of multiple forms of violence, including physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence, as well as newly addressed forms such as technology-facilitated violence (including online harassment, cyberstalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images and digital hate speech), violence against women in politics and electoral processes, and sexual harassment in the workplace.

19. The law also introduces expanded and harmonised definitions in line with the Istanbul Convention, CEDAW and ILO Convention No. 190, and strengthens fundamental principles, including a victim-centred approach, confidentiality, non-justification of violence, access to justice and services, and the prohibition of mediation in cases of violence. Furthermore, the law establishes a comprehensive protection system, including strengthened protection orders tailored to specific forms of violence, such as those related to domestic violence, technology-facilitated violence, sexual harassment and violence in political life. It also enhances coordination mechanisms, risk assessment procedures and multi-sectoral responses involving law enforcement, judiciary, social services and local government structures.

Inclusive drafting and consultation process

20. The law was developed through a broad and inclusive consultation process, coordinated by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare through an inter-institutional technical working group. Extensive consultations were carried out with local government representatives, gender equality officers, civil society organisations,

² Law 11/2026 "On the Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence" published in Official Gazette no. 34, date 12/02/2026 available at <http://qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2026/01/28/11>.

independent human rights institutions, international partners, and justice sector actors, including prosecutors, judges and law enforcement authorities. Specific consultations were also held with cyber security institutions and media-related stakeholders to address emerging forms of violence, including online violence.

Budgetary allocations for implementation

21. The implementation of Law No. 11/2026 is supported by a comprehensive financial framework, based on a detailed costing analysis. The total estimated financial impact amounts to approximately ALL 2,014.1 million over the period 2026–2035, with annual allocations distributed progressively in line with implementation priorities. The financial framework supports key areas such as prevention measures, protection services, institutional capacity-building, data systems, and multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms.

Ongoing work on the Criminal Code

22. In parallel, Albania has undertaken steps to strengthen the criminal law framework addressing gender-based violence. Amendments to the Criminal Code have already improved provisions related to sexual offences, aiming to enhance the investigation and prosecution of such crimes and strengthen victim protection.³ Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice has conducted a comprehensive review of the Criminal Code, in light of relevant EU directives and international standards. This ongoing process includes the incorporation of a consent-based definition of rape, as well as the consideration of further criminalisation of emerging forms of violence, including cyberviolence and other gender-based offences, in line with evolving European standards.

C. Information relating to paragraph 28 (b)

Strengthening the legal and policy framework on equal representation

23. In response to the Committee’s recommendation and in line with General Recommendation No. 23 (1997) and Sustainable Development Goal 5.5, Albania has undertaken important legislative and policy reforms to enhance women’s participation in political and public life.

24. A major development is the adoption of Law No. 64/2025 “On Gender Equality”, which significantly strengthens the legal basis for equal and inclusive representation. In particular, Article 24 establishes a clear and binding framework for gender-balanced participation in decision-making systems, introducing a parity objective of 50% representation for each gender, while maintaining a minimum threshold of 30%. Representation below this threshold is explicitly defined as gender-based discrimination.

25. The law extends these requirements across a broad range of decision-making structures, including the Parliament and local elected bodies; central and local government institutions; the civil service and foreign service; electoral administration bodies; governing and supervisory boards, including in the private sector.

26. It further requires the progressive achievement of gender parity over a 10-year period (30%–50%), through the integration of gender equality and diversity criteria in recruitment, nomination and appointment procedures. This approach represents a shift from compliance with minimum quotas towards a systemic and transformative

³ Amendments of Criminal Code, Law 8/2026, “For some amendments and additions at law no. Për disa 7895, dated 27.1.1995 “Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania” as amended.

parity model, aligned with international standards and the Committee's General Recommendation No. 25.

Temporary special measures and electoral system safeguards

27. Temporary special measures continue to be implemented through the Electoral Code, which provides binding mechanisms to ensure gender-balanced candidate lists. Electoral subjects are required to ensure that at least one in every three candidates belongs to the underrepresented gender, both in closed lists and in lists subject to preferential voting.

28. The enforcement mechanism has been strengthened: non-compliance results in the refusal of registration of candidate lists by the electoral administration, ensuring effective application of gender quotas. Furthermore, safeguards are in place to maintain gender balance during the allocation of mandates, including in cases of replacement of elected representatives, where priority is given to candidates of the underrepresented gender.

Women's participation in political life: evidence and trends

29. Available data demonstrate measurable progress in women's representation, particularly in legislative bodies, while highlighting persistent gaps in executive and leadership positions.

30. In the 2025 parliamentary elections:

- Women represented 38.5% of all candidates (787 out of 2046);
- Women accounted for 44.27% of candidates in closed lists and 36.88% in preferential lists;
- Women won 35% of parliamentary seats (49 out of 140 MPs).

31. This represents a level above the legal minimum threshold of 30%, indicating effective enforcement of quota provisions, although still below parity.

32. In the 2023 local elections:

- Women represented nearly 50% of all candidates (11,843 women out of 23,907);
- Women constituted a significant share of elected municipal council members (681 women);
- However, women remain underrepresented in executive positions, with only 8 women elected as mayors, compared to 53 men.

Capacity-building and support for women candidates

33. Efforts to support women's participation have included capacity-building initiatives, awareness-raising and institutional support measures aimed at strengthening women's leadership skills, political participation and engagement in decision-making processes.

34. These efforts are complemented by broader gender equality policies, including gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting, which contribute to creating an enabling environment for women's participation in public life. While progress has been made, continued efforts are needed to strengthen access to campaign financing, mentoring and leadership development, particularly for women from underrepresented groups.

Addressing violence and hate speech in political and public life

35. Albania has strengthened its legal framework to address violence and hate speech against women in public and political life, including online forms. These measures, along with awareness and prevention efforts, aim to create a safer environment for women's participation.

D. Information relating to paragraph 36 (d)

Legal and policy framework

36. Albania ensures that access to abortion services is regulated within a rights-based and public health framework, while strictly prohibiting practices that violate gender equality, including sex-selective abortion.

37. The national legal framework guarantees:

- Access to safe and legal abortion services within the public health system;
- Protection of women's reproductive autonomy and informed consent;
- Prohibition of any form of coercion or pressure related to reproductive decisions;
- Alignment with international human rights standards, including CEDAW and WHO guidance.

38. Sex-selective abortion is not permitted under Albanian legislation, and any attempt to influence or coerce women into terminating a pregnancy based on the sex of the fetus constitutes a violation of both health and equality principles.

Access to reproductive health services

39. During the reporting period, the Republic of Albania has ensured nationwide access to integrated reproductive and maternal health services through primary healthcare centres and hospital services. Women have access to a continuum of care that includes antenatal, delivery and postnatal services, family planning and contraceptive counselling, as well as safe abortion services under medical supervision.

40. These services are complemented by programmes for the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, early detection of breast and cervical cancer and referral mechanisms for gender-based violence. This integrated approach has contributed to improving women's health outcomes and reducing risks associated with unsafe abortions and unwanted pregnancies.

Evidence and trends

41. National data show that abortion services in Albania operate within a regulated medical framework, with no evidence of systematic sex-selective practices. In 2024, 4,192 abortions were recorded versus 23,310 live births (a 5.6:1 ratio), with stable trends over 2015–2024. Most cases involve women aged 30–44 (72.7%), while adolescents account for only 2.3%. Around 86% are performed by married women and 55.1% involve unemployed or uninsured women, indicating that abortion is primarily used for reproductive health and family planning rather than discriminatory purposes.

Preventive measures and awareness

42. During the reporting period, the Republic of Albania has strengthened preventive measures aimed at addressing the underlying factors that may lead to reproductive pressure or discriminatory practices.

43. Comprehensive sexuality education has been further integrated into the national education system, providing approximately 140 hours of structured learning across different age groups. In parallel, teacher training programmes of approximately 110 hours have been implemented to ensure the delivery of accurate and age-appropriate information on reproductive health and gender equality.

44. Public awareness has also been enhanced through national health promotion initiatives. The “Check-Up” programme has continued to expand its coverage, reaching over 4 million health checks between 2015 and early 2026, thereby increasing awareness and utilisation of preventive health services.

Protection from coercion and support services

45. Albania ensures safeguards against coercion in reproductive decisions, guaranteeing informed consent, confidentiality, and access to counselling. Cases of pressure are addressed through gender-based violence mechanisms, with existing helplines offering support to affected women.

Budget for the health sector

46. Since 2015, Albanian patients have been benefiting from free nephrology and cardiac surgery health packages in public and private hospitals in 10 hospital services: Dialysis Package, Kidney Transplant, Acute Flare Therapy, Definitive Pacemaker, Coronary Angiography, Coronary Angioplasty, Coronary Bypass, Valve Interventions, Congenital Interventions, Radiotherapy Packages, Cataract Package, Cochlear Implant Package for children with hearing problems. These packages are 100% financed by the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund and are implemented based on protocols approved by the Ministry of Health, Social Affairs and Health. Financing and implementation of interventions is initially carried out in the public sector. For cases beyond the capacities of public health institutions, FSDKSH also finances these packages in non-public hospitals. Patients benefit from the service according to a waiting list with clear and transparent rules.

Annex

I. Data on Women's Representation in Decision-Making Processes

Table 1
Results of the list of winners in the 2021 and 2025 Assembly Elections

<i>Winning Assembly</i>	<i>Elections 25.04.2021</i>	<i>Ratio %</i>	<i>Elections 11.05.2025</i>	<i>Ratio %</i>
Women MPs	45	32	49	35
Male MPs	95	68	91	65
Total	140	100	140	100

Source: Central Election Commission.

Table 2
Number of candidates and winners for members of Municipal Councils and Mayors in the 2023 Local Elections

<i>Local Elections 2023</i>	<i>Member of the Municipal Council (no.)</i>	<i>Ratio %</i>
Women candidates on electoral lists	11 843	50
Male candidates on electoral lists	12 064	50
Total	23 907	100
Winner Member K. B women	681	42
Winner Member K. B men	932	58
Total	1 613	100

Source: Central Election Commission.

II. Data on abortions over the years

<i>Years</i>	<i>EAST</i>	<i>Abortions</i>	<i>Report the abortion</i>	<i>Report: Birth/Abortion</i>
2015	32 715	5 880	180	5.6 :1
2016	31 733	5 410	170	5.9 :1
2017	30 869	5 279	171	5.8 :1
2018	28 934	5 532	191	5.2 :1
2019	28 561	5 183	181	5.5 :1
2020	28 075	4 540	162	6.2 :1
2021	27 211	4 463	164	6.1 :1
2022	23 575	4 199	178	5.6 :1
2023	23 617	4 188	177	5.3 :1
2024	23 310	4 192	180	5.6 :1

Source: Ministry of Health and Socia Welfare.