



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 prior to the submission of the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Croatia*

General

1. Please provide information and statistics, disaggregated by sex, age, nationality, disability, geographical location, minority status and socioeconomic background, on the current situation of women and girls in the State Party to enable monitoring of the implementation of the Convention. In accordance with the State Party's obligations under articles 1 and 2 of the Convention, and in line with target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, please indicate how the State Party intends to improve the collection and analysis of data pertaining to the areas covered by the Convention, so as to support policymaking and programme development and to measure progress towards the implementation of the Convention and the promotion of substantive gender equality, including with regard to the specific areas covered in the present document.

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

2. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Committee's previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/HRV/CO/4-5), please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Strengthen legal education and capacity-building programmes for judges and prosecutors on the Convention, the Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Committee's views on individual communications and inquiries, to enable them to interpret national legislation in line with the Convention;

(b) Raise awareness among the general public about women's and girls' rights under the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto, including through the translation of information into Croatian and dissemination through all appropriate means, including media, such as radio, television, the Internet, oral traditions and other culturally appropriate methods, to ensure that it reaches all segments of society.

* Adopted by the Committee at its ninety-second session (2–20 February 2026).



Legislative framework

3. With reference to paragraph 9 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on measures taken, including legislation, to criminalize sexist and misogynist hate speech online and offline and to put in place adequate safeguards to prevent sociocultural and religious attitudes from constituting hindrances to the full realization of women's and girls' rights.

National machinery for the advancement of women

4. With reference to paragraph 13 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on steps taken to:

(a) Increase the resources allocated to the Office for Gender Equality and the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, including at the county and city committee levels;

(b) Ensure that all national strategies, policies and action plans on gender equality and women's and girls' rights, including the national plan for gender equality for the period ending 2027, are submitted to and adopted by Parliament through formal legislative procedures, thereby ensuring legal authority, sustained political commitment and effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms;

(c) Formally recognize women's civil society organizations, particularly feminist organizations, including those providing specialized support services to women and girls, as equal partners in policy development, monitoring and implementation of gender equality measures.

Temporary special measures

5. Please provide information on temporary special measures adopted in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, including statutory quotas aimed at achieving substantive equality between women and men in all areas covered by the Convention in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged, such as political and public life, employment and education, and the empowerment of rural women. Please clarify what accountability mechanisms and sanctions are applied in cases of non-compliance with such measures and provide information on awareness-raising campaigns targeting government officials, policymakers, private entities, employers, political parties and the general public on the non-discriminatory nature, value and importance of temporary special measures.

Access to justice

6. Please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Ensure that law enforcement officials, prosecutors, judges and court personnel receive mandatory gender-sensitive training to enable them to adequately address cases of gender-based violence;

(b) Provide mandatory gender-sensitive training to social workers, healthcare providers and court-appointed expert witnesses on victim-centred and trauma-informed approaches to cases of gender-based violence, developed in collaboration with women's civil society organizations, and ensure that court-appointed expert witnesses' assessments comply with the State Party's obligations under the Convention and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention);

(c) Ensure that all cases of domestic violence are prosecuted as criminal offences and that protective measures are applied consistently and not suspended during appeals;

(d) Abolish the practice of dual arrests in cases of domestic violence and ensure that victims who report violence are not treated as co-perpetrators when they have acted in legitimate self-defence;

(e) Ensure that domestic violence and coercive control are systematically considered in custody and visitation proceedings, that children exposed to violence are recognized as victims, that concepts such as “parental alienation” are eliminated and that mandatory mediation is prohibited in cases involving domestic violence;

(f) Address systematic barriers faced by disadvantaged groups of women, including rural women, Roma women, refugee, asylum-seeking, displaced and migrant women, sex workers, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and women with disabilities, when filing complaints of sexual violence, and establish accessible complaint mechanisms, including free legal aid, interpretation services and procedural accommodations.

7. With reference to paragraph 41 of the Committee’s previous concluding observations, please provide information on measures taken to ensure access to justice for victims of conflict-related sexual violence, including with respect to:

(a) The amendment of the law on the rights of victims of sexual violence perpetrated during the 1991–1995 armed conflict, with a view to:

(i) Expanding the definition of conflict-related sexual violence to include all forms of sexual violence, in line with the Rome Statute and jurisprudence of the International Criminal Court;

(ii) Recognizing that coercive circumstances inherent to armed conflict can vitiate consent, and removing the requirement to prove physical force or explicit lack of consent when such coercive circumstances are established;

(iii) Extending rights to all victims regardless of registered residence status;

(iv) Recognizing all children born of conflict-related rape to ensure their adequate protection and rights;

(b) Recognition of all victims of sexual violence perpetrated during the armed conflict, regardless of whether the perpetrators were Croatian forces or whether assaults occurred in non-military zones, and the strengthening of investigations and prosecutions;

(c) The provision of psychosocial support and legal assistance to victims throughout the reparation process, public awareness-raising campaigns and measures to combat stigma.

Gender stereotypes and harmful practices

8. Please provide information on steps taken to:

(a) Develop and implement a comprehensive policy with proactive and sustained measures to overcome stereotypical attitudes towards the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, with particular attention to addressing negative stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes against Roma and ethnic minority women;

(b) Strengthen regulatory, complaint and sanctions mechanisms to address gender-discriminatory media content and content objectifying women;

(c) Eliminate child and forced marriage in Roma communities, including through such measures as awareness-raising campaigns, prevention programmes and support services for at-risk girls and women subjected to such practices;

(d) Prohibit non-medically necessary sex assignment treatment and surgical intervention on the sex characteristics of intersex children, and promote awareness-raising among medical professionals and parents regarding the rights of intersex children and the harmful effects of unnecessary medical interventions;

(e) Prohibit conversion therapy and other forced, involuntary or otherwise coercive treatment aimed at changing sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gender-based violence against women

9. The Committee takes note of the State Party's ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2018. Please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Fully harmonize the legislative and policy framework pertaining to gender-based violence with the Istanbul Convention, including by adopting a comprehensive definition of gender-based violence against women and girls that recognizes all forms of violence, including economic violence, coercive control and technology-facilitated gender-based violence;

(b) Amend the law on protection against domestic violence to include all intimate partner relationships, including those involving persons who do not share a joint residence, who have been in a relationship for less than three years or who do not have a child together;

(c) Address femicides and intimate partner violence, including through disaggregated data on killings of women and girls by partners and ex-partners, risk assessment protocols, prevention programmes and enhanced protection measures for women at high risk of lethal violence;

(d) Strengthen the criminal justice response to rape and ensure that all sexual violence offences, including marital rape and technology-facilitated gender-based violence and online exploitation, are investigated and prosecuted with appropriate severity;

(e) Ensure effective access to and enforcement of protection orders, including the removal of the perpetrator from the shared home, the enforcement of minimum distance requirements, appropriate sanctions, including imprisonment for violations, and monitoring mechanisms, such as electronic surveillance;

(f) Provide adequate resources to shelters and support services, particularly in the six administrative regions that currently lack such facilities; ensure that funding is not allocated to organizations that impose religious requirements or promote views contrary to women's human rights; maintain confidentiality and security of shelter locations; allow accommodation for periods exceeding six months; and strengthen the specialized national hotline for women survivors of violence;

(g) Formally recognize women's civil society organizations as equal partners in policy development, monitoring and implementation of responses to violence against women.

10. Please provide statistical data, disaggregated by year, victim age, disability status, minority status, type of violence and relationship between victim and perpetrator, on complaints, investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed in cases of domestic violence, rape and other forms of gender-based violence

against women; protection orders issued and violations thereof; perpetrators mandated to undergo psychosocial treatment and completion rates; women subjected to dual arrests; and femicides.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

11. With reference to paragraph 21 of the Committee's previous concluding observations and its general recommendation No. 38 (2020) on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Ensure that perpetrators of trafficking receive sentences commensurate with the gravity of the offence and that prosecutors do not lower trafficking charges to lesser offences;

(b) Establish a legislative framework for the national committee for combating trafficking in human beings and adopt national action plans that incorporate gender-specific approaches addressing the distinct vulnerabilities and needs of women and girls, who constitute the majority of trafficking victims, particularly in relation to technology-facilitated trafficking and trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation, and strengthen victim identification through enhanced screening and victim-centred training developed in collaboration with women's civil society organizations;

(c) Increase the resources allocated to shelters for victims of trafficking, in particular in rural areas, ensure confidentiality and protection of victims' identities, facilitate access to compensation in criminal proceedings and establish systems for the collection of disaggregated data;

(d) Address the root causes of trafficking in women and girls, including discrimination, poverty, lack of sustainable alternative income-generating opportunities and social marginalization.

12. Please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Decriminalize women engaged in sex work and ensure that they are not prosecuted or penalized;

(b) Ensure that individuals who have purchased sex from victims of trafficking, including technology-facilitated trafficking, are prosecuted and adequately punished, and ensure that women and girls who are victims of trafficking subjected to forced prostitution, including forced Internet prostitution, are referred to support measures instead of being prosecuted;

(c) Strengthen support measures for women, including non-nationals, who wish to leave prostitution.

Participation in political and public life

13. With reference to paragraph 23 of the Committee's previous concluding observations and its general recommendation No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Promote the full and equal participation of women, particularly women facing intersecting forms of discrimination, in political and public life and in the civil service, especially at the senior and decision-making levels, address the impact of the preferential voting system on the effectiveness of gender quotas for women candidates on electoral lists, and adopt temporary special measures, in accordance

with article 4 (1) of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25, to ensure gender parity in elected positions;

(b) Ensure the effective implementation of the 2024 amendments to the Companies Act implementing European Union directive No. 2022/2381 on improving the gender balance among directors of listed companies and related measures;

(c) Ensure that female diplomats are able to fully exercise their right to maternity leave, including while posted overseas.

Women and peace and security

14. With reference to paragraph 25 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please clarify the current status of the national action plan on the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, following the expiration of the previous plan covering the period 2019–2023, and provide information on measures taken to ensure accountability and adequate resources for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), the full participation of women in security and reconstruction processes and meaningful consultations with women's civil society organizations active in peace initiatives and post-conflict reconstruction during the development, implementation and monitoring of any national action plan on women and peace and security.

Education

15. With reference to paragraph 27 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Remove gender stereotypes from school curricula and education materials and ensure mandatory, comprehensive, age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education, including on rights, consent, bodily autonomy, contraceptives and prevention of sexually transmitted infections and gender-based violence;

(b) Address persistent educational segregation and high dropout rates affecting Roma women and girls and intensify efforts to diversify educational and vocational choices towards non-traditional fields particularly in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, information and communications technology and artificial intelligence, including through temporary special measures;

(c) Increase the representation of women in academic institutions, especially in leadership positions, including through temporary special measures.

Employment

16. With reference to paragraph 29 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Address vertical and horizontal occupational segregation, the overrepresentation of women in informal and part-time work and the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women, and introduce compulsory paternity leave to encourage equitable sharing of childcare responsibilities;

(b) Implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and close the gender wage gap, including through mandatory pay audits, labour inspections, pay transparency measures and sanctions for non-compliance;

(c) Ensure effective mechanisms for complaints of employment discrimination on the ground of pregnancy or maternity and enforce timely and commensurate sanctions;

(d) Increase access to formal and sustainable employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

Health

17. With reference to paragraph 31 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on measures taken to guarantee dignified access to health services for all women and girls, particularly adolescent girls, Roma women, rural and economically disadvantaged women, women with disabilities and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including measures taken to:

(a) Address barriers preventing women and girls from gaining access to sexual and reproductive health services, including conscientious objection by healthcare personnel, institutional refusal of care, stigmatization and coercive practices by healthcare providers, harassment by third parties and lack of universal health insurance coverage for modern contraceptives, abortion and post-abortion services, and establish mechanisms to ensure referrals to alternative providers and enforcement;

(b) Address noncommunicable diseases by strengthening prevention, early detection and treatment programmes for cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, breast and cervical cancers and mental health conditions and by ensuring equitable access to screening services and specialized care, particularly for women facing intersecting forms of discrimination;

(c) Ensure that all women and girls can make autonomous decisions about their sexual and reproductive health with access to evidence-based information, that free, prior and informed consent is obtained for all medical interventions and that women, particularly women with disabilities and Roma women, are protected from forced sterilization;

(d) Adopt legislation on sexual and reproductive health and rights to replace Law No. 1252-1978 of 21 April 1978 concerning the medical measures for materialization of the right to freely decide on the birth of children, in compliance with the decision issued by the Constitutional Court in 2017.

Economic empowerment of women

18. With reference to paragraph 33 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on:

(a) Studies undertaken on the socioeconomic situation of women living in poverty, particularly older women and those without previous employment, and how the findings of such studies have informed policy formulation;

(b) Measures to ensure that social protection and employment legislation address the lower average years of contribution of women, more frequent non-contributory periods and lower average salaries among women, as well as the impact of the lower retirement age for women on pension entitlements.

Rural women

19. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that rural women and girls have adequate access to land and related resources, social and health services, training and economic opportunities, equal opportunities to participate in political and public life and decision-making processes, including in local agricultural chambers, and childcare facilities.

Women facing intersecting forms of discrimination*Roma women*

20. With reference to paragraph 37 of the Committee's previous concluding observations, please provide information on resources allocated to the implementation and evaluation of the national strategy on Roma inclusion, the monitoring mechanisms and clear time-bound targets established, particularly on access to essential services, education and elimination of child marriage, and temporary special measures to accelerate substantive equality for Roma women in political and public life.

Refugee, asylum-seeking, displaced and migrant women and girls

21. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure gender-sensitive and trauma-informed asylum procedures, prevent pushback and ensure dignified treatment at borders, investigate violence by border police against migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls and ensure accountability, and ensure unrestricted access by non-governmental organizations to reception centres. Please also provide statistical data, disaggregated by age, disability status, minority status, nationality and geographical location, on: (a) refugee, asylum-seeking, displaced and migrant women and girls who reported gender-based violence; (b) those identified as victims of trafficking; and (c) the availability and utilization of specialized support services by those groups.

Lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and girls

22. Please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Combat discrimination, online and offline hate speech and stigmatization against lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, including by preventing the provision of public funding to organizations that spread hate speech, addressing "re-traditionalization" narratives that undermine the rights of those women, and conducting public awareness campaigns to counter stigma and misinformation;

(b) Provide training to judiciary and law enforcement personnel on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, prosecute perpetrators of hate crimes and ensure that lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women have access to justice, services for victims of gender-based violence, employment, healthcare and other public services.

Women with disabilities

23. Please provide information on measures taken to:

(a) Ensure that women with disabilities have access to the open labour market, can make independent decisions about their living arrangements and have access to services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence;

(b) Include women and girls with disabilities in all gender equality policies and programmes, including through temporary special measures;

(c) Implement a nationwide de-institutionalization strategy with clear targets, deadlines and funding, and ensure the provision of needs-oriented personal assistance;

(d) Ensure accessibility of information, communications, public facilities, transportation and services for women and girls with disabilities;

(e) Ensure access to healthcare, including supported decision-making for medical interventions, protect sexual and reproductive health rights, prevent coercive and involuntary procedures, including forced sterilization and institutionalization, and support the right of women with disabilities to family life, including through assisted parenthood services.

Marriage and family relations

24. With reference to paragraph 43 of the Committee's previous concluding observations and its general recommendation No. 29 (2013) on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution, please provide information on:

(a) Legislative amendments aimed at ensuring equal rights for women and men in marriage and upon its dissolution, including with regard to inheritance and property rights, and at incorporating measures to ensure that intangible assets, such as pension funds, severance payments and insurance, are included in marital property and divided equitably;

(b) Measures to ensure that women's civil society organizations have meaningful and equal access to policy forums on family law legislation and policies affecting equality in divorce and custody proceedings, and measures to ensure transparency in decision-making processes.

Additional information

25. Please provide any additional information deemed relevant with regard to legislative, policy, administrative and other measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention and the Committee's concluding observations since the consideration of the previous combined periodic report in July 2015. Such measures may include recent laws, developments, plans, programmes and ratifications of human rights instruments, as well as any other information that the State Party considers relevant. Please also provide information on measures taken to integrate a gender perspective into all efforts aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Please note that, further to the issues raised in the present document, the State Party will be expected, during the dialogue, to respond to additional questions relating to areas covered by the Convention.