



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Implementation of articles 21 and 22 of the Convention

Reports by specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization***,***

Summary

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system have been invited to submit to the Committee, at its ninety-second session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

* CEDAW/C/92/1.

** The present report is being issued without formal editing.

*** The present document was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.



I. Introduction

1. UNESCO's work on education and gender equality is guided by the UNESCO strategy for gender equality in and through education, which emphasizes both system-wide transformation to benefit to all learners and targeted interventions to empower girls and women. It reflects UNESCO's vision to ensure that all learners – girls and boys, women and men – can fully realize their rights and potential through education.
2. Promoting the right to education for girls and women remains a top priority for UNESCO. The Organization advocates for gender equality in participation in, within and through education. To achieve this, UNESCO provides technical support to its Member States to align their constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks with international norms and commitments. In addition, UNESCO supports the development and implementation of gender-transformative strategies that address key barriers hindering girls' and women's access to quality education opportunities.
3. UNESCO plays a key role within the United Nations system in supporting the implementation of several provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Notably, this includes Article 10, which calls on States parties to "take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education".
4. The Organization also monitors the status of national constitutions, legislation and regulations related to girls' and women's education rights across the world through "HerAtlas" – an interactive online tool that constituted a valuable resource in compiling this report. UNESCO's initiative "Her Education, Our Future", to which HerAtlas contributes, was designed to accelerate action on girls' and women's education by leveraging political and financial commitments, and leadership.
5. From a broader perspective, the "Observatory on the right to education" monitoring tool has been also useful for this report. By highlighting inequalities across countries and publishing data on the implementation of the right to education at the national level, the Observatory has provided useful valuable documentation and insights.
6. To monitor and advocate for the universal right to education, UNESCO regularly monitors the implementation of the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education through periodic consultations, requesting Member States to submit national reports on the measures taken to implement the Convention and Recommendation. An analytical report synthesizing the findings of the national reports is available online. The 11th Consultation resulted in the submission of 94 reports and was concluded in December 2025.

II. Measures taken by countries under review

Inputs for the 92nd session

Viet Nam

7. Viet Nam has not ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education; it should be recommended to do.
8. The Constitution of Viet Nam does not explicitly enshrine the right to education; however, it does prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. The legislation provides that learning is a right but for citizens only, therefore this does not apply to all within the territory. Citizens have equal educational opportunities, regardless of gender.

9. The Education Law of 2019, as amended in 2025, explicitly provides for 9 years of compulsory and 12 years of tuition-free primary and secondary education. While the same act provides tuition-free pre-primary education, it does not guarantee compulsory education at this level.

10. According to the Law on Marriage and Family of 2014, the minimum legal age of marriage is 18 years for girls and 20 years for boys, with no exceptions.

11. While the Regulations on Rewards and Discipline for Students of 2025 prohibits the use of violent measures or measures negatively affecting the physical and mental health of students, corporal punishment in education is not expressly prohibited. The Education Law of 2019 prohibits physical violence only and no provision has been identified that explicitly prohibits psychological and sexual violence.

12. According to the Labour Code of 2019, the legal working age is 15, which is aligned with the end of compulsory education.

13. According to the latest data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), in 2024 the gross enrolment rate in primary education stood at 106.33% globally (104.14% for girls and 108.42% for boys), while in 2022, the gross enrolment rate in secondary education was 93.41% globally (90.54% for girls and 96.21% for boys).

14. According to UIS' latest data, in 2022 the expenditure on education of Viet Nam represented 2.89% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 15.45% of total government expenditure.

15. Viet Nam did not submit a national report on the measures taken to implement the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025). It should be recommended that the country participate more systematically in the monitoring consultations conducted by UNESCO.

Iraq

16. Iraq ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education on 28 June 1977.

17. The Constitution of Iraq guarantees the right to education and contains a non-discrimination provision with gender as a prohibited ground. The Compulsory Education Law states that education is a human right. Education is guaranteed without discrimination, but the Law does not explicitly mention the ground of sex or gender.

18. The legislation guarantees compulsory primary education for a duration of 6 years, starting at the age of 6. Middle school-level, lasting 3 years, shall progressively become compulsory. According to the legal framework, primary and secondary education is free for a duration of at least 12 years. Law N°22 of 2011 in federal culture, education and higher education mandates provides for free pre-primary education, but this is not compulsory.

19. According to the Personal Status Law of 1959, the minimum age for marriage is 18 years, but individuals may marry at 15 years of age with judicial consent.

20. Primary School regulation N°30 of 1978 and Secondary School regulation N°2 of 1977 prohibit corporal punishment. The Constitution of Iraq prohibits “all forms of violence and abuse in the ... school”, although there is no explicit mention of gender-based violence. In 2024, the Ministry of Education issued directives to all its directorates that prohibit the use of physical and psychological punishment in schools under any circumstances.

21. Labour Law N°37 of 2015 sets the legal age of employment at 15 years. Therefore, the end of compulsory education (12) is not aligned with the age of work.

22. There is no recent UIS data on gross enrolment rates in primary and secondary education.
23. There is no recent UIS data on Iraq's expenditure on education.
24. Iraq did not submit a national report on the measures taken to implement the Convention against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025). It should be recommended that the country participate more systematically in the monitoring consultations conducted by UNESCO.

Lithuania

25. Lithuania has not ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education; it should be recommended to do so.
26. The Constitution of Lithuania of 1992, as amended in 2019, does not explicitly enshrine education as a right. It contains a provision on equality before the law. The Law on Education of 1991, as amended in 2017, guarantees the right to study and acquire education for citizens and legal residents, as well as equal opportunities in general and non-discrimination, without explicitly mentioning the grounds of sex or gender.
27. The legal framework of Lithuania guarantees 10 years of compulsory education, starting at age 7 (or 6 under conditions), with 4 years of primary education and 6 years of lower-secondary education. It also guarantees 12 years of free primary and secondary education. The Law on Education of 1991, as amended in 2017, provides one year of compulsory and free pre-primary education, starting at the age of 6 years.
28. The Civil Code of Lithuania, as of 2019, sets the minimal age of marriage at 18 years old. However, judicial exceptions allow minors between 16 and 18 years old to get married, and it can even be lowered below 16 years old in case of pregnancy.
29. The legal framework of Lithuania explicitly guarantees the right to education for pregnant and parenting girls. The Law on Education prohibits all forms of violence as defined in the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence, including physical, mental and sexual violence. Furthermore, the Law on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women requires educational establishments to take action to prevent sexual harassment within their infrastructure.
30. According to the Labour Code as of 2016, the minimum legal age for employment is 16 years, which is aligned with the end of compulsory education.
31. According to UIS' latest data, in 2023 the gross enrolment rate in primary education stood at 102.68% globally (102.93% for girls and 102.44% for boys), while the gross enrolment rate in secondary education was 105.43% globally (104.36% for girls and 106.46% for boys).
32. According to UIS' latest data, in 2022 expenditure on education of Lithuania represented 4.25% of GDP and 11.80% of total government expenditure.
33. Lithuania submitted a national report on the measures taken to implement the Convention against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025).
34. During the 11th Consultation on 1960 Recommendation, Lithuania reported that it had developed methodological guidance to help education sector staff promote gender equality and non-discrimination in teaching and training. It also provides practical 'dos and don'ts' as well as a self-reflection framework to assess classroom gender dynamics and adjust practice to ensure equal inclusion and encouragement of all students.

Netherlands (Kingdom of the)

35. The Netherlands ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education on 25 March 1966.

36. The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands of 1983, as last amended in 2023, contains an equality principle and a non-discrimination principle based on sex. However, the country's legal framework does not explicitly enshrine the right to education.

37. The education legislation of the Netherlands establishes compulsory education for a period of 12 years, ending at the age of 16, covering primary and secondary education. If the compulsory education period is over and the young person does not have a diploma, there is a qualification obligation that lasts until the young person turns 18 or obtains a basic qualification. The Primary Education Act and Secondary Education Act guarantee that admission shall not be dependent on a financial contribution, however this does not fully guarantee free education or ensure that all 12 years are cost-free.

38. The Civil Code of the Netherlands, as last amended in 2025, provides that the minimum age of marriage is 18 years, without exception.

39. The General Equal Treatment Act of 1994, as amended in 2019, protects the right to education of pregnant and parenting girls. The legislation of the Netherlands provides protection from mental and physical violence by educators in educational institutions but does not refer explicitly to "corporal punishment". Moreover, the legislation prohibits sexual harassment in education.

40. The Civil Code of the Netherlands, as last amended in 2025, sets the minimum age of employment at 16 years, which corresponds to the end of compulsory education.

41. According to UIS' latest data, in 2023 the gross enrolment rate in primary education was 104.16% globally (103.92% for girls and 104.38% for boys), while the gross enrolment rate in secondary education was 137.51% (140.84% for girls and 134.35% for boys).

42. According to UIS' latest data, in 2022 expenditure on education by the Netherlands represented 5.18% of GDP and 11.98% of total government expenditure.

43. The Netherlands submitted a national report on the measures taken to implement the Convention against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025).

44. During the 11th Consultation on the 1960 Convention and Recommendation, the Netherlands stated that gender gaps in educational pathways are driven by pervasive conscious and unconscious gender stereotypes, which can restrict students' choices and lead to unequal opportunities. To address this, the Netherlands reported on the STO scheme and the *Techkwadraat* programme, both of which include explicit requirements to combat gender bias, as well as Ministry of Education–funded initiatives such as "Becoming Who You Are" aimed at challenging gender stereotypes in schools.

Argentina

45. Argentina ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education on 30 October 1963.

46. The Constitution of Argentina of 1994 does not fully enshrine the right to education. It contains a provision on equality but does not mention the grounds of sex

or gender. The National Education Law of Argentina guarantees the right to education and prohibits gender discrimination in education.

47. The legal framework of Argentina provides for 12 years of free and compulsory primary and secondary education, starting at the age of 6 years. It also guarantees 2 years of free and compulsory pre-primary education.

48. The Civil and Commercial Code of Argentina sets the legal age of marriage at 18 years and allows for exceptions to marry below the age of 16 with judicial consent, or between 16 and 18 with the permission of a legal representative.

49. The Comprehensive Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents Act both prohibits restrictions on the education of pregnant and parenting children, and imposes a duty to ensure the continuity and completion of their studies. While the Civil and Commercial Code of Argentina prohibits corporal punishment, this provision does not apply explicitly to educational settings. Similarly, although the Integral Protection of Women Act protects against institutional violence, educational institutions are not explicitly specified. Therefore, there is no explicit protection against corporal punishment and gender-based violence in educational institutions in Argentina.

50. According to the Law Prohibiting Child Labour and Protecting Adolescent Labour, the minimum age for employment is 16 years, which is not aligned with the end of compulsory education (18).

51. According to UIS' latest data, in 2023 the gross enrolment rate in primary education stood at 102.54% globally (103.18% for girls and 101.92% for boys), while the gross enrolment rate in secondary education was 105.57% globally (107.98% for girls and 103.30% for boys).

52. According to UIS' latest data, in 2023 expenditure on education by Argentina represented 5.90% of GDP and 13.97% of total government expenditure.

53. Argentina did not submit a national report on the measures taken to implement the Convention against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025). It should be recommended that the country participate more systematically in the monitoring consultations conducted by UNESCO.

Czech Republic

54. Czech Republic ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education on 26 March 1993.

55. The legal framework of the Czech Republic guarantees the right to education without discrimination based on sex or gender.

56. The Education Act of 2004 provides for 9 years of compulsory primary and secondary education, starting at the age of 6 years. Moreover, the legal framework provides for 12 years of free primary and secondary education. The Education Act guarantees one year of compulsory pre-primary education, but no legal provision regarding its gratuity has been identified.

57. According to the Civil Code, the legal age of marriage is 18 years of age, which can be lowered to 16 years with judicial consent.

58. The Education Act explicitly protects the right to education of pregnant and parenting pupils. In 2025, the Civil Code was amended to recognize corporal punishment as an infringement on a child's human dignity and to exclude it from permissible educational means. Although the Education Act obliges head teachers to issue school rules of order and internal rules of order that provide protection against

violence, these provisions are insufficient to be considered proper protection from all forms of violence.

59. According to the Civil Code, the minimum age of employment is 15 years, aligned with the end of compulsory education. The Civil Code also states that individuals cannot start work before they have completed their compulsory school attendance.

60. According to UIS' latest data, in 2023 the gross enrolment rate in primary education stood at 99.70% globally (99.53% for girls and 99.86% for boys), while the gross enrolment rate in secondary education was 97.62% globally (98.02% for girls and 97.23% for boys).

61. According to UIS' latest data, in 2022 expenditure on education by the Czech Republic represented 4.30% of GDP and 10.01% of total government expenditure.

62. Czech Republic submitted a national report on the measures taken to implement the Convention against Discrimination in Education for the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025).

El Salvador

63. El Salvador has not ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and should be recommended to ratify it.

64. The Constitution of El Salvador enshrines the right to education and contains a general provision on equality before the law. There is a provision on non-restriction on the grounds of sex, but it applies to civil rights only. While the Constitution states that educational establishments cannot discriminate students, it does not mention the ground of sex or gender. However, the legislation guarantees the right to education and prohibits gender discrimination in education.

65. The General Law of Education of 1996 provides for 9 years of compulsory education and 12 years of free primary and secondary education, starting at the age of 7. It also guarantees free and compulsory pre-primary education for 3 years, from 4 to 6 years old.

66. According to the Family Law Code of 1993, the legal age of marriage is 18 years old; however, minors under the age of 18 may marry if, being pubescent, they already have a child in common, or if the woman is pregnant.

67. El Salvador's legal framework explicitly protects the right to education of pregnant and parenting girls. The General Law of Education of 1996 protects from corporal punishment and all other forms of violence, including psychological, physical and sexual violence, in educational institutions, while the Law on Equality, Equity and the Eradication of Discrimination against Women of 2011 requires the prevention of violence against women in educational activities.

68. According to the national policy Growing Together for the comprehensive protection of early childhood, childhood and adolescence of 2022, the minimum age of work is 14, with exceptions in certain circumstances if it does not impair the enjoyment of the right to education. Therefore, the minimum age of employment is not aligned with the end of compulsory education (16).

69. According to UIS' latest data, in 2024 the gross enrolment rate in primary education was 89.88% (90.18% for girls and 89.60% for boys), while the gross enrolment rate in secondary education was 62.14% (61.13% for girls and 63.09% for boys).

70. According to UIS' latest data, in 2023 expenditure on education by El Salvador represented 3.17% of GDP and, in 2025, 15.89% of total government expenditure.

71. El Salvador submitted a national report on the measures taken to implement the Convention against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025).

72. During the 11th Consultation on the implementation of the 1960 Recommendation, El Salvador reported on a protocol aimed at reducing school dropout rates among girls and adolescents due to pregnancy and motherhood, to ensure that they remain in school and can successfully complete their studies. El Salvador also mentioned a protocol for action to address sexual violence in educational communities. Moreover, the Directorate of Education for Cycle III has developed several initiatives aimed at promoting the teaching of science, technology, engineering and mathematics for girls and young woman using project-based learning methodology.

Lesotho

73. Lesotho has not ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and should be recommended to ratify it.

74. The Constitution of Lesotho does not enshrine the right to education. However, it contains a provision on non-discrimination and an equality principle without distinction based on sex. No legal provision has been identified that enshrines the right to education in Lesotho's legal framework. However, there is an obligation for those that work in the education sector to ensure that learners are free from discrimination, without explicitly including the grounds of sex or gender.

75. The Education Act N°3 of 2010 provides for 7 years of compulsory primary education, starting at the age of 6 years. The Education Act N°3 of 2010 is also designed to implement free education at primary level; however, this is not guaranteed. No legal provision has been identified which guarantees either free or compulsory pre-primary education in Lesotho's legal framework.

76. According to the Mariage Act N°10 of 1974, the minimum age of marriage is 18 years for a boy and 16 years for a girl. However, children below this age can contract a valid marriage with the written permission of the Minister.

77. The Children's Protection and Welfare Act of 2011 protects the right to education of pregnant and parenting girls. Although the Education Act N°3 of 2010 protects against cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment that could cover some forms of violence, it does not explicitly prohibit corporal punishment and, furthermore, the Children's Protection and Welfare Act allows for 'chastisement'.

78. According to the New Labour Code Order of 2024, the minimum age of employment is 15 years of age, provided that employment does not interfere with the child's schooling. Therefore, the end of compulsory education (13 years old) is not aligned with the minimum age of employment.

79. According to UIS' latest data, in 2024 the gross enrolment rate in primary education stood at 80.18% globally (78.60% for girls and 81.75% for boys). There is no recent UIS data on gross enrolment rate in secondary education.

80. According to UIS' latest data, in 2024 expenditure on education by Lesotho represented 6.62% of GDP and 10.37% of total government expenditure.

81. Lesotho did not submit a national report on the measures taken to implement the Recommendation against Discrimination in Education to the most recent 11th Consultation (2024–2025). It should be recommended that the country participate more systematically in the monitoring consultations conducted by UNESCO.