



# 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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**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under  
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms  
of Discrimination against Women**

## Replies of France to the list of issues and questions in relation to its ninth periodic report\*

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



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## I. Visibility of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 1

#### (a) Women's knowledge of their rights and accessibility of the Convention

1. The text of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has been posted on the website established by the Government for the reporting of cases of violence against women<sup>1</sup> and on the websites of the Ministry for Gender Equality,<sup>2</sup> the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs<sup>3</sup> and the High Council for Gender Equality,<sup>4</sup> in order to raise the profile of the instrument and ensure that it is shared as widely as possible.

2. In addition, in 2017 the Government produced a booklet entitled “Discriminations, c'est non” (No to discrimination) aimed at raising public awareness of discrimination, particularly discrimination against women. The aim of this tool is to help women, especially those in vulnerable situations, to recognize discrimination against them, particularly in the labour market, and to identify the people to contact and the steps to take when it occurs. In order to reach people from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, this booklet is made available to users at care centres and local public facilities, such as town halls and various social venues.

3. As part of the personalized republican integration programme for newly arrived people from third countries (outside the European Union) who intend to settle in France and who have obtained their first residence permit, compulsory civic training includes a module dedicated to gender equality and combating violence, including female genital mutilation.

#### (b) Capacity-building programmes on the Convention for public servants

4. The Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto provide the foundation for the tools put in place to implement the principle of equality in all sectors, both public and private.

5. In 2017, the Government published an interministerial anti-discrimination guide designed to raise awareness of the measures taken by all ministries to combat discrimination, particularly discrimination against women. This practical guide is intended primarily for government services and public servants. It provides specific tools to help professionals combat and learn to combat all types of discrimination, particularly discrimination against women.

6. For many years, ministries have been developing training courses for their staff on gender equality and the protection of women against sexual and gender-based violence. In October 2021, the Ministry for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service conducted a survey among all State schools on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and found that 67 per cent of schools train their pupils to prevent such violence, but only 19 per cent of schools provide training for their teaching staff on the matter.

7. Since 2019, there have been awareness-raising activities for national police force cadets in ethics and respecting people through training in how to interact with

<sup>1</sup> <https://arretonslesviolences.gouv.fr/l-etat-vous-protege/politique-de-lutte-contre-les-violences-faites-au-femmes>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.egalite-femmes-hommes.gouv.fr/diplomatie-feministe>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/politique-etrangere-de-la-france/droits-de-l-homme/droits-des-femmes/article/la-france-engagee-a-l-international-dans-la-lutte-contre-les-violences-faites>.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/stereotypes-et-roles-sociaux/reperes-juridiques/cadres-de-la-politique-publique/?debut\\_art\\_juri=5](https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/stereotypes-et-roles-sociaux/reperes-juridiques/cadres-de-la-politique-publique/?debut_art_juri=5).

vulnerable groups, including victims or witnesses of sexual violence, LGBTQIA+ persons or persons engaged in prostitution. Police officers receive ongoing training on sexual and gender-based violence (39 sessions for 283 trainees in 2022), cross-disciplinary training on domestic violence (26 sessions for 216 trainees in 2022) and online training on receiving and caring for victims of sexual and gender-based violence (1,414 officers certified).

8. These training courses are proving to be effective. In an audit carried out in 2021 by the Inspectorate General of the National Police and the Inspectorate General of the National Gendarmerie, the overall satisfaction rate among victims of domestic violence in terms of how they were received was 79 per cent.

9. In November 2022, the Ministry for Public Sector Transformation and the Civil Service and the Ministry for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities published a guide to statutory and disciplinary tools for combating sexual and gender-based violence in the civil service. It provides information and support to employers, human resources departments and persons involved in prevention, as well as to employees who are victims or witnesses of such offences.

10. This measure is also provided for in the interministerial gender equality plan “Plan known as Toutes et Tous Égaux” to facilitate the prevention and detection of sexual and gender-based violence within the three levels of the civil service. Training for stakeholders may include the use of innovative tools such as virtual reality.

**(c) Judicial decisions based on the provisions of the Convention**

11. In a decision dated 4 November 2020, the French Court of Cassation rejected appeal No. D 19-17.559, ruling that the Paris Court of Appeal had violated article 9.2 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which provides that women shall be granted equal rights with men with regard to the nationality of their children.

## **II. Women’s rights and gender equality in relation to the pandemic and recovery efforts**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 2**

#### **Assurances in measures in all coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis response and recovery efforts**

**(a) Consideration of violence against women and girls**

12. In March 2020, an emergency plan to protect victims of domestic violence was implemented. The platform for reporting sexual and gender-based violence has been strengthened with additional staff. The short message service alert number for the hearing impaired, 114, has been made accessible for reporting domestic violence. As well as maintaining the 3919 helpline, the Government has strengthened “silent” reporting and alert methods such as chats and short message service and email exchanges. Funding for the 3919 helpline has increased substantially, making it possible to establish a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week hotline to cover the needs of the entire country, including the overseas departments and territories.

13. Refuge places, such as reception areas in pharmacies for victims of violence, and information points in shopping centres, have been set up. Overnight stays in hotels and housing for women victims of violence and their children have been organized, and free transportation has also been made available by the company Uber for women who do not have their own means of transport.

14. The Government has also supported specific steps aimed at the perpetrators of domestic violence to prevent them from committing or repeating acts of violence. The “Ne frappez pas” (“No hitting”) national number and helpline were set up in April 2020, along with a housing platform, to facilitate evictions of violent partners. The scheme for the deployment of care centres for perpetrators of domestic violence has been stepped up. Between 2020 and 2021, 30 such centres were established across France. A national coordinator was appointed towards the end of 2021 to steer the scheme, which is currently being studied and evaluated with a view to harmonizing the delivery of care. The scheme has already helped to strengthen local partnerships and 10 per cent of persons cared for come to the centres voluntarily, although most are referred by the judicial authorities.

**(b) Participation of women and girls in political and public life and decision-making**

15. Recent initiatives to promote workplace equality are part of an economic recovery package that should offer an opportunity for women’s employment. In 2021 and 2022, the Ministry for Gender Equality launched a 1 million euro “equality and economic empowerment” call for projects in order to provide financial support for initiatives aimed at ensuring women’s economic independence and the integration into the workplace of women who are most likely to be unemployed, with a focus on women living in priority neighbourhoods and rural areas.

16. In 2021, the signing of two national framework agreements on integration and entrepreneurship strengthened the national and local governance of the gender equality policy on employment and women’s entrepreneurship. These actions simultaneously address combating stereotypes, promoting gender diversity in the workplace, promoting and highlighting women’s entrepreneurship and training in and raising awareness of business start-up by women.

17. One of the aims of the Act of 24 December 2021 on accelerating economic and professional equality is to use a number of tools to prevent economic and banking violence and to remove obstacles to parity in higher education, in the governance bodies of large companies or in access to financing for women entrepreneurs.

18. With regard to the integration of young women into the workforce, civic service, which was established in 2010, was expanded at the end of the first lockdown in 2020 with the introduction of the “1 jeune, 1 solution”(One young person, one solution) plan. The plan, which aims to offer an opportunity to every young person and which is an important tool for the integration of young women into the workforce, has led to the creation of 100,000 additional civic service missions. In 2020, 132,000 volunteers, including 80,520 young women and men (aged 16 to 25) were engaged in civic service.

19. The 2023–2027 gender equality plan submitted to the Cabinet on 8 March 2023 aims to boost the goal of the Government of France, set in 2017, to provide greater support to girls and women in “future-oriented” careers, by diversifying access to facilities that provide support for employment and entrepreneurship across all French territories and by setting out specific measures for the most vulnerable groups.

**(c) Recovery programmes aimed at mitigating the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic**

20. In the Government’s finance bill of 2021 setting out the budget appropriations for the recovery plan, the budget for the 137 programme on gender equality increased by almost 40 per cent compared to 2017. The aim of the 137 programme is to promote and coordinate activities related to gender equality in professional, economic, political and social life, the promotion of rights and the prevention of and fight against sexual and gender-based violence.

21. That increase followed the request for an additional appropriation of 4 million euros for the programme in the 2020 Amending Finance Act.

**Access to justice, housing, education, employment and health care despite measures taken to contain the pandemic**

22. During the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency measures were taken in France to protect access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Access to medically induced abortion at home has been extended to 9 weeks of amenorrhea, compared with 7 weeks before 2020. That measure was fully incorporated into the Public Health Code by Act No. 2022-295 of 2 March 2022 on protection of the right to abortion.

23. Measures have also been taken to facilitate over-the-counter access to the contraceptive pill directly from pharmacies, without having to go through a health-care professional, and using old prescriptions.

24. In 2021, 1,000 additional spots for shelters for women victims of domestic violence were added to the 1,000 spots already planned as part of the measures adopted following the round tables on domestic violence.

25. The Government has included issues specific to women in its strategy to combat poverty. As part of the France Recovery programme, the Government has launched an exceptional 100 million euro plan to support organizations that combat poverty, which were in high demand during the health crisis.

26. A pilot programme has been launched in response to the health and social issues involved in combating menstrual poverty, with funding of one million euros in 2020 and five million euros in 2021 and 2022. The aim is to improve access to menstrual products for all women, including women in prison, women and girls in vulnerable situations, homeless women and girls in priority education secondary schools and high schools.

27. The 2023–2027 gender equality plan provides for the reimbursement of reusable menstrual products for all women up to the age of 26, as well as the doubling of grants currently allocated to organizations providing information and distributing menstrual products to the relevant groups.

### **III. Access to justice**

#### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 3**

28. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Justice, 526 people were prosecuted for gender discrimination between 2017 and 2021. Of those, 319 were prosecuted for one or more types of discrimination (61 per cent), such as discrimination on grounds of origin and sexual orientation. Over those five years, the number of perpetrators prosecuted for sexual discrimination more than doubled, from 58 prosecutions in 2017 to 103 in 2021.

29. Over that same period, the number of convictions for discrimination offences rose from 15 to 86, and convictions involving at least one offence of sexual discrimination totalled 213, of which 122 (57 per cent) involved intersecting forms of discrimination.

30. Still between 2017 and 2021, the number of sentences for sexual discrimination convictions increased sevenfold, from 20 sentences handed down in 2017 to 135 in 2021. A total of 324 sentences were handed down over five years, 50 per cent of which were prison sentences and 24 per cent were fines or day fines.

## IV. National machinery for the advancement of women (1)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 4

31. The President of the Republic has made gender equality a top priority commitment since 2017 and for his second five-year term, he has once again made it a great national cause. The Government undertook a major initiative at the meeting of the Interministerial Committee on Gender Equality held on 8 March 2018, involving economic and social actors throughout the country in the delivery of tangible results. On 8 March 2023, the 2023–2027 interministerial gender equality plan was submitted to the Cabinet, with the aim of boosting activities already under way in four areas: combating violence against women, women's health, professional and economic equality, and the culture of equality.

32. In addition to the measures adopted following the round tables mentioned in document [CEDAW/C/FRA/9](#), a national action plan to eradicate female genital mutilation was drawn up in consultation with numerous organizational and ministerial partners and presented on 21 June 2019. A follow-up committee for that national action plan will meet in June 2023.

33. The gender equality plan includes new measures to prevent female genital mutilation, including the strengthening of the network of national ambassadors in middle and high schools and a communication campaign before the summer break. 3D video prevention tools were also developed distributed in May 2023 with the financial support of the Ministry for Equality, in order to raise awareness of the various forms of female genital mutilation.

34. As regards combating prostitution and providing support for persons involved in prostitution, the committee to monitor the Act of 13 April 2016 was established on 14 June 2016. In February 2023, the Minister convened a meeting of all stakeholders for an update on the implementation of the Act. On 13 April 2023, the Minister announced the development of a national strategy to combat prostitution aimed at strengthening and accelerating the implementation of the Act of 13 April 2016, which is currently under development with victims' support organizations.

35. In terms of professional equality in the private sector, a number of measures have been set out in specific roadmaps:

- A framework agreement has been signed between the State and the Employment Office for the period from 2021 to 2024, focusing on four main areas: strengthening national and local governance of gender equality policy in the field of employment, combating gender stereotypes, promoting gender diversity in professions, and facilitating women's return to employment by removing specific obstacles;
- Since 2012, the Government of France and Bpifrance have been signing framework agreements to promote women's entrepreneurship. The latest framework agreement, for 2021–2023, involves banking networks and renews the goal of making available support for the start-up and growth of women-led businesses.

36. In terms of disseminating a culture of equality, the interministerial agreement for equality between girls and boys and women and men in the education system, signed on 28 November 2019, stresses the importance of collaboration and the pooling of resources and tools from the various ministries that are signatories to the agreement and their partners.

37. It should also be noted that all ministries and many public institutions, as well as regional and local authorities and health-care institutions, have obtained or retained the “professional equality” label.

38. That policy is being led by the Minister for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities.

39. The Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Service coordinates the network of senior equal rights civil servants appointed by the ministries. It also coordinates the decentralized women’s rights network in the regions and departments, which is under the authority of the prefects, and leads the State budgetary programme for gender equality (programme 137). Its staff allocation, led at the central level by the Directorate General for Social Cohesion, is drawn from the workforce of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (programme 124). The Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Service has had 25 annual full-time equivalent positions since 2018.

40. Employees on the regional teams of the decentralized network account for 140 full-time equivalent positions, with a staff allocation capped at 124.2 full-time equivalent positions. The network was reorganized in 2017, based on a regional team of four staff for each of the 13 regions of mainland France and one delegate in each department, and a regional director in each of the five overseas regions.

41. The Interministerial Mission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence and for Combating Human Trafficking, staffed by a secretary general and a team of five full-time equivalent positions, with a further three full-time equivalent positions to be added in 2023, acts as a national observatory on violence against women. It is tasked with preparing a national training plan for professionals who may work with women victims of violence and with promoting the policy to protect women victims of violence at the local level. It is also responsible for the national coordination of efforts to combat human trafficking and, accordingly, leads the implementation of national action plans to combat human trafficking by ensuring the deployment of measures involving various ministries. It is involved in the implementation of all measures relating to the training of professionals as part of the “Plan Toutes et Tous Égaux” gender equality plan and is drafting a national training plan as input for the third plan to combat human trafficking and the national strategy to combat prostitution.

42. The principal financial resources for the gender equality policy come from two budgetary programmes:

- Budgetary programme 137 “Gender equality”, which finances the main measures in the three priority areas of the policy: preventing and combating violence against women, access to rights and dissemination of a culture of equality, and the economic emancipation of women;
- Budgetary programme 124 “Conduct and support of health and social policies”, part of which is devoted to the management of employment at both the central and decentralized levels.

43. The 2023 finance bill once again reflects the Government’s commitment to gender equality. For 2023, 65.4 million euros in appropriations have been earmarked for programme 137, compared with 50.7 million euros in the 2022 finance bill, an increase of 29 per cent. For programme 124, appropriations will rise by 7 per cent between 2022 and 2023, or 14 million euros.

44. Since 2010, the cross-cutting policy document entitled “Gender equality policy” has been tracking all resources devoted to gender equality in the various ministries, through a comprehensive and declarative inventory of appropriations by each programme manager.

45. Under the 2023 finance bill, the appropriations for the cross-cutting policy document are estimated at almost 2.4 billion euros – compared with 1.3 billion euros under the 2022 finance bill and 0.3 billion euros under the 2017 finance bill – representing an increase of 80.6 per cent between 2017 and 2023.

## V. National machinery for the advancement of women (2)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 5

46. In April 2016, the Unpaid Maintenance Payment Recovery Agency was established pursuant to article 41 of Act No. 2016-1827 of 23 December 2016 on the financing of social security for 2017 to ensure national and standardized processing of the public guarantee for unpaid maintenance allowances. It is led by the National Family Allowance Fund and operates nationwide to help families cope with separation or unpaid maintenance allowances. In October 2020, the Agency evolved into a public maintenance allowance service and became the Maintenance Allowance Recovery and Intermediation Agency.

47. The aim of the shared child-rearing allowance was to encourage fathers to take parental leave in order to become involved in family life and to encourage mothers to return to work more quickly. Although the reform had no direct effect on the division of parental roles, mothers did return to the labour market more quickly and the growth in their job-related income compensated for the decrease in their allowance entitlements.

48. The Family Allowance Fund (CAF) and the Agricultural Social Solidarity Fund (CMSA) will be entrusted with a new mission as part of the Nouveau Départ (New Start) Pack that is currently being deployed in five pilot areas and will be deployed nationwide in 2024. The aim is to promote access to all ordinary rights, to offer a coordinated pathway for women victims of violence by mobilizing a network of third-party detectors (associations, law enforcement agencies, public prosecutors, social workers from departmental councils or social action community centres, France Services hubs, health-care professionals, etc.) and “domestic violence” referents in the various facilities responsible for providing care using a hotline approach (prefectures, employment centres, health insurance administrations, departmental councils, public prosecutors, associations, etc.). CAF and CMSA will serve as coordinators of the pathway for victims: after assessing their needs, they will activate the network of domestic violence referents in the various partner institutions. The aim is to simplify the pathway for victims and to ensure that their case is handled expeditiously and as a matter of priority.

49. The universal emergency assistance for victims of violence established by the Act of 28 February 2023 is part of the New Start Pack and will provide victims with emergency financial assistance to be delivered by CAF and CMSA

50. To protect women’s right to information on abortion, the obsolete reference to distress when requesting an abortion has been removed and the definition of the offence of obstructing access to information has been broadened. The Social Security Funding Act for 2021 provided for full third-party payment for all abortion procedures and for secrecy concerning abortion, in order to ensure the confidentiality of the procedure.

51. The Act of 2 March 2022 on protection of the right to abortion introduced a number of supplementary measures to improve access to abortion, including the abolition of the legal minimum period of reflection between the information consultation and the psychosocial interview, for both minors and adults. The Act also

extended the legal period for abortion from 12 to 14 weeks of pregnancy, opened up medically induced abortion to teleconsultation and authorized midwives to perform instrument-induced abortions in health-care facilities. On 8 March 2023, the President announced the introduction of a bill to enshrine in the Constitution “the freedom of women to have an abortion”.

52. The interministerial gender equality plan that was submitted to the Cabinet on 8 March 2023 aims to promote access to public contracts among companies that fulfil their professional equality index publication obligations and that achieve an adequate score. Public procurement officers will be made more aware of the need to take professional and pay equality into account when awarding contracts.

53. In terms of protection for women victims of violence, protection orders have been strengthened, with maximum time for their issuance reduced to six days. In addition, a bill aims to extend their duration from six months to one year; eviction of the violent spouse from the marital home has become the rule; serious-danger telephones have been made widely available (5,000 devices deployed, of which 75 per cent have been assigned); a tracking bracelet system was established in September 2020 (1,020 devices assigned to date) and, to prevent recidivism, accountability training courses have been introduced for perpetrators of violence. All these measures have been applied and reinforced since the launch of the round tables to combat domestic violence in 2019.

54. Since the August 2019 Act on civil service reform, ministries, their public administrative bodies, local authorities with more than 20,000 inhabitants and public health facilities have had to set up a three-year equality plan in order to make equality a cross-cutting policy.

55. The powers given to the Audiovisual and Digital Communications Regulatory Authority through the Act of 4 August 2014 on substantive gender equality have made it possible to specify programmes relating to combating gender biases and violence against women and to establish qualitative and quantitative indicators on the representation of women and men in programmes.

56. The Act of 27 January 2017 on equality and citizenship strengthened the Authority’s role by giving it a new mission to regulate advertising through audiovisual communications regarding the image of women.

57. The High Council for Gender Equality has a mandate to contribute to the evaluation of public policies and to formulate recommendations and opinions which the Government can use to implement its equality policy. The Government is encouraged to follow the Council’s recommendations and may refer a matter to it directly for its opinion, but is not obliged to implement all its recommendations.

58. The ministries draw on the Council’s recommendations in all the fields covered by its various committees: European and international issues; parity; health, sexual and reproductive rights; violence against women; workplace equality; stereotypes and social roles.

59. A few examples are listed below:

- Regarding European and international issues, the Government has implemented several of the Council’s recommendations from the 29 October 2020 report on the challenges of feminist diplomacy;
- On reproductive and sexual health and rights, the Council issued opinions in 2017 and 2022 containing several recommendations relating to abortion that were included in Act No. 2022-295 of 2 March 2022 on protection of the right to abortion (see the provisions described in paragraph 5);

- On access to economic and social rights, the Council issued an opinion on 16 June 2021 on the individualization of benefits for adults with disabilities, containing a recommendation that was taken up in Act No. 2022-1158 of 16 August 2022 on emergency measures to protect purchasing power. Individualization of benefits for adults with disabilities will take effect on 1 October 2023.

60. There are seats on the Council for representatives of various political and administrative institutions and departments. As a result, the Council's opinions and recommendations are taken up as a matter of course by the public institutions and administrations in charge of developing equality policies in France.

## VI. Stereotypes (1)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 6

61. The Minister for Women's Rights is responsible for leading the implementation of the action plan defined by the 2018 Interministerial Committee on Gender Equality.

62. The Director General for Social Cohesion, who is also the interministerial delegate for women's rights, coordinates the follow-up of these activities. The Women's Rights and Gender-Equality Service of the Directorate General for Social Cohesion mobilizes the network of senior gender equality officials and the various central government entities for interministerial follow-up, and the decentralized women's rights and equality network for local implementation. For each 2018 Interministerial Committee on Gender Equality measure, an action record was established to ensure follow-up during the interministerial meetings that bring together all the relevant stakeholders.

63. The priority given to the protection of women victims of domestic violence resulted in:

- Intense legislative activity with the adoption of specific laws in 2019 and 2020, as well as several regulatory texts in 2020 and 2021;
- Rationalization of regional and local governance in combating domestic violence, insofar as each prefect organizes, in line with the methods best suited to the region or locality in question, opportunities for discussion and consultation with local stakeholders caring for women victims of violence;
- Care for perpetrators of domestic violence, as a public policy priority, with the establishment of 30 centres for the care of perpetrators of domestic violence;
- A priority government policy, implemented by the Ministry for Gender Equality, together with its regional and local teams and the Ministries of the Interior, Justice and Housing.

64. In the context of protection, all the 54 measures that came out of the round-table process and the Prime Minister's announcements in June and November 2021 have been initiated, and 87 per cent have been implemented, including the roll-out of the tracking bracelet and the extension of dedicated shelter spots.

65. To prevent sexual and gender-based violence from an early age, the Ministry of Education launched a "no to bullying" competition in 2011 to coincide with the national summit on harassment in schools, for students involved in the pHARE prevention of harassment programme, which includes a category dedicated to "sexual and gender-based harassment". In 2022, the mobilization of students and adults reached a record high level, with over 70,000 students participating and submitting

1,854 projects, despite the health crisis. Educational resources are available for teachers to help students acquire the knowledge and skills they need to respect dignity and consent.

66. In terms of economic equality, the 2018 commitments of the Interministerial Committee on Gender Equality led to:

- The implementation of the professional equality index, established through Act No. 2018-771 of 5 September 2018 on the freedom to choose one's professional future. Results recorded on the index, a 100-point measure of pay inequality in companies with at least 50 employees introduced in 2019, have been improving steadily. In 2023, 72 per cent of the companies concerned had published their score, compared with 61 per cent in 2022. The average score for companies with 50 or more employees is 88 out of 100 for 2023. This is better than in 2022 (86/100) and 2021 (85/100);
- The establishment of new substantive equality obligations for the three levels of the civil service, introduced through Act No. 2019-828 of 6 August 2019 on civil service reform. This momentum has led to the implementation of action plans for workplace equality in certain ministries, such as the 2020–2022 action plan, extended to 2023, of the Ministry of Justice, and a new agreement that is currently under negotiation;
- The adoption of Act No. 2021-1774 of 24 December 2021, aimed at accelerating economic and professional equality, which contains new provisions to promote the equitable representation of women in the economy and in the workplace and their financial and banking independence, and to support women who are most likely to be unemployed for maternity reasons;
- The launch by the Ministry for Gender Equality of a 1 million euro “Equality and independence” call for projects in 2021 and 2022 to provide financial support for projects aimed at ensuring women’s economic independence and the integration into the workplace of women who are most likely to be unemployed, with a focus on women living in priority urban policy districts and in rural areas;
- The signing of a 2021–2023 framework agreement between the State and Bpifrance to promote women’s entrepreneurship, and the signing of a 2021–2024 framework agreement between the Ministry for Gender Equality, the Ministry of Labour and employment centres for the integration of women;
- The issuance of the decree of 25 February 2022 on measures to eliminate corporate gender pay gaps, which established new obligations relating to corrective measures and progression targets for companies whose results on the professional equality index are below 75, or even 85 points;
- The extension of the paternity leave to 28 days to encourage a better division of responsibilities between men and women;
- The strengthening of career guidance starting in seventh grade, with meetings with role-models, mentoring and tutoring, and visits to companies, with the aim of achieving greater diversity in training courses. Priority has been given to the digital and information technology fields in particular and to the sciences.

67. In terms of a multidimensional culture of equality, particular attention has been paid to students and young people. The interministerial agreement signed by six ministries responsible for education and initial training (Education, Higher Education, Culture, Agriculture, Armed Forces and Gender Equality) is an important instrument for addressing these challenges:

- The eradication of sexual and gender-based violence and the development of a culture of equality, which require combating gender stereotypes in early childhood and at school by introducing compulsory training on equality for all staff working in education and the obligatory raising of awareness of the need to prevent domestic violence as part of the Wednesday Plan and the Educational Cities programmes. Among other steps, the Ministry has provided staff with self-training resources, such as the Sexist Behaviour and Sexual Violence guide, which aims to help middle- and high-school educational teams better prevent and act in situations involving sexist behaviour, sexual violence and their consequences;
- The introduction of the “Girl-boy equality” label for middle and high schools in March 2022, to bring greater internal and external visibility and coherence to activities undertaken or planned by schools, and to promote education against stereotypical representations and the prevention and combating of sexual and gender-based violence. That label, designed as a tool to mobilize the educational community and promote a substantive commitment to gender equality, concerns all public middle schools and high schools and private schools under contract with the Government. It is obtained by schools, as part of a voluntary process, taking into account all aspects of a comprehensive policy of gender equality, such as staff training and the introduction of mixed and egalitarian teaching methods;
- To encourage students’ own commitment to equality, the Ministry of Education has produced a pedagogical guide entitled “For equality and diversity, against discrimination and gender-based violence, my middle- high-school council is committed”, enabling students to draw up a diagnosis and suggest ways of getting involved, within the school, to promote equality;
- Intensified action as part of the universal national service, including awareness-raising among heads of centres, which remains optional, and the involvement of associations during cohesion events, which is left to the discretion of each universal national service centre. In addition, some civic service activities are geared towards gender equality;
- The place of women in sport is another very active aspect of the culture of equality, amplified with the approach of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. The Government has launched and coordinated the establishment of the “Level playing field” label for major international sporting events to promote gender equality and combat discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence before and during sporting events. The label will be awarded by a commission made up of representatives of the Government of France, members of the French sports movement, representatives of associations and athletes committed to these issues, and will highlight initiatives taken to foster equality during sporting events.

68. The Act of 2 March 2022 on democratizing sport in France has made strict parity mandatory in all national governing bodies of sports federations approved by the Ministry of Sports as of the next elections to be held before 31 December 2024. The Act also introduces the same parity requirement for the governing bodies of regional sports leagues as from 2028. As a result, regardless of the breakdown by gender of members of sports federations, their governance will henceforth be entirely parity-based.

69. The Ministry of Culture’s activities in the media and advertising sector are carried out in conjunction with the Audiovisual and Digital Communications Regulatory Authority (ARCOM) and the Ministry for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities. In 2018, at the initiative of ARCOM and following a study published in October 2017, a charter of voluntary commitments to combat sexual, sexist and gender-based stereotypes in advertising was signed the Union des marques, the Association of Communication Agencies and the Professional Advertising

Regulatory Authority. This measure has visible and measurable results in public broadcasting content. In fact, in 2022, the five channels of the France Télévisions group put out more than 800 broadcasts of programmes contributing to combating gender bias and gender-based violence, and more than 3,000 hours of fictional programmes that are non-stereotyped; the seven radio stations of the Radio France group put out more than 900 broadcasts of programmes contributing to combating gender bias and gender-based violence. In the same year, Radio France Internationale and France 24 put out more than 800 broadcasts contributing to combating gender bias and gender-based violence.

70. ARCOM also published a second study on the representation of women in television advertising on 6 March 2023. The trends observed are positive overall, with the proportion of women in advertising now reaching 51 per cent, and the proportion of female experts (people who are “knowledgeable” or who provide knowledge about the product or service being advertised) rising sharply (34 per cent in 2022, compared with only 18 per cent in 2017). The Interministerial Committee on Integration decided at its meeting of 6 November 2019 to strengthen the employment component of this policy by including among the 20 measures of its action plan a focus on the integration of newly arrived women, in particular with the introduction of programmes designed to raise awareness among the target group of the need for a mix of professions and the need to combat gendered occupations and social and professional downgrading by promoting professional skills and know-how.

71. The gender equality plan, launched on 8 March 2023, builds on this work. The culture of equality component of this new plan reinforces activities already under way with various measures to combat stereotypes.

72. Joint work with the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Youth and textbook publishers should help to improve the representation of women in the textbooks students use every day.

73. The plan also calls for awareness-raising and training on stereotyping biases for senior education officials and competitive examination juries.

74. The idea behind the development of a culture of equality at all levels is to create a genuine continuum that would bring profound and lasting change, given the deep-rooted nature of stereotypes internalized from an early age. The goal of awarding labels to all schools by the end of the plan reinforces this commitment.

75. The special feature of the gender equality plan is the focus to attract girls to science, given their under-representation in science courses. For example, gender targets have been set to increase the number of girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics: 10,000 girls will also be supported in the digital realm, including through mentoring.

76. Finally, sex education is a priority. The gender equality plan confirms the Government’s commitment to this issue by proposing the collection of quantitative and qualitative data to provide information on the effectiveness of compulsory sessions. It should be pointed out that sex education covers not just the biological component but also a whole range of subjects, including gender stereotypes and the challenges of gender equality.

## VII. Stereotypes (2)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 7

#### Charter of commitments for the prevention of exposure of minors to online pornographic content

77. The signing of a charter of commitments for the prevention of exposure of minors to online pornographic content has resulted in three measures: raising awareness of and supporting parents, reinforcing the accountability of pornographic sites and making parental control systems more widespread.

78. From January 2020 to January 2021, ARCOM and the Electronic Communications, Postal and Print Media Distribution Regulatory Authority (ARCEP), jointly supervised the implementation of two of the protocol's commitments: the design of a barometer to assess the level of use of parental control in French households and the establishment of a platform to inform and promote these tools among parents.

79. Regularly supplied with data from the economic stakeholders who have signed up to the protocol, the barometer has enabled the tracking of progress in the use of parental control systems. In addition to collecting these data, in June 2021 ARCOM and ARCEP commissioned the French Institute of Public Opinion to conduct a survey on the actual use of such devices among 2,535 parents of children aged 5 to 17.

80. With regard to raising awareness of and supporting parents, the "I protect my child from pornography" information platform was established and launched on 9 February 2021. This website for parents is the fruit of a partnership between public authorities, stakeholders in the digital realm and parenting support and child protection associations. It offers tutorials on how to activate parental control tools, and tips and educational resources on the subject, along with resources dedicated to sex education to help parents and children talk more freely. A total of 119,227 visits were recorded from February 2021 to 15 March 2023.

81. To publicize the site, two national communication campaigns have been launched: one in February 2021, aimed at parents, on the exposure of minors to pornography, and another in February 2023, including video spots broadcast on social networks and posters sent to partners. In addition, a partnership has been established with parenting support associations and stakeholders in the digital realm so that they can communicate about this platform.

82. With regard to strengthening the accountability of pornographic websites, Act No. 2020-936 of 30 July 2020 on the protection of victims of domestic violence specifies that declaring one's age online does not constitute sufficient protection against access to pornography by minors. It strengthens the powers of ARCOM, which can now issue formal notices to comply to pornography websites that fail to meet their obligations, and take legal action to have them blocked. ARCOM referred the case of four pornography websites to the Paris judicial court in 2022.

83. In addition, the 2 March 2022 Act aims to make it easier for parents to access parental control tools. The Act now requires manufacturers of online devices to install a parental control mechanism and to offer free activation when the device is first used.

84. The bill on securing and regulating the digital realm entrusts ARCOM with the task of verifying that online pornographic content is not accessible to minors.

85. The signing of the charter of commitments has also enabled France to take steps to protect minors, such as the piloting of the hub of expertise on digital regulation of age verification.

### **Educational Cities scheme**

86. In April 2021, the national body to coordinate the Educational Cities scheme established 10 thematic groups to identify inspirational activities and practices.

87. The Girl-Boy Equality pilot group run by the association Villes au Carré and the Integration and Cities Regional Observatory, through its reflections and exchanges of practices, has enabled the conduct of activities to promote equality in the Educational Cities scheme's 200 participating localities. These are found throughout France, with a particular concentration in the Île de France, Auvergne-Rhône Alpes and Hauts de France regions. There are also Educational Cities in all French overseas territories. In all, these cities cover 1 million children and young people aged under 25.

88. The three main objectives set by the pilot group are: to promote girl-boy equality within the Educational Cities, to uphold the principles of secularism, including the emancipation of girls, and to encourage co-education. The work carried out by the pilot group has helped to create a culture of awareness-raising and prevention as regards girl-boy relations, to enable discussions among the Educational Cities of common issues and, lastly, to enable the sharing of experiences and knowledge.

89. By the end of their work in 2022, the 30 Educational Cities that participated regularly in the pilot group had identified the issue of education in the themes of relationships and sexuality and the prevention of the risk of prostitution as one of the major challenges. The national coordinating body has scheduled a themed webinar dedicated to girl-boy equality for September 2023, to continue supporting the Educational Cities.

90. With regard to measures taken to combat gender stereotypes, the policy of preventing discrimination is based on various levers of educational policy, such as the inclusion of these subjects in curricula and in partnership agreements between the Ministry of Education and its Educational Cities partners. This policy also involves making available management (at the national level and in the academies), training and teaching resources, with dedicated areas on the Canopé platform and on Eduscol. Finally, the Government of France provides support to civil society, through accreditations and subsidies, the promotion of educational activities and the permanent inclusion of the subject in the calendar of educational activities.

91. Combating sexual and gender-based violence, which mainly affects girls, is a major challenge for the entire educational community and its partners. It is based in particular on education in mutual respect, respect for the body and dignity. In addition, the increase in sexual and gender-based violence in the digital realm – cybersexism, cyberviolence, cyberstalking – is also a growing concern owing to the spread of mobile Internet and social networks. Several educational initiatives are helping to develop a culture of peer prevention.

## **VIII. Harmful practices**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 8**

92. A flagship measure of the National Action Plan to Eradicate Female Genital Mutilation, a data collection project directly involving women living in France, has received 80,000 euros in funding and has been entrusted to the Migrations and Society Research Unit. The aim was to test a new tool to collect data on the prevalence of genital mutilation in the female population in three pilot French departments: Seine-Saint-Denis, Rhône and Alpes-Maritimes. Of 3,120 adult women interviewed, 2,507 agreed to take part in the survey (80 per cent).

93. The results of this study, published in October 2022, show that this direct rate-measuring methodology, unique in Europe, is proving to be conclusive and relevant for areas with the highest numbers of at risk populations, such as the Paris region. The rates, meaning the percentage of women aged between 18 and 44 who reported having undergone female genital mutilation, in the three experimental departments fall into three estimated prevalence levels:

- A high level in Seine-Saint-Denis, with approximately 7.2 per cent of women having undergone female genital mutilation;
- An average level in the Rhône, close to the national average of around 1 per cent;
- A low level in Alpes-Maritimes, with around 0.7 per cent of women having undergone female genital mutilation.

94. In view of the results of this pilot project, a new study has just been launched to update the indirect data drawn from public statistics, which will cover the whole country and be refined for the departments of the Île-de-France.

95. At the end of 2022, following the results of the study that showed the high prevalence of female genital mutilation in the Île-de-France region, additional funds were released to carry out a specific diagnosis of this region and to set up awareness-raising and training initiatives, including for professionals.

### **Dissemination of information on combating these practices**

96. Much of the Government's information on female genital mutilation is provided by the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons. Fear of female genital mutilation is grounds for asylum protection. In this respect, it follows from the doctrine of the Office and the case law of the National Court of Asylum and the Council of State, that the women and children concerned are eligible for refugee status under the 1951 Geneva Convention on the grounds that they belong to a particular social group.

97. The Office is fully committed to respond to this specific need for protection and has equipped itself with the necessary tools and expertise, thanks in particular to the dedicated training courses that the Violence against Women referral group regularly provides to examining protection instructors and supervisors.

98. The legal representatives of the minors concerned are informed at all stages of proceedings and, in particular, during the personal interview at the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, of the criminal consequences of female genital mutilation and of the fact that the public prosecutor will be notified without delay on receipt of a medical certificate noting the presence of evidence of female genital mutilation. Information on the asylum application procedure and subsequent protection owing to the risk of female genital mutilation is also publicly accessible on a dedicated page of the website.

99. In addition, during the compulsory civic training organized as part of the republican integration process, the prohibition of female genital mutilation, the right to bodily autonomy, the prohibition of domestic and marital violence, and sexual and reproductive rights are addressed. Trainers receive training on violence against women, including female genital mutilation, from an association that specializes in women's rights: Information Centres on the Rights of Women and Families. This training enables them to talk more effectively about this topic during civic training and to direct a victim they have identified or who has come to them to the appropriate authorities. Resource materials supplement the training of trainers.

100. The Interministerial Mission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence and for Combating Human Trafficking has also developed training tools for professionals on female genital mutilation. A “Bilakoro” training kit, consisting of a short film and an educational booklet entitled “The practitioner confronted with female genital mutilation”, provides a better understanding of this form of violence and its consequences, identifies warning signs, improves detection or lowers risks through systematic questioning of professionals and provides better care for threatened or victimized minors. It is aimed primarily at social workers and school and after-school professionals.

101. The “Forced Marriages” kit for professionals, which includes a video and a training booklet, deals with identifying and caring for girls and women who are victims of forced marriage. All these tools are available to the general public and can be freely downloaded from the website <https://arretonslesviolences.gouv.fr>.

102. Lastly, the Government of France funds a number of associations that work on the ground with the public and/or professionals:

- Red Orchids: national subsidy of 15,000 euros in 2022 supplemented by a regional subsidy of 6,000 euros;
- Group for the Abolition of Sexual Mutilation, Forced Marriage and other Traditional Practices Harmful to the Health of Women and Children: annual national subsidy of 42,000 euros, supplemented in 2022 by an additional 20,000 euros;
- Circumcision. Let's talk about it!, which runs the nationwide “Circumcision alert” campaign: annual national subsidy of 20,000 euros, supplemented in 2021 and 2022 by additional subsidies.

103. These measures will be continued in 2023, as announced in the Gender Equality Plan.

### **The bioethics bill and the care of children with variations in genital development**

104. The supervision of medical intervention in cases of children with variations in genital development was discussed during the adoption of the Bioethics Act. Article 30 of the Act enshrines the principles of consultation prior to any intervention, except for life-threatening emergencies. It also amends the Civil Code to allow for a three-month delay in indicating the child's gender when a birth is certified and for the possibility of correcting a person's civil status.

105. The Bioethics Act contains a special section entitled “Children with a variation in genital development”, with a single article L. 2131-6 specifying the procedures for caring for a child with variations in genital development. It sets out the prerequisites for all interventions, except in cases of life-threatening emergency. In particular, it requires multidisciplinary teams from specialized rare disease reference centres to work together to establish a diagnosis, with the possibility of no therapeutic intervention and the postponement of medical procedures as far as possible to an age when the children concerned are capable of expressing their wishes and participating in the decision. It also provides for informed and transparent information for children and their families, as well as appropriate psychosocial support and information on the existence of specialized associations.

106. Article L. 2131-6 emphasizes the principle of seeking consent and involving children in decisions.

107. The decree implementing this article, published in November 2022, is the result of work led by the Ministry of Health and the heads of the rare disease care networks concerned. Particular attention has been paid to the balance of representation in the

composition of the working groups. Consultations were held with health professionals from all the centres concerned, legal experts and social science specialists working specifically on issues of child consent and the care of variations in genital development, as well as civil society and representatives of the persons concerned. Representatives of the National Advisory Committee on Ethics, the Ministry of Justice and the interministerial delegation for combating racism, antisemitism and hatred towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons also took part.

108. The implementation of this new decree will be monitored by a dedicated national committee that will bring together representatives of centres, experts and organizations to discuss the annual operating report and concerns in the field, examine the cases that have raised or are likely to raise the most questions about care decisions and contribute to the application of good practices relating to the care of children with variations in genital development.

## **IX. Gender-based violence against women**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 9**

#### **(a) Data on cases of gender-based violence**

109. According to a study carried out by the Ministerial Statistical Service for Internal Security (SSMSI) on sexual violence outside the family, 72,000 offences were recorded by the police and gendarmerie in 2021. The most common type of violence was physical sexual violence (73 per cent). The majority of victims were women (86 per cent) and more than half were minors (55 per cent). Of the 48,300 persons accused, 96 per cent were men, most of them adults (73 per cent). Fewer than 10 per cent of victims of sexual violence committed outside the family filed a complaint.

110. With regard to domestic violence, another study published by SSMSI in December 2022 shows that there were 208,000 victims of violence committed by a partner or ex-partner in France in 2021, an increase of 21 per cent compared to 2020. At a time when victims are encouraged to speak more freely and the manner in which they are received by the police and the gendarmerie has improved, the number of cases has almost doubled since 2016. The proportion of incidents that occurred before the year in which they were recorded rose from 18 per cent in 2016 to 28 per cent in 2021.

111. As in previous years, the vast majority of victims were women (87 per cent) and the vast majority of perpetrators were men (89 per cent). The departments of French Guiana, Seine-Saint-Denis, Nord, Réunion, Pas-de-Calais and Lot-et-Garonne had the highest number of female victims per 1,000 inhabitants.

112. However, victims of domestic violence rarely report the crime to the security services. According to the Genese victimization survey, fewer than one in four victims of domestic violence filed a complaint in 2020.

113. To go into more detail, SSMSI has published two tables differentiating between marital and non-marital sexual violence:

## Femmes de 15 ans et plus, victimes de violences conjugales entre 2016 et 2021

	2016						2017						2018					
	AGE						AGE						AGE					
	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 et +	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 et +	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 et +
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 207</b>	<b>31 231</b>	<b>33 706</b>	<b>20 943</b>	<b>7 212</b>	<b>2 973</b>	<b>4 345</b>	<b>31 448</b>	<b>35 176</b>	<b>21 009</b>	<b>7 286</b>	<b>3 085</b>	<b>5 065</b>	<b>34 637</b>	<b>38 722</b>	<b>23 224</b>	<b>8 363</b>	<b>3 463</b>
Violences physiques et administrations de substances nuisibles (NFI 02A.1, 02A.2 et 02.F6)	3 279	23 762	24 226	14 731	5 213	2 280	3 333	23 647	25 105	14 546	5 211	2 362	3 743	25 397	27 235	15 744	5 876	2 589
Viol (NFI 03A)	169	722	677	399	127	36	214	828	826	459	129	44	322	1 096	933	528	178	59
Autre violence sexuelle (NFI 03 sauf 03A)	22	167	208	118	38	14	27	154	177	126	37	18	33	214	230	131	49	14
Menace (NFI 02A4)	500	4 474	5 442	3 390	1 065	420	499	5 447	3 372	1 087	412	572	4 884	5 969	3 710	1 315	484	
Harcèlement (02G)	193	1 803	2 681	1 964	665	195	227	1 987	3 115	2 137	706	217	321	2 678	3 771	2 674	843	282
Atteintes à la vie privée (NFI 02J)	36	183	209	153	39	14	36	182	228	170	56	11	60	242	298	213	43	13
Injures, diffamations (NFI 02H)	8	120	263	188	65	14	9	144	278	199	60	21	14	126	286	224	59	22

	2019						2020						2021					
	AGE						AGE						AGE					
	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 et +	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 et +	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 et +
6 898	40 777	45 943	26 916	9 737	4 156	8 090	44 957	51 463	29 729	11 290	4 782	10 883	54 711	60 163	35 328	13 568	5 946	
5 064	29 563	31 342	17 759	6 703	3 045	5 712	32 086	34 687	19 509	7 682	3 567	7 392	37 193	38 119	22 276	8 668	4 188	
432	1 367	1 235	675	208	56	687	1 795	1 517	747	225	79	991	2 413	1 851	932	318	98	
51	237	281	145	53	21	77	326	398	212	82	29	134	362	380	187	71	25	
782	5 810	7 303	4 487	1 483	602	858	5 852	7 634	4 392	1 660	590	1 173	7 428	9 331	5 324	2 084	825	
470	3 333	5 104	3 362	1 146	392	588	3 871	5 759	3 904	1 343	445	835	5 040	7 290	4 627	1 774	634	
82	311	360	220	74	22	149	872	1 101	722	224	54	336	2 110	2 809	1 721	574	156	
17	156	318	268	70	18	19	155	367	243	74	18	22	165	383	261	79	20	

## Femmes victimes d'infractions sexuelles non conjugales, de 2016 à 2021

	Total violences sexuelles non conjugales						violences sexuelles intrafamiliales non conjugales					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>35 328</b>	<b>39 334</b>	<b>46 911</b>	<b>52 675</b>	<b>53 262</b>	<b>68 466</b>	<b>6 555</b>	<b>7 300</b>	<b>8 136</b>	<b>9 300</b>	<b>10 050</b>	<b>12 803</b>
0-9	6 924	7 654	8 307	9 780	10 083	13 563	3 759	4 130	4 481	5 293	5 658	7 395
10-14	8 919	9 799	11 815	12 994	13 350	17 226	1 969	2 153	2 464	2 750	3 015	3 777
15-19	7 728	9 117	11 232	12 979	13 489	17 359	584	757	864	926	1 041	1 260
20-29	5 666	6 347	7 856	8 563	8 476	10 766	90	115	132	145	149	169
30-39	2 691	2 994	3 439	3 895	3 567	4 362	74	65	92	72	89	94
40-49	1 933	1 875	2 304	2 370	2 296	2 740	49	50	62	59	56	64
50-59	902	903	1 167	1 236	1 230	1 431	19	17	21	27	24	
60-69	310	341	438	462	429	571	6	6	13	16	10	8
70 et +	255	304	353	396	342	448	5	7	7	12	8	12

Violences sexuelles non intrafamiliales					
2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
28 773	32 034	38 775	43 375	43 212	55 663
3 165	3 524	3 826	4 487	4 425	6 168
6 950	7 646	9 351	10 244	10 335	13 449
7 144	8 360	10 368	12 053	12 448	16 099
5 576	6 232	7 724	8 418	8 327	10 597
2 617	2 929	3 347	3 823	3 478	4 268
1 884	1 825	2 242	2 311	2 240	2 676
883	886	1 146	1 209	1 206	1 407
304	335	425	446	419	563
250	297	346	384	334	436

114. These tables, showing the number of victims, show the number of cases recorded by law enforcement agencies and therefore include not only formal complaints but also *mains courantes* (statements of people reporting abuse without seeking any further action).

<b>Auteurs poursuivis dans les affaires de violence fondée sur le genre</b>						
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2017-2021</b>
Auteurs poursuivis	31 584	34 335	42 176	47 673	56 910	212 678

Source : ministère de la justice/SG/SDSE, fichier statistique Cassiopée

Champ : France entière, COM compris

Lecture : en 2017, 31 584 auteurs de violence fondée sur le genre, à l'égard d'au moins une femme, ont fait l'objet d'une poursuite.

#### **Femmes victimes de violence dans les affaires poursuivies**

	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2017-2021</b>
<b>Femmes victimes de violence</b>	<b>35 685</b>	<b>38 791</b>	<b>47 111</b>	<b>53 270</b>	<b>63 056</b>	<b>237 913</b>
Moins de 18 ans	7 161	7 596	8 340	8 968	10 443	42 508
18-24 ans	5 497	6 041	7 610	8 549	10 722	38 419
25-34 ans	9 033	9 969	12 145	14 019	16 456	61 622
35-44 ans	6 433	7 191	9 130	10 721	12 890	46 365
45-54 ans	3 097	3 510	4 465	5 183	6 042	22 297
55-64 ans	974	1 075	1 296	1 553	1 885	6 783
65 ans et plus	431	526	598	670	816	3 041
Âge inconnu	3 059	2 883	3 527	3 607	3 802	16 878

Source : ministère de la justice/SG/SDSE, fichier statistique Cassiopée

Champ : France entière, COM compris

Lecture : en 2017, les auteurs poursuivis pour violences sexistes à l'égard d'une femme ont fait 35 685 victimes. Parmi ces dernières, 431 avaient 65 ans ou plus au moment de l'infraction.

**Condamnations pour violence fondée sur le sexe**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021
Condamnations	30 429	31 338	36 362	39 948	53 320	191 397

Source : ministère de la justice/SG/SDSE, fichier statistique du Casier judiciaire national des personnes physiques

Champ : France entière, COM compris

Lecture : en 2017, 30 429 condamnations pour violence sexiste ont été prononcées.

**Peines prononcées pour des condamnations de violence sexiste et discrimination combinées**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021
<b>Toutes peines</b>	<b>39 424</b>	<b>41 850</b>	<b>49 644</b>	<b>55 099</b>	<b>78 652</b>	<b>264 669</b>
01 Emprisonnement réclusion	27 238	28 186	33 179	36 258	47 686	172 547
02 Amende/jour-amende	3 269	3 368	3 685	3 864	5 114	19 300
03 Stages	506	902	1 444	2 518	3 906	9 276
04 Interdictions hors permis	3 492	4 341	5 919	7 425	14 742	35 919
05 Confiscation	3 290	3 462	3 994	3 632	5 122	19 500
06 Autres peines	1 629	1 591	1 423	1 402	2 082	8 127

Source : ministère de la justice/SG/SDSE, fichier statistique du Casier judiciaire national des personnes physiques

Champ : France entière, COM inclus. Ensemble des peines prononcées, accompagnant des condamnations pour au moins une infraction de violence à caractère sexiste

Lecture : en 2021, 78 652 peines accompagnaient les condamnations pour violence sexiste. Parmi elles, 47 686 étaient des peines d'emprisonnement/réclusion.

**(b) Feminicide data**

115. According to a Ministry of the Interior survey, between 2017 and 2021 there were 600 femicides in France (109 in 2017, 121 in 2018, 146 in 2019, 102 in 2020 and 122 in 2021). Of these 600 women, the majority were between 19 and 50 years of age (100 were between 19 and 30, 120 were between 31 and 40, and 124 were between 41 and 50). Seven victims were 18 years of age or younger.

116. Between the vast majority of femicides were committed by male partners. Over that five-year period, 3,780 of those accused of femicide (or attempted femicide) were prosecuted.

Relation entre la victime et l'auteur					
RELATION ENTRE LA VICTIME ET L'AUTEUR	ANNEES				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Epoux	63	60	70	37	60
Ex-époux	2	8	5	7	3
Concubin	30	22	28	26	25
Ex-concubin	14	16	14	16	10
Pacsés	0	3	5	2	0
Ex-Pacsés	0	0	0	0	1
Couples non officiel	0	12	24	14	23
<b>TOTAUX</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>122</b>

Auteurs poursuivis pour féminicide						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021
Auteurs poursuivis	658	707	839	777	799	3 780
Source : ministère de la justice/SG/SDSE, fichier statistique Cassiopée						
Champ : France entière, COM compris						
Lecture : en 2017, 658 mis en cause pour féminicide (ou tentative) ont fait l'objet d'une poursuite.						

Victimes de féminicides dans les affaires poursuivies						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021
<b>Victimes de féminicides</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>4 424</b>
Moins de 18 ans	107	105	91	65	80	448
18-24 ans	79	79	79	101	84	422
25-34 ans	108	144	136	118	143	649
35-44 ans	119	106	132	111	133	601
45-54 ans	133	116	131	107	110	597
55-64 ans	74	82	100	65	69	390
65 ans et plus	84	83	89	77	99	432
Âge inconnu	202	174	225	158	126	885
Source : ministère de la justice/SG/SDSE, fichier statistique Cassiopée						
Champ : France entière, COM compris						
Lecture : en 2017, les personnes poursuivies pour féminicide (ou tentative) ont fait 906 victimes. Parmi ces dernières, 84 avaient 65 ans ou plus au moment de l'infraction.						

**(c) Data on cases involving anti-religious crimes, crimes of anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia combined with crimes of sexism against women and girls**

117. According to figures from the Ministry of the Interior, between 2017 and 2021 there were 27,756 victims of racist, xenophobic or anti-religious crimes.

**(d) SSMSI data on victims of sexism**

118. The most recent SSMSI study, conducted in July 2022, showed that number of cases involving the making of sexist comments recorded by the security services increased since the promulgation of the Act of 3 August 2018 that established the specific offence of the making of sexist comments, but at a slower pace since the end of 2021.

119. Over the 2020-2021 period, 3,700 offences of the making of sexist comments were recorded in France by the security services, of which 1,400 were recorded in 2020 and 2,300 in 2021. These offences are classified as serious crimes. Most of these involved sexist comments without aggravating circumstances (“sexist comments that undermine dignity or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive situation for a person”): they accounted for 70 per cent of cases involving the making of sexist comments recorded in 2020 and 75 per cent of those recorded in 2021.

120. These offences are recorded primarily in the Centre-Val-de-Loire and Île-de-France regions. Within the area under the authority of the national police, the majority of victims were women, except in the case of offences committed because of a victim’s sexual orientation. Almost two thirds of victims were under 30 years of age. The perpetrators were almost exclusively men, most of whom were adults.

## **X. Extraterritorial State obligation**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 10**

121. Arms exports by France are always carried out in strict compliance with the country’s international commitments and are subject to a robust and strictly enforced interministerial oversight procedure. In the context of arms export controls, special consideration is given to upholding human rights and international humanitarian law.

122. France has a responsible export control policy that is in compliance with the embargoes and restrictive measures established by the Security Council, the European Union and the Arms Trade Treaty, the eight criteria of the Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of the Council of the European Union and its own national criteria. Thus, the State rejects any export licence applications whenever it becomes aware, at the time authorization is requested, that the exported military equipment and technologies may be used to commit violations of human rights and international humanitarian law or to facilitate the commission of such violations. France exercises particular caution when international bodies report serious violations of international humanitarian law in the destination country.

123. The decision to grant a licence is taken following a meticulous case-by-case review carried out by the four voting members of the Interministerial Committee for the Study of Military Equipment Exports: the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of the Armed Forces and the Secretariat-General for Defence and National Security. The French export control policy is implemented based on a rigorous, case-by-case analysis of every arms export application. The decisions are taken under the authority of the Prime Minister in strict compliance with the country’s international commitments, in particular those assumed under the Arms Trade Treaty and the Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008, as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/1560 of 16 September 2019. The Committee considers the nature of the materiel, the end user and factors related to respect for human rights and international humanitarian law in its analysis. The safety of civilians and upholding the country’s international human rights commitments are a constant concern. The Committee

consults other ministries, intelligence services and diplomatic missions in connection with an arms export request, as necessary.

124. In addition, exports of dual-use items fall within the scope of Regulation (EU) 2021/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021, setting up a Union regime for the control of exports, brokering, technical assistance, transit and transfer of dual-use items. In the control of such exports, their end use is taken into consideration, in particular with regard to potential human rights violations. The Regulation reproduces in extenso the checklists drawn up by supplier groups (e.g., the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Australia Group). General national directives in which these criteria are taken into account are routinely drawn up for specific countries and categories of equipment, with particular note taken of the potential use of such equipment as instruments of law and order or as tools of repression.

125. France carries out a rigorous review of each arms sale dossier it receives, in some cases rejecting export applications or stipulating conditions before granting export licences. As part of this evaluation, the authorities take a number of factors into account depending on the nature of the items being exported, the end destination, the end user and the parties involved in the transfer. This information must be provided by the manufacturers in the export licence applications submitted to the authorities. The assessment is also based on the information received from diplomatic missions and intelligence services. Special attention is paid to the end user and, more specifically, to the entity receiving the items, including its activities, mandates and background. The prior use made of the exported materiel is also considered, namely the prior use made of the equipment by the destination country and the possibility that the equipment would be used for internal repression. Lastly, the French authorities may suspend or revoke an export licence in the light of changing circumstances.

## **XI. Trafficking in persons (1)**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 11**

126. The recommendations issued in 2022 by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the view of the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights, which serves as the independent national rapporteur on combatting trafficking in persons, have been carefully reviewed by the Government and underpin the work undertaken together with civil society and a number of ministries to develop the third national plan to combat exploitation of and trafficking in persons. The Minister for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities convened a meeting of all stakeholders on 15 May 2023 to launch work on the elaboration of the plan, and workshops are being led by the Interministerial Mission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence and for Combating Human Trafficking with a view to presenting the plan in the fourth quarter of 2023.

127. The following priorities have been identified based on the recommendations of the Group of Experts and the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights:

- Establish a national mechanism for the identification and referral of victims of trafficking and a regional directory of key stakeholders
- Enhance communication on the prevention and combating of trafficking in persons, in particular during the Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Elaborate a national interministerial training plan for public sector employees, conduct an inventory of existing tools and set training priorities

- Strengthen shelter, protection and support systems for victims, in particular minors, and offer comprehensive support encompassing housing, health care, access to rights and reintegration.

128. With regard to introducing the general principle of exemption from criminal responsibility for victims of human trafficking, French lawmakers did not wish, at this stage, to call into question the principle of equality before the law. However, in addition to the principle of discretionary prosecution, certain legal provisions, in particular articles 122-2 and 122-7 of the Criminal Code, allow for victims forced to commit offences to be absolved of responsibility.

129. In addition, the Government has continued its efforts to increase the use of confiscated assets in the public interest, in accordance with article 706-160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, having allowed real estate confiscated from offenders to be transferred to associations working to prevent trafficking in persons and protect trafficking victims.

130. In 2023, the Agency for the Management and Recovery of Seized and Confiscated Assets increased by nearly 1 million euros the funds allocated from a dedicated fund, established using proceeds from the sale of confiscated goods and assets of perpetrators of trafficking in persons and procuring, to finance a regional call for projects that supported local organizations working on four aspects of prostitution prevention and providing support to victims of sexual exploitation. A total of 3.4 million euros was made available, as compared to 2.5 million euros in 2022.

131. The agency responsible for providing legal aid, access to justice and assistance services to victims of trafficking in persons has continued to provide financial support (228,502 euros in 2022) to associations that help victims of trafficking and procuring, such as Agir pour le Lien social et la Citoyenneté, Amicale du Nid, the Committee against Modern Slavery, the Association Foyer mise à l'abri pour femmes victimes de la traite à des fins d'exploitation sexuelle, and Ruelle and Hors-la-rue.

132. In addition, local victim support committees, which serve as local coordinating entities, are responsible for coordinating national victim support policy at the regional and local level. The regions and local communities have the freedom to establish local victim support committees for different victim categories (e.g., minors) or themes (e.g., exploitation and trafficking, sexual violence).

133. The Government provides assistance and support to presumed or formally recognized victims in particular by providing treatment of psychological trauma through 15 regional psychological trauma treatment centres whose territorial network will be strengthened to further harmonize practices and establish a special support programme for persons living with disabilities.

134. Combating trafficking in children is another major issue for the Government, which is continuing, as part of the development of the third plan to combat trafficking in persons, the measures put in place as part of the strategy to combat child prostitution for 2021–2022, which has a budget of 14 million euros. On 21 November 2022, the Government established an interministerial committee for children, which has combating violence against children in all its forms as one of its priorities. More training for practitioners has also been made available, and a new national plan to combat violence against children will be rolled out soon.

135. In general, the Government reaffirms its commitment to the unconditional protection of child victims of trafficking or exploitation, whatever form it takes.

136. With regard to assistance for underage victims, the plan to combat violence against children for 2020–2022 provided for the establishment of a paediatric in-take unit for children at risk in every department that would provide comprehensive health,

judicial and forensic services in cases involving underage victims of violence or trafficking.

137. The pilot mechanism for the protection of underage victims, introduced in Paris in 2016, which allows for a case to be processed by the juvenile prosecution service within 24 hours and a temporary placement order to be issued within 48 hours, is meant to be expanded in order to shield minors from the influence of exploitative networks and people by placing them in safe and secure environments. The first safe and secure in-take and housing centre for underage victims of trafficking was opened in 2021 to provide them with emergency shelter and enhanced follow-up that includes educational, psychological and legal support and health services.

138. In addition, 353 rooms for conducting interviews with minors (known as “Mélanie rooms”) have been installed in police and gendarmerie departments and outfitted with sound and image recording equipment to record statements by children while providing them with toys and teaching aids to make them feel more at ease, confident and able to express themselves.

139. Lastly, as stated in the circular on the criminal policy on combating violence against minors, published on 28 March 2023, identifying and punishing the organizers of trafficking networks must be the primary goals of criminal investigations.

## **XII. Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution (2)**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 12**

#### **Act of 2016 criminalizing the purchase of sexual services and penalizing clients**

140. State funding for the policy on preventing and combating prostitution and sexual exploitation is provided under budget programme No. 137 on gender equality, with 3.1 million euros allocated at the national level and 3 million euros allocated at the local level for assistance to persons engaged in prostitution. The Agency for the Management and Recovery of Seized and Confiscated Assets has allocated a further 3.8 million euros, of which 400,000 euros were allocated at the national level and 3.4 million euros were allocated for the regional call for projects. In 2022, among other new measures, an additional 1.2 million euros were allocated to fund prostitution exit programmes and financial assistance for social integration.

141. A monitoring committee headed by the Ministry for Gender Equality oversaw the implementation of Act No. 2016-444. The committee met for the first time on 15 February 2021, giving all entities a chance to take stock of the measures already in place and those planned for the future. A second meeting, held on 7 February 2023, was chaired by the Minister.

142. In addition, two institutional assessments of the quality of the implementation of the Act of 13 April 2016 were carried out: the first by the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs, the General Inspectorate of Administration and the General Inspectorate for Justice, which published their report in December 2019, and the second by the High Council for Gender Equality, which issued its report in May 2021.

#### **What are the consequences for women in prostitution, in particular in terms of exposure to all forms of violence, including exploitation?**

143. In their report, the General Inspectorates of Social Affairs, and Justice put forward 28 recommendations focusing on four areas. In recommendation No. 16, the General-Inspectorates proposed that an interministerial circular be issued setting out the procedures for processing applications to the prostitution exit programme,

including eligibility criteria and the issuance and duration of temporary residence permits.

144. To that end, interministerial circular No. NOR: SSAA2201128C of 13 April 2022 on access to the prostitution exit programme and social and professional integration was issued, restarting the programme's implementation. A top priority set out in the circular was the establishment of departmental commissions in all departments to combat prostitution, procuring and trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation and to open access to prostitution exit programmes.

145. The Act of 13 April 2016, seen as decriminalizing the victims of prostitution and penalizing the client-perpetrators, is a framework law aimed at overhauling all public policies concerning prostitution. The Act has made it possible to adopt a series of measures that address the system of prostitution as a whole. Some of these measures are designed to improve care for victims of prostitution, procuring and human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Through the prostitution exit programme, victims can obtain support from approved associations, a temporary six-month residence permit (renewable for a total of 24 months) and financial assistance.

146. Departmental commissions to combat prostitution are responsible for organizing and coordinating the efforts of each department to assist victims of prostitution, procuring and trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation in entering or staying in the prostitution exit programme and being reintegrated into social and professional life.

#### **What financial resources are available for women wishing to leave prostitution?**

147. Entry into the prostitution exit programme requires the authorization of the prefecture and grants access to specific rights under the law: social and professional support by approved associations, the issuance of a temporary residence permit for foreign nationals and the allocation of financial assistance for social and professional integration for persons who are not eligible to receive basic welfare benefits.

148. Since 2017, 1,242 people have completed or are currently in the prostitution exit programme. As at 1 January 2023, there were 121 approved associations that assist those exiting prostitution, and 643 applications to enter the programme had received prefectoral authorization, an increase of more than 30 per cent as compared with 2022.

149. These figures clearly show that the Act of 13 April 2016 is making a clear, positive difference for victims of prostitution by offering them comprehensive, personalized support to exit prostitution.

#### **The 2017–2030 national sexual health strategy and the 2018–2020 sexual health road map**

150. The 2016 Act recognized the particular preventive and medical care needs of persons engaged in prostitution. The needs relate primarily to sexual health, but must be considered in a broader context, taking into account the various vulnerabilities of these persons that stem from their circumstances and their occupation.

151. As part of the pilot programme provided for under action 16 of the 2018–2020 sexual health road map, 200,000 euros have been allocated for projects promoting risk reduction for persons engaged in prostitution in Île-de-France, Auvergne/Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and Occitania.

152. The second road map for the period 2021–2024, an offshoot of the 2017–2030 national sexual health strategy, includes strengthening innovative harm reduction

measures aimed at persons engaged in prostitution or seeking to exit prostitution, by building up the capacity of community stakeholders involved in risk reduction.

153. As far as possible, targeted funding provided under budget programme 204, entitled “Prevention, health safety and health care services”, has been kept unchanged in the 2022 budget.

154. The numerous initiatives aimed at facilitating access to health care for vulnerable persons can also benefit persons engaged in prostitution. For example, this is one of the priority target groups of the pilot project involving four community-based sexual health centres opened in 2021.

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

#### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 13**

##### **Act of 27 January 2011 on the balanced representation of women and men on boards of directors and supervisory boards and on gender equality in the workplace**

###### **(a) Information on measures taken to ensure gender parity in elected and appointed political positions**

155. French law currently provides for incentives, to be used in the event of non-compliance with parity rules, and also obligatory measures.

156. One such incentive, in the context of national elections, is set out in the Act of 6 June 2000 in support of equal access for women and men to electoral mandates and elected positions, which provides for the withholding of State funding from political parties that fail to ensure gender parity among their nominations for legislative elections. Under the Act of 4 August 2014 on substantive gender equality, the funds withheld were doubled starting in 2017.

157. As regards obligatory measures, the Act of 14 February 2014 prohibited holders of parliamentary mandates from also holding local executive offices or more than one local mandate, thus enabling turnover among holders of political offices and ensuring greater access to elected office for women. The first time the Acts of 4 August 2014 and 14 February 2014 were applied legislative elections in June 2017 there was an immediate effect: the number of women elected to office rose from 155 in 2012 to 224 in 2017 (later dropping to 217 in 2022).

158. Since 2022, women have accounted for 37.6 per cent of National Assembly members and 34.8 per cent of Senate members, up from 10.9 per cent and 5.6 per cent, respectively, in 1999.

159. In the case of local elections, the Act of 6 June 2000 requires political parties to field an equal number of men and women candidates for regional, municipal, senatorial and European elections for their candidate lists to be accepted. The Act of 31 January 2007 on promoting equal access for women and men to electoral mandates and elected positions, which extended parity requirements to communes with more than 3,500 inhabitants and regions and cantons, has brought about a further increase in the number of women holding local executive offices.

160. The Act of 17 May 2013 on elections of departmental, municipal and commune councillors further tightened these obligatory measures by requiring the use of binomial one-man/one-woman tickets in departmental elections and the strict alternation of men and women candidates in lists of candidates fielded for municipal and commune elections.

161. As a result of these measures, women now account for 42.2 per cent of municipal councillors, 48.5 per cent of regional and local councillors, 50 per cent of departmental councillors and 35 per cent of commune councillors.

162. By contrast, in communes with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants and in public corporations for inter-municipal cooperation, where parity rules do not apply, women are less visible: on average, only 35 per cent of municipal councillors are women, just 20 per cent of mayors are women and only 11.8 per cent of associated public corporations for intermunicipal cooperation are headed by women. To remedy this, the Act of 17 December 2019 on the role of local elected officials provides for the amendment of the electoral code to ensure equal access for women and men to elected positions in communes and their groupings. These changes, whose impact has been assessed by the National Assembly, are scheduled to be implemented in time for the next commune elections to be held in 2026.

**(b) Information on representation of women on boards of directors and supervisory boards of public and semi-public entities**

163. As regards the private sector and semi-public entities, the Act of 27 January 2011 on the balanced representation of women and men on the boards of directors and supervisory boards and on gender equality in the workplace, also known as the Copé-Zimmermann Act, has led to a dramatic increase in the number of women on the boards of French companies listed on the stock exchange from barely 10 per cent in 2009 to 44.6 per cent today. This puts France in first place in Europe and in second place globally.

164. The Act of 24 December 2021, aimed at accelerating economic and professional equality, known as the Rixain Act, introduced the requirement of balanced representation of women and men among senior executives and members of governing bodies in companies with at least 1,000 employees. The Act also requires transparency in the matter, thus extending the parity requirements set out in the Copé-Zimmerman Act to executive and management committees.

165. In the event of non-compliance, a company has two years to meet the requirements, but must publish progress targets and the corrective measures being employed at the end of the first year. The company may be subject to a financial penalty at the end of the two-year period if it fails to reach the desired gender parity target.

166. In addition, publicly owned banks must make the granting of loans or equity capital contingent on the publication by the companies of their professional equality index.

167. With regard to the civil service and public institutions, France has introduced a number of legislative and regulatory measures aimed at improving the representation of women in management positions and bodies.

168. Since late 2019 and the adoption of the Act on civil service reform, all public sector employers have been required to implement a multi-year action plan on gender equality in the workplace that includes ensuring equal access for both women and men to the civil service corps, job families, grades and posts.

169. In addition, under the system of gender-balanced appointments in senior and executive management introduced under the Sauvadet Act of March 2012, later integrated into the agreements signed between trade unions and public sector employers in 2013 and 2018, and further strengthened by the 2019 Act on civil service reform, public sector employers are required to ensure that each gender accounts for a minimum of 40 per cent of first-time appointments at the senior and executive management level in the civil service. As a result, in 2020, women accounted for 42

per cent of first-time appointments to senior government positions, making it the first time that the target was reached.

170. The 2023–2027 gender equality plan is aimed at extending the professional equality index provided for under the Act of 5 September 2018 to all three levels of the civil service and strengthening the system for ensuring gender parity in appointments.

**(c) Online harassment: data and information on the legal framework, policies and processes in place to combat this form of harassment**

171. The Penal Code places online harassment in the category of general criminal offences and does not provide for penalties that specifically address harassment aimed at women who express public positions.

172. A number of legislative reforms have been introduced to more effectively punish acts of harassment and to provide a better understanding of the different forms that harassment can take. Under the Act of 3 August 2018 on strengthening action to combat sexual and gender-based violence, these forms of harassment are punishable by two years of imprisonment and a fine of 30,000 euros. An observatory on online hate was established by the High Audiovisual Council, now known as ARCOM, as called for in the Act of 24 June 2020 on combating hateful content on the Internet. The observatory will advocate better regulations and the establishment of more effective harassment detection and processing systems for victims.

173. Several provisions penalize harassment and stalking, in particular using digital and information technologies. Articles 222-33-2 to 222-33-2-3, insofar as they apply to acts of moral harassment; article 222-33 relating to sexual harassment; and articles 222-17 to 222-18-3 of the Penal Code relating to the use of threats, can be used to punish acts of online harassment, as they penalize harassing or threatening acts that may be committed using electronic communications. Article 24 of Act of 29 July 1881 can also be used to punish participation in online harassment, as it penalizes incitement to hatred, violence and discrimination.

174. A number of new offences have also been added to the legal arsenal available for addressing these forms of violence. For example, the Act of 24 August 2021, which added article 223-1-1 to the Penal Code, provides penalties for individual acts undertaken to reveal personal information about a person with the aim of seriously harming that person, his or her family or his or her property.

175. Criminal penalties for acts of harassment perpetrated by coordinated groups (e.g., cyber mob attacks) are provided for in article 222-33-2-2 of the Penal Code, as amended by the Act of 3 August 2018, which states that acts of harassment may also comprise comments or acts directed at the same victim by several people in a coordinated manner or at the instigation of one of them, even if each participating individual does not act repeatedly, or when several people direct comments or acts at the same victim, successively, even in the absence of coordinated action, and are aware that such comments or acts are repetitive.

176. With regard to protecting the rights of victims of online hate, France has recently developed a number of tools to make it easier to file complaints online and report hateful content. Initiated by the Ministry of the Interior, the online platform for standardization, analysis, cross-checking and referral of reports of illegal content and behaviour (PHAROS) of the central office for combating crimes committed using information and communications technology, is used to collect reports of illegal content and behaviour on the Internet and to have them processed by the judicial system. The PHAROS team is composed of 24 investigators and two supervising officers.

177. In addition, the agency responsible for providing legal aid, access to justice and assistance services to victims supports and funds specialized associations that develop information, prevention and training initiatives for professionals and assist victims of online discrimination and hate speech. The agency also supports national associations with a narrower focus, such as racism and anti-Semitism.

## **XIV. Education (1)**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 14**

#### **The Hypatia Project**

178. The Hypatia Project, funded by the Horizon 2020 programme of the European Union, ran from 2015 to 2018 and involved 19 partners in 14 countries. The project targeted pupils ages 13 to 18 and was primarily aimed at encouraging girls to pursue education in science and technology.

179. During the project's three years in existence, an array of tools was developed and made available to museums, science education centres, schools, research institutions and industry actors. Government-sponsored initiatives included workshops to raise awareness of stereotypes in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; meetings with male and female science ambassadors; and the creation of a card game that highlighted the role of women scientists in the history of science.

180. The 2023–2027 gender equality plan is aimed at strengthening the role of girls and women in scientific fields, in particular in the digital sphere. A number of initiatives are planned: 10,000 young women wishing to pursue higher education in the tech and digital sectors will receive comprehensive support that addresses all of the obstacles identified, including funding, self-confidence and networking; gender targets will be introduced for mathematics and physics/chemistry tracks in the penultimate year of high school and for the advanced mathematics track in the final year of high school; a platform linking schools and professional networks, especially those of women professionals, will be established.

#### **Sex education in schools**

181. Sex education is compulsory in accordance with the Education Code, articles L.121-1 and L.312-16 et seq., which stipulate that three sex education classes must be held each year for each homogeneous age group, starting in the first grade in elementary school. Circular No. 2018-111 of 12 September 2018 on sex education specifies how such classes should be conducted and how to make them age appropriate.

182. The Ministry of Education has organized a number of training initiatives, including an online conference on sexual violence within the family and two training seminars. Numerous resources are available on the Eduscol website, including a handbook on sexual violence within the family for education staff, in particular teachers and school counsellors, a guide on child prostitution and sex education fact sheets.

183. A working group on sex education was established in January 2023. Its outputs will be implemented at the start of the school year in September 2023.

## XV. Education (2)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 15

#### The “no to harassment” programme

184. The toll-free 3020 number, operated in collaboration with Ecole des Parents et des éducateurs d’Île de France, an association that provides education to parents and educators in Île de France, is open Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. This number is now well known in the educational community as the number to call to report harassment that the callers are unable to resolve in a school or an educational institution.

185. The calls are handled by professional social workers who can, when the situation so requires, transmit a report, securely, to a network of 399 academic and departmental harassment focal points within the education system. Since September 2017, the 3020 helpline has been used to report 11,284 situations involving harassment.

186. In April 2021, the number for Net-Ecoute was changed from 0 800 200 000, in operation since 2012, to 3018. This helpline is operated by the E-enfance Association, which was established specifically to combat cyberbullying. The helpline can be used to transmit reports to harassment focal points, who can help young victims in their educational institutions. Cyberbullying can also be reported using an application launched in 2022. The 3018 helpline is open seven days a week, from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.

187. Following the mass roll-out of the pHARe programme in September 2022, all schools and educational institutions are required to have a harassment prevention plan in place, which should reduce the number of calls to the 3020 and 3018 helplines.

188. The website [www.nonauharcelement.education.gouv.fr](http://www.nonauharcelement.education.gouv.fr) lists all the measures undertaken or supported by the ministry (e.g., information and guidance for students, whether they are the victims, witnesses or perpetrators of harassment, and resources for professional staff).

#### Steps taken to overcome discrimination in access to education for girls with disabilities and those belonging to disadvantaged groups

189. The development of the inclusive school model is aimed at enabling all children with disabilities to attend school, while taking their specific needs into account, regardless of their gender.

190. Mobile educational support teams comprising medical social workers were established in 2021 in cooperation with local inclusive educational support units. The teams also contribute indirectly in ways that benefit schools by raising disability awareness among educators and by providing practical solutions and support aimed at preventing disruptions to the students’ academic progress. By 2022, 166 mobile educational support teams had been established. The teacher serving as the focal point for education of students with disabilities is the main point of contact for parents and students with disabilities. This teacher monitors each student’s progress at school. He or she is assigned to a geographical area and works together with the local inclusive education support units. The teacher is thus also in a position to respond to identified needs and ensure that the student is not the target of discrimination of any kind.

## **XVI. Employment (1): Impact of the Interministerial Plan for Professional Equality between Women and Men (2016–2022)**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 16**

191. A number of laws have strengthened the obligations of businesses with regard to ensuring economic equality. The professional equality index established through Act No. 2018-771 of 5 September 2018 on the freedom to choose one's professional future is used to measure the gender pay gap.

192. Act No. 2021-1774 of 24 December 2021, aimed at accelerating economic and professional equality, contains new provisions aimed at promoting the equitable representation of women in the economy and in the workplace and their financial and banking independence and supporting women who are most likely to be unemployed for maternity reasons.

193. Act No. 2019-828 of 6 August 2019 on civil service reform also sets out new requirements for achieving true equality at the three levels of the civil service. The extension of paternity leave to 28 days is helping to encourage a better division of responsibilities between men and women.

194. The Government has also launched numerous initiatives to promote the integration of women and women's entrepreneurship. In 2021, such initiatives included the signing and implementation of the 2021–2023 framework agreement for women's entrepreneurship, concluded between the State and Bpifrance, and the signing and implementation of the 2021–2024 framework agreement on the integration of women in the workplace, concluded between the Ministry for Gender Equality, the Ministry of Labour and employment centres for the integration of women.

195. Through calls for projects on sexual and gender-based violence in the workplace launched in 2020 and 2022, support has been provided for joint initiatives by associations and companies on this topic.

196. The Government has also introduced the use of the "Professional equality", "Diversity" and "Alliance" labels to recognize companies across all sectors and of all sizes that have exemplary gender equality policies. In addition, the Ministry for Gender Equality gave the impetus for the development of the ISO gender equality standard, a project expected to be completed in 2023, which it has piloted together with the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, with the support of Association Française de Normalisation, the French standards organization.

197. In March 2023, the Prime Minister announced a new interministerial plan for achieving gender equality in the workplace for 2023–2027. The plan is focused on professional and economic equality and comprises a number of strategic objectives: ensuring equality in the private and public professional sphere, promoting greater gender diversity in all professions and removing obstacles to women's entrepreneurship.

## XVII. Employment (2)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 17

#### Gender equality index

198. In December 2022, 84 per cent of companies with at least 50 employees had published their professional equality index. The average score was 86 points.

199. The labour standards inspection agencies are heavily involved in promoting the index. Since 2019 and as at 2023, 695 formal notices have been issued to and 49 penalties imposed on companies for failing to publish their scores or to put in place adequate and relevant corrective measures.

200. In addition, since 2022, a penalty can be imposed on companies with more than 250 employees for failing to achieve results after three years. In 2023, this penalty will also apply to companies with 50 to 250 employees that have not reached the 75-point threshold by the deadline.

#### Extended paternity leave

201. The extension of paternity leave was one of the Government's priority policies and is accompanied by a monitoring indicator. In 2022, 71,601 fathers/spouses took paternity leave.

#### Measures to promote equal access to the labour market for women belonging to minority groups

202. The integration of newly arrived women into the workforce is a government priority, as stated by the Interministerial Committee on Immigration and Integration on 6 November 2019 and characterized in the ministerial instruction of 2022 as a key tool for the integration and emancipation of this group, which is a key tool for social cohesion.

203. The framework agreement signed on 1 March 2021 between the Government, the Office for Immigration and Integration and the stakeholders in the Public Employment Service explicitly mentions that special support must be provided to foreign women and requires the Public Employment Service and the Office for Immigration and Integration to commit to developing specific measures to ensure that newly arrived women are referred to existing programmes within their jurisdictions.

204. In addition, one of the goals set by the Interministerial Committee is to strengthen the process by which newcomers to France can validate their acquired experience. Programmes in that regard are aimed at women in particular, as around 30 per cent of newly arrived women, a higher proportion than that of newly arrived men, hold a diploma from their country of origin.

205. The Government also supports initiatives taken by associations through national calls for projects which, for the first time in 2022, sought out employment support programmes specifically aimed at newly arrived women.

206. Lastly, since 2022, the comprehensive individualized refugee support programme has offered each person having international protection status the opportunity to receive comprehensive individualized housing and employment support through a regional one-stop shop mandated by the Government. A gradual roll-out of the programme across France is scheduled for 2024. Around 40 per cent of persons receiving international protection are women; this programme will therefore enhance the support they receive and their professional integration.

## XVIII. Health (1)

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 18

#### 2018–2020 sexual health road map

207. Free information, screening and diagnosis centres for human immunodeficiency virus infections, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections were established by a decree adopted on 1 July 2015. Each year, all regional public health authorities must report on the centres in their regions. By 2022, 320 such centres had been established in the territory of France. There is at least one centre in every region.

208. There are 17 free information, screening and diagnosis centres in overseas territories:

- Six in La Réunion, located along the coast
- Four in Guadeloupe, of which one is in Saint-Martin, where the need is especially high, one in Basse-Terre, one in Point-à-Pitre and one in Marigot
- Four in French Guiana, including two in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni, where the need is greatest, one in Kourou and one in Cayenne
- Two in Martinique, in Fort-de-France
- One in Mayotte, in Mamoudzou

209. The overseas centres use mobile units to provide services in community-based and outreach settings to population groups that are not reached by the public health care system.

210. There are no centres on Saint Pierre and Miquelon and Wallis and Futuna Islands. In view of the small population size (5,974 inhabitants in Saint Pierre and Miquelon in 2021 and 12,067 in Wallis and Futuna Islands in 2018), information, screening and diagnosis services are provided by the public health authority.

211. The centres contribute to the prevention, screening and diagnosis of human immunodeficiency virus and hepatitis infections; help to identify appropriate care, preventive care, screening, diagnosis and outpatient treatment for sexually transmitted infections; and mitigate other risks linked to sexual activity by taking a comprehensive approach to sexual health, in particular by prescribing contraceptives.

212. A total of 276 centres surveyed, including 16 centres located overseas, reported having conducted 695,134 medical visits in 2021, averaging 2,537 visits per centre. Forty-four per cent of visits were screening visits, 41 per cent were follow-up visits and 8 per cent were initial or follow-up visits in connection with pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

213. Compared to 2016, there has been a significant increase in the use of contraception services, cases of sexual violence and reports of sexual disorders, even if they are still a small part of the work of the centres. The centres recorded ten times as many visits related to sexual violence, three times as many prescriptions issued for standard contraceptives and five times as many prescriptions issued for emergency contraceptives. Lastly, the number of cases of sexual disorders detected increased by 30 per cent.

214. It is very likely that the work of the centres in this regard is underreported, since some services are provided as part of unrelated visits and are not recorded.

215. In addition to the free information, screening and diagnostic centres, there are 1,200 sexual health centres (former family planning and education centres) located

throughout the territory. These centres conduct family planning visits, disseminate information regarding sexuality and family education, couples and parenting counselling and abortion counselling. They can also choose to provide screening and treatment for certain sexually transmitted infections.

216. Since January 2022, following a pilot programme in two regions, HIV screening has been made available free of charge without prescription or age limit. The 2023 Social Security Financing Act expanded this programme to also cover screening for other sexually transmitted infections for patients under 26 years of age.

217. The Government is also funding information and counselling centres on emotional, relationships and sexual matters – known as “Espaces Vie Affective Relationnelle et Sexuelle” – from the budget of the Ministry for Gender Equality. These centres provide information, counselling, awareness-raising and prevention services on an anonymous basis and free of charge. There are currently 160 such centres already in operation or in planning stages, of which six are overseas (one in French Guiana, two in La Réunion, one in Martinique and two in Mayotte). Their purpose is to provide information to clients regarding their rights (e.g., contraception, induced abortion, sexually transmitted infection prevention, combating sexual abuse) and to contribute to building self-esteem and mutual respect (e.g., sex education, respect for all sexual orientations, gender identity, intersex persons, persons with disabilities and all persons in vulnerable situations). In addition, they can support people in difficult situations or looking for guidance (e.g., desire or lack of desire for children, adoption or medically assisted reproduction, marital or family crisis and mental illness).

218. Since January 2022, contraception has been fully covered for all women under the age of 26, and since January 2023, emergency contraception has been fully covered without prescription or age limit. Male condoms have been covered for persons under the age of 25 since January 2023. The same coverage will be provided for female condoms under the gender equality plan.

### **National Health Strategy 2018–2022**

219. Perinatal health indicators reveal major persistent inequalities affecting French overseas territories. For example, the stillbirth rate (the number of stillborn babies as a share of the total number of births) is 1.5 times higher in overseas territories: 13.4 per cent in all overseas departments and regions taken together, as opposed to 8.2 per cent in mainland France in 2019. In addition, early neonatal mortality (the number of children born alive and dying within the first seven days of life as a share of all live births) is twice as high in overseas territories as in mainland France: 3.4 as opposed to 1.7 per 1,000 live births, respectively, according to data provided by the Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics. The maternal mortality rate is 3.4 times higher than in mainland France, according to the findings of the confidential national survey on maternal deaths. The preterm birth rate is also higher than in mainland France – 9.5 per cent of births as opposed to 7 per cent – as is the low birthweight rate – 10 per cent, instead of 7 per cent in mainland France – according to the 2021 National Perinatal Survey. In addition, the early pregnancy rate is higher, in particular in French Guiana, where it is seven times higher than in mainland France, and in Mayotte. Lastly, there are several notable negative determinants of health, such as excess maternal weight, which stands at 22.4 per cent as contrasted with 14.4 per cent in mainland France.

220. A number of projects have been launched to address these issues and are currently under way. For example, to follow up on the 2021 national perinatal survey, a report for each overseas territory will be published in mid-2023 to highlight developments and guide the public health response. Work is also under way at the

national level, with a particular focus on overseas territories, to better understand and analyse the causes of neonatal deaths.

221. In addition, the interministerial gender equality plan, submitted on 8 March 2023, includes, in the section on health, the operational goal to expand access to health for women in overseas territories by deploying measures to prevent avoidable maternal deaths and perinatal health.

222. Other initiatives include the elaboration of a road map for the first 1,000 days of a child's life for 2021–2022 as part of a hands-on strategy for preventing parenting difficulties and violence against children, including by raising awareness of the effects of ordinary violent discipline and shaken baby syndrome, and promoting child development, including even before the arrival of the child. Future parents and parents of children under the age of 2 can now consult a new website and an application containing practical advice and scientifically sound information on the three key health pillars during the first 1,000 days (environmental safety, nutrition and emotional security). The solidarity pact currently being drawn up specifically to implement and adapt the road map in overseas territories includes a focus on the first 1,000 days in the overseas territories.

223. Lastly, to strengthen measures to protect and promote maternal and child health, prefects, regional health agencies and departments have entered into agreements, as part of the national child protection strategy, enabling the following overseas territories to receive targeted funding from the Regional Intervention Fund: French Guiana, Reunion, Martinique, Mayotte, Saint-Martin (Guadeloupe) and Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon.

224. With regard to the fight against heavy metals, people in French Guiana are exposed to very high levels of lead and mercury. They suffer in particular from mercury pollution, which is primarily the result of illegal gold panning in tributary rivers involving the uncontrolled use of mercury, the sale of which continues to be authorized in Suriname, against all international expectations (Minamata Convention on Mercury).

225. The limit for hair mercury levels as set by the World Health Organization is currently 10 µg/g. Some research studies, for which more evidence is needed, appear to indicate that this threshold is not sufficiently high to protect against critical neurological effects. The latest study carried out in French Guiana revealed that 84 per cent of the Indigenous population screened (pregnant women in high-risk areas) had hair mercury levels that exceeded the 10 µg/g threshold. By contrast, the reference value for adults in France is 2.5 µg/g. The new strategy to combat exposure to heavy metals provides for systematic screening of all pregnant women and children under the age of 6 in French Guiana, subject to the availability of ad hoc funding.

226. In 2017, the French Society of Clinical Toxicology published recommendations on the prevention of the toxic effects of mercury at the request of the General Health Directorate. The recommended treatment threshold was set at 2.5 µg/g for pregnant women and at 1.5 µg/g for children. These recommendations are being followed as far as possible, despite the limited access to health care within the affected population groups.

227. In addition, French Guiana has been implementing an interministerial strategy to combat exposure to heavy metals since 2021. The main goals of this multi-year regional strategy, undertaken jointly by the prefecture and the regional health agency of French Guiana, are to address the determining factors related to nutritional health and offer comprehensive and appropriate care to address overexposure.

228. The multi-year regional strategy also calls for a different approach to prenatal and paediatric care that encompasses prevention, improved detection of

contamination, monitoring of potential deleterious effects, targeted epidemiological monitoring and optimized long-term monitoring. The key measures include increasing the use of analytical techniques in the territory, expanding screening and upgrading the skills of health-care professionals in order to be able to offer more suitable care options.

229. Early reports by the mobile teams set up for this purpose in 2022 indicate very positive trends at the local level and full commitment on the part of the relevant entities. In 2022, a pilot project was deployed in the Camopi Commune (Haut Oyapock) initially focusing only on lead poisoning. The first mobile team, comprising a nurse, a full-time mediator, a half-time coordinator and a part-time coordinating doctor, focused on helping people to prevent lead poisoning through a participatory, community-based approach to promoting health.

## **XIX. Health (2)**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 19**

230. Women's health is one of the areas of focus of the interministerial gender equality plan known as "Plan Toutes et Tous Égaux" presented to the Cabinet on 8 March 2023, which comprises three operational objectives and 40 specific measures.

231. The objectives are to improve women's sexual and reproductive health, take better account of the specific challenges to women's health and improve women's access to health care.

232. Some of the key measures include the elimination of the waiting period for sick leave following a miscarriage and improved psychological support for women and their partners; the launch of campaigns on contraceptive methods, the fight against sexually transmitted infections, and the importance of consent, launched online by the national public health agency in May 2023; the provision of free reusable menstrual products to young people under 26 years of age in pharmacies; awareness-raising initiatives regarding cardiovascular risks in women for health-care professionals; the deployment of 30 mobile clinics offering screening for gynaecological and cardiovascular diseases; and the introduction of a free human papilloma virus vaccination campaign for all fifth-graders who wish to be vaccinated, provided they have parental consent.

## **XX. Economic empowerment of women**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 20**

233. In 2022, women accounted for 33.5 per cent of all entrepreneurs. This figure has been rising steadily since 2018, when it stood at 27.3 per cent.

234. The 2021-2023 framework agreement for women's entrepreneurship was signed on 5 March 2021 between the Government and Bpifrance. This framework agreement is intended to be applied at the regional level.

235. In addition, the Government supports women's entrepreneurship through partnerships with networks of entrepreneurship associations – such as BGE, Réseau Entreprendre and France Active, which operates Garantie ÉGALITÉ Femmes, a bank loan guarantee programme for women entrepreneurs – and networks focused

specifically on women's entrepreneurship – such as Empow'her, Force Femmes and Les Premières.

236. With regard to innovation, the Government, in partnership with Bpifrance, is promoting women's participation in the three areas of the “i-PhD, i-Lab and i-Nov” innovation contest using three main strategies: striving for gender parity within the national panel of judges, training panel members on gender bias and promoting the contest among women's entrepreneurship associations, such as the 2023 Women's Entrepreneurship Summit, and Action'elles, a network for women in finance.

237. In addition, La French Tech supports gender equality initiatives in the tech industry through its Capitales and Communautés networks and has concluded a parity pact with French Tech 120/Next40 start-ups.

238. More detailed information about the 17 start-ups support and financing networks supported by Bpifrance is shown below:

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of persons receiving support	130 184	123 180	138 919	148 796
Number of women receiving support	58 057	57 875	65 462	67 649
Percentage of women receiving support	45%	47%	47%	45%
Number of women receiving financing (microcredit, honour loan or loan guarantee)	18 310	18 163	21 817	23 851

239. The 2023–2027 gender equality plan includes proposals that will benefit women leaders who will receive more support for their projects and be better represented in our companies through the publication of an annual barometer of women's entrepreneurship to better identify and overcome the obstacles facing entrepreneurs. The “One entrepreneur, one mentor” programme will provide women entrepreneurs with online mentoring, free of charge, for one to two years, and banking and financial coaching services offered by Banque de France for women entrepreneurs.

## XXI. Rural and marginalized groups of women

### Reply to the question contained in paragraph 21

#### Data on women entrepreneurs in rural areas

240. The interministerial committee on rural development established in 2015 set 40 per cent as the target for the proportion of women entrepreneurs in rural areas.

241. In 2022, women accounted for 33.5 per cent of entrepreneurs across all regions.

242. Women entrepreneurs receive support through the Garantie ÉGALITÉ Femmes programme, which helps them access lines of credit for financing the establishment, acquisition or development of their enterprises. Under the gender equality plan, this guarantee will be extended also to women wishing to establish or take over the operation of a farm.

243. In 2021, the Ministry for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunity and the State Secretariat for Rural Development allocated 500,000 euros for associations working in rural areas to improve information, support and care for women in difficulty or victims of violence. The funding, which is provided as part of the rural development agenda, was distributed through a call for expressions of interest and was used to fund measures that benefitted women and were tailored to the specific needs of rural areas.

244. Going a step further, in particular with regard to outreach, the ministries announced a second call for expressions of interest with a purse of 1 million euros funded by the National Agency for Territorial Cohesion. The winners were announced in August 2022.

245. In addition, in one of its seven areas of focus, the 2021-2023 framework agreement for women's entrepreneurship, signed on 5 March 2021 between the Ministry for Gender Equality and Bpifrance, calls for action to be taken in vulnerable areas, such as rural revitalization zones and priority urban development districts, and for young people, notably to encourage women entrepreneurship in rural areas. The regional versions of this framework agreement must also include measures aimed at supporting women entrepreneurship in rural areas.

246. In 2022, through public funding programmes coordinated by Bpifrance to support and finance business start-ups, women in rural areas received 3,207 microloans in support of their professional activity from Adie (28 per cent) and 737 France Active bank loan guarantees (25 per cent), of which 117 were provided through the Garanties ÉGALITÉ Femmes programme. In addition, 382 women in rural revitalization zones were granted interest-free, guarantee-free honour loans funded through solidarity groups, totalling 1,960,900 euros, and 741 women received honour loans for business start-up or acquisition, totalling 4,656,362 euros.

See below for more detailed information provided by Bpifrance Crédit for 2022:

	Total women	Total rural women	Percentage of rural women	
Adie (professional microcredit)	11 477	3 207	28	
France active (loan guarantees)	2 836	737	25	
of which guarantees provided through Garanties ÉGALITÉ Femmes		117		
	Honour loans funded through solidarity groups	Honour loans for business start-up or acquisition		
	Total	Euros	Total	Euros
Women	382	1 960 900	741	4 656 362
Men	526	2 859 388	1 417	10 539 117
Total in rural revitalization zones	908	4 820 288	2 158	15 195 479
Total not including rural revitalization zones	2 531	13 814 930	7 802	51 320 003
Women in rural revitalization zones / 2022 total	11%	11%	7%	7%
Women in rural revitalization zones / Total rural revitalization zones	42%	41%	34%	31%
Percentage of rural revitalization zones / Total	26%	26%	22%	23%

### Care for vulnerable refugee women

247. The vulnerabilities plan of the Ministry of the Interior, published in May 2021, addressed the issue of training for the staff of the Office for Immigration and Integration and the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons. The plan comprises 10 actions aimed at enhancing the way the vulnerabilities of asylum-seekers and refugees are addressed. Action No. 3 provides for the development of

training courses on identifying vulnerabilities linked to trafficking, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, and health, to be completed by the focal points for vulnerabilities at the Office for Immigration and Integration, the facilities for the initial reception of asylum-seekers and the social workers at the accommodation facilities operated by the national system for the reception of asylum-seekers. The Office for Immigration and Integration trained 205 agents in identifying vulnerabilities in June 2021 and in 2022. At the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, in 2022, 1,082 staff took part in training courses on all types of vulnerabilities.

248. The Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons is also involved in other training initiatives on the topics of violence against women, trafficking in persons and minors in particular, including for the National Court of Asylum.

249. With regard to the information provided by the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons to female asylum-seekers, action No. 5 of the 2021 vulnerabilities plan calls for the development of targeted information campaigns aimed at asylum-seekers and refugees, which contribute to earlier identification and appropriate referral of the most vulnerable among them.

250. In this regard, since 2017, the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons has been publishing a booklet with information and guidance for both men and women asylum-seekers who are vulnerable as a result of acts of violence against women, their sexual orientation or gender identity, trafficking in persons and/or torture and psychological trauma.

251. Information is also provided to women asylum-seekers on the Office's website, which was completely revised in 2022 and is now also available in English. In particular, there is now a separate page on taking vulnerabilities into account, which specifically mentions the procedures to be followed for asylum claims relating to a risk of sexual mutilation.

252. Persons with disabilities of any kind can also receive special procedural guarantees, including being accompanied by a third party to their interview at the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, as provided for in article L.531-18 of the Code on the Entry and Residence of Foreigners and the Right to Asylum. More information on this subject is available on the vulnerabilities page on the Office's website. A separate section of the asylum application form allows asylum-seekers to state any special needs they may have regarding their hearing.

253. Finally, the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons has instituted a mechanism coordinated by the Vulnerabilities Mission, established in 2016, for holding regular consultations with its institutional and associative partners on issues of vulnerability, in particular with the general and specialized associations that support women asylum-seekers in various capacities. These consultations help to strengthen the Office's expertise and its ability to identify situations where women are victims of violence, so that it can better protect them once they are granted asylum. For their part, associations and institutions can report situations of particular vulnerability involving female asylum-seekers to the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons.

254. The first assessment is carried out by the staff of the facilities for the initial reception of asylum-seekers, who are responsible for reporting persons identified as vulnerable to the regional branch of the Office for Immigration and Integration before their appointment at the one-stop shop for asylum applications. Intervening before the interview to be conducted by the Office for Immigration and Integration ensures that the best possible material reception conditions are offered to them. The vulnerabilities can then continue to be taken into consideration throughout the asylum

application process. Situations of vulnerability can also be reported directly by the Office for Immigration and Integration to the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons following the assessment interview at the one-stop shop. The consent of the asylum-seekers is obtained in such cases.

255. The vulnerabilities taken into consideration by the Office for Immigration and Integration include disabilities (motor, sensory, visual and/or auditory, mental and intellectual), serious illnesses, pregnant women and persons who are vulnerable owing to their age or family situation. In application of article L.522-2 of the Code on the Entry and Residence of Foreigners and the Right to Asylum, the staff of the Office for Immigration and Integration tasked with the assessment must be receive training in identifying vulnerabilities in particular.

256. Furthermore, if the vulnerability identified by the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons appears to require an adjustment of reception conditions, in particular with regard to accommodation, the information is relayed to the Office for Immigration and Integration, with the asylum-seeker's consent, so that a new needs assessment can be made. This procedure, which may concern women victims of gender-based violence and/or victims of trafficking, identified in particular following a personal interview at the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, is a good practice instituted to protect the best interests of vulnerable asylum-seekers and is reflected in action No. 2 of the vulnerabilities plan.

257. With regard to asylum-seekers in receipt of accommodations, the specifications for such facilities require that practitioners inform the Office for Immigration and Integration as soon as possible of any situations of vulnerability or specific reception and support needs. The Office for Immigration and Integration can then assist the asylum-seeker in finding more suitable housing, such as a specialized facility for women who are victims of violence or trafficking in persons, or one housing LGBTQI+ persons. The Office for Immigration and Integration has the capacity to provide special accommodation to 300 women victims of violence and 207 LGBTQI+ persons. As at 31 December 2022, of the 300 spots reserved for women victims of violence, 267 were taken, representing an occupancy rate of 89 per cent. Asylum-seekers accounted for 221 of the spots.

## **XXII. Climate change and disaster risk reduction**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 22**

258. The Act of 4 August 2014 on substantive equality between women and men calls for an integrated approach to the implementation of the gender equality policy, which means that the State must assess the measures being taken. While this does not refer directly to policies aimed at combating climate change, France is following the recommendations of the European Union to adopt a gender mainstreaming policy, which means taking into consideration gender issues and paying attention to the different ways in which all public policies, in particular those aimed at achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, affect women and men.

259. Taking the example of the urban development policy, in the Act of 21 February 2014 on urban planning and urban cohesion, gender equality is designated a cross-cutting issue (and is mandatory in municipal contracts).

260. In addition, the measures undertaken by France in the field of gender equality through the feminist diplomacy conducted by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the French Development Agency are part and parcel of the European and international strategy and are aimed at bringing about systemic change and integrating

gender into national thematic areas of focus, including climate, agriculture and sustainable development.

## **XXIII. Marriage and family relations**

### **Reply to the question contained in paragraph 23**

261. Forced marriage of children under the age of 18 is prohibited under French law. However, this ban does not fully address the challenge posed by customary, traditional and/or religious marriages, which continue to be practised. In this respect, the Ministry for Gender Equality supports Association Voix de femmes, which operates the SOS Mariage forcé hotline: 01 30 31 0505.

262. In addition, in connection with the work of the European Commission on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, discussions are under way on the possibility of expanding the definition of exploitation to include forced marriage and illegal adoption.

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