

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
10 June 2013

Original: English

---

**Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**  
**Pre-sessional working group****List of issues in relation to the combined fourth, fifth and sixth periodic reports of Belarus (E/C.12/BLR/4-6), adopted by the pre-sessional working group at its fifty-first session (21-24 May 2013)****I. General information**

1. Please indicate whether the Covenant has been invoked in national courts of law and provide examples of such cases. Please also provide information on the availability of effective remedies for individuals claiming a violation of the rights under the Covenant.
2. Please provide information on steps taken to establish a national human rights institution in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions (Paris Principles), as the State party has previously indicated.

**II. Issues relating to the general provisions of the Covenant (arts. 1-5)****Article 2, paragraph 2 - Non-discrimination**

3. Please indicate whether the State party intends to adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation addressing discrimination in all areas, prohibiting direct and indirect, as well as de facto and de jure discrimination, reflecting a comprehensive list of grounds for discrimination and providing for appropriate remedies to victims.
4. Please provide information on steps taken to combat and prevent societal stigma and discrimination against persons living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, and to ensure their enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Covenant, including access to employment, health care, and education.

**Article 3 - Equal rights of men and women**

5. Please provide comprehensive information on the efforts taken by the State party, including disaggregated data, to enhance the representation of women in senior positions in State bodies, including the legislative, executive and judicial bodies. Please also provide

information on the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Gender Equality for 2011-2015 and the interim results achieved.

### **III. Issues relating to the specific provisions of the Covenant (arts. 6-15)**

#### **Article 6 - The right to work**

6. Please provide information on the impact of measures taken, including statistics disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic group and rural/urban areas, to reduce unemployment among women, youth, persons with disabilities, refugees and Roma people.

7. Please provide data concerning employment in the informal economy, including its extent, characteristics and earnings by different categories of work. Please specify what measures are in place to guarantee access of persons employed in the informal economy, in particular older workers and women, to basic services and social protection.

8. Please indicate the measures taken to ensure that workers on short-term contracts are not deprived arbitrarily of employment.

#### **Article 7 - The right to just and favourable conditions of work**

9. Please indicate the current level of minimum wages and inform the Committee as to whether the minimum wage provides for a decent standard of living for the workers and their families.

10. Please provide information on the wage differences between men and women by sectors, and indicate what measures have been taken to give effect to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and reduce the gender pay gap, and the impact thereof.

11. Please indicate the measures taken by the State party to implement effectively legislation that criminalizes sexual harassment in the workplace, and describe the mechanisms in place to monitor such implementation.

#### **Article 8 – Trade union rights**

12. Please indicate: (a) all the conditions that must be fulfilled to form or join the trade union of one's choice; and (b) whether there are any restrictions on the exercise of the right to form or join trade unions by workers, and how they have been applied in practice.

13. Please indicate any restrictions on the right to strike in the public and private sectors, as well as the essential services for which strikes are prohibited. Please also outline the measures taken to fully guarantee the constitutional right to strike in practice.

#### **Article 9 - The right to social security**

14. Please provide information on the social assistance schemes as well as the conditions applicable to: (a) self-employed persons who are not eligible to the mandatory sickness and pension insurance; (b) persons working in the informal economy; and (c) persons in need of income support, including asylum-seekers and refugees.

15. Please indicate to what extent non-nationals residing in the State party benefit from non-contributory schemes for income support, access to health care and social assistance for families.

---

## **Article 10 - Protection of the family, mothers and children**

16. Please provide information on measures taken, legislative or otherwise, to combat domestic violence against women and children, including marital rape and sexual abuse against children, and to provide access to adequate remedies. Please also provide information on the number of registered cases of domestic violence, including marital rape and sexual abuse of women and children, since 2009, the sanctions imposed on perpetrators and the remedies provided to victims.

17. Please indicate whether the draft law on countering trafficking in persons (State party's report, E/C.12/BLR/4-6, para. 288) has been adopted. Please provide information on the extent of trafficking in women, men, and children for purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour, the measures taken to combat this phenomenon, as well as statistics, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic group, rural/urban areas, on the number of reported cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced labour, the investigations, prosecutions and convictions, the sentences imposed on perpetrators and the redress and compensation awarded to victims.

## **Article 11 - The right to an adequate standard of living**

18. Please indicate how austerity measures have impacted on people's real incomes and living standards and provide information on the measures taken to address any adverse effects of the financial crisis on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, including by disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups.

19. Please highlight the measures taken to further eliminate poverty, especially in rural areas and among disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including families with three or more children and single-parent households (in particular female-headed households), older persons and persons with disabilities.

20. Please indicate the measures taken to ensure access to adequate and affordable housing by disadvantaged and marginalized groups and individuals, especially refugees, young families, families with many children, older persons and persons with disabilities, and provide information on any progress made in improving their living conditions.

## **Article 12 - The right to physical and mental health**

21. Please provide information on measures taken to address the high incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STI) and on steps that have been taken to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health services by all sections of the population, and to promote sexual and reproductive health education, in particular for adolescent girls and boys. Please also report on the implementation of the State Programme on HIV prevention for 2011-2015 (E/C.12/BLR/4-6, para. 441) and the interim results achieved, including on the antiretroviral therapy coverage.

22. Please indicate the measures taken to combat tobacco use, excessive alcohol consumption and drug use, particularly among adolescents. Please provide information on the results achieved following the implementation of the following programmes: (a) the programme to prevent alcohol abuse and alcoholism for 2006-2010; (b) the comprehensive tobacco control programme for 2008-2010; (c) the programme of comprehensive measures to address drug abuse and drug trafficking and related offences in Belarus for 2009-2013 (E/C.12/BLR/4-6, para. 431).

23. Please report on measures taken to address the high rate of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and the progress achieved.

**Articles 13 and 14 - The right to education**

24. Please provide statistical data on school dropout rates at various levels of education, disaggregated by age, sex, nationality, urban/rural areas. Please provide information on measures taken to eliminate indirect costs (e.g. expenses for school books, uniforms, transport, special fees such as exam fees, contributions to district education boards, etc.) in primary education.

25. Please indicate the measures taken by the State party to accommodate students wishing to study in Belarusian-language classes in higher education.

**Article 15 - Cultural rights**

26. Please indicate the measures taken by the State party, including by strengthening bilateral cooperation, to ensure the enjoyment of cultural rights by minority groups.

---