



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

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

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

Combined third and fourth periodic reports of States parties

Armenia*

* The present report is being issued without formal editing.

For the initial report submitted by the Government of Armenia, see CEDAW/C/ARM/1 and Corr.1 which was considered by the Committee at its seventeenth session. For the second periodic report, see CEDAW/C/ARM/2 which was considered by the Committee at its Exceptional session.



Introduction

Armenia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1993 and has submitted two periodic reports since that time: the initial report in 1996, and the second report in 1999. After the second report was considered by the Committee in 2002, additional information was requested on the changes that had occurred in terms of the equal participation of women in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country in the period from 1999 through 2002.

Accordingly, this report covers the period from 2002 through 2006 and contains information on subsequent legislative and institutional measures taken by the State to improve the status of women in society, including by means of eliminating all forms of discrimination and effecting true equality between men and women.

The principal guarantee of the achievement of that goal is the Constitution of Armenia of 1995, which has supreme juridical force. The referendum of 27 November 2005 adopted amendments to the Constitution. Law-making bodies are guided in their work by the international commitments and standards agreed to by the Republic of Armenia, as well as by the Constitutional provision obliging the National Assembly (parliament) to bring prevailing law into conformance with the new provisions within two years after the adoption of the constitutional amendments.

This report took into account the final comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/SR.571 and 572) regarding the second periodic report of Armenia (CEDAW/C/ARM/2).

Report preparation

An interagency working group consisting of experts from the ministries and agencies listed below and coordinated by the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia was formed to prepare this report:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Ministry of Labour and Social Issues;
- Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs;
- Ministry of Agriculture;
- Ministry of Justice;
- Ministry of Environmental Protection;
- Republic of Armenia Police;
- National Statistical Service.

In preparing the report, the interagency working group was guided by the principles contained in the document titled "Compilation of Guidelines for the Form and Content of Reports to be

Submitted by States Parties to the International Human Rights Treaties: Addendum" (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.1/Add.2), prepared by the Committee.

Article 1

For purposes of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

1. An energetic process to update the legal framework is under way in Armenia: constitutional amendments have been adopted, domestic laws are being reformed, a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements have been signed, the institution of the Human Rights Defender has been created and the process of ratifying conventions continues.

2. Law-making bodies are guided in their work by the commitments and international standards that have been accepted, as well as by the provisions of the new Constitution obliging the parliament to bring prevailing law into conformity with the adopted changes within two years.

3. Article 6 of the Constitution states:

"International treaties that have been ratified are a constituent part of the legal system of the Republic of Armenia. If norms other than those provided by the laws are provided in a treaty, the norms of the treaty shall prevail "

4. The definition of discrimination that is given in Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is, by definition, a component of domestic law.

Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

a) To embody the principle of equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;

b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;

c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;

d) To refrain from any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public agencies and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;

e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;

f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;

g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

5. Armenian law provides all the guarantees of the protection of human and civil rights, including the prohibition of discrimination against women. In Armenia, there are no laws, resolutions, decisions, policies or practices that discriminate against women.

6. Over the period under report, Armenia signed and ratified a number of international treaties involving the protection of human rights and, separately, the protection of women's rights.

International treaties of the UN, among which are:

Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, ratified by the Republic of Armenia on 25 March 2003.

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 6 October 1999, New York, ratified on 23 May 2006.

Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1953, ratified on 27 October 2007.

International treaties of the Council of Europe, among which are:

Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 4 November 2000, ratified on 25 October 2004, entered into force on 1 April 2005.

Protocol No. 14 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, amending the control system of the Convention, 13 May 2004, ratified on 8 December 2004.

European Social Charter, Strasbourg, 3 May 1996, ratified on 25 December 2003, entered into force on 1 March 2004.

Conventions of the International Labour Organization, among which are:

Labour Inspection Convention, 1947, ratified on 25 October 2004.

Forced Labour Convention, 1930, ratified on 25 October 2004.

Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970, ratified on 13 December 2004.

Protection of Workers' Claims (Employers' Insolvency) Convention, 1992, ratified on 28 February 2005.

Paid Vacations (Seafarers) Convention (revised in 1970), ratified on 3 October 2005.

7. The new version of the Constitution (2005) not only preserves the articles that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and that secure the equality of rights of men and women upon entry into marriage, during marriage, and in the dissolution of the marriage, but also improves the provisions on the protection of the family, maternity, and children.

8. According to Article 3 of the Constitution:

“The human being, his/her dignity, and the fundamental human rights and freedoms are an ultimate value. The State guarantees the protection of human rights and freedoms in accordance with the principles and norms of international law.”

9. Article 5 states:

“State and local self-government bodies and public officials are competent to perform only such acts for which they are authorized by the Constitution or laws”.

10. Under Article 14.1 of the Constitution (added by the referendum):

“Everyone shall be equal before the law.

“Any discrimination based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion, belief, political or any other views, membership in a national minority, property status, birth, disability, age or other personal or social circumstances shall be prohibited”.

11. The principle of the equality of men and women is also formulated in articles 18, 19, 20, 30 and 35 and in many other articles of the Constitution guaranteeing protection of fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms.

12. For example, paragraph 4 of Article 18 states:

“Everyone shall, in conformity with the international treaties of the Republic of Armenia, be entitled to apply to the international agencies protecting human rights and freedoms with a request to protect his/her rights and freedoms”.

13. Under Article 19:

“Everyone shall have the right to restoration of his/her violated rights and to an explanation of the grounds of the charge against him/her in a public hearing conducted by an independent and impartial court within a reasonable amount of time and in conformity with all requirements of justice”.

14. Among the amendments made to the 2005 Constitution was a clause added to Article 101, according to which:

“In conformity with the procedure set forth in the Constitution and the law on the Constitutional Court, the application to the Constitutional Court may be filed by:...

6) every person in a specific case when the final judicial act has been adopted, when the possibilities of judicial protection have been exhausted, and when the constitutionality of a law provision applied by the act in question is being challenged;...”

15. Article 20 stipulates the following:

“Everyone shall be entitled to legal assistance. In cases prescribed by the law, the legal assistance shall be provided at the expense of the state resources.

“Everyone shall have a right to the assistance of a legal defender chosen by him/her, starting from the moment of his/her arrest, subjection to a security measure or indictment.

“Every person shall have the right to a review of the judgment against him/her by a higher instance court in conformity with the procedure prescribed by the law.

“Every convicted person shall have a right to request pardon or mitigation of the punishment.

“The damages incurred by the victim shall be compensated in conformity with the procedure prescribed by the law”.

16. Under Article 6 of the Advocates Law of the Republic of Armenia, for example, the State guarantees free legal assistance in criminal cases in the instances specified and in the manner prescribed by the Criminal Procedure Code, as well as in the manner prescribed by the Civil Procedure Code in the following instances:

1. In cases involving the recovery of alimony.
2. In cases involving damages resulting from maiming or other harm done to health, as well as in cases resulting from the death of a breadwinner.

Free legal assistance is provided by the Chamber of Advocates at State expense.

17. Based on Article 30, all citizens of the Republic of Armenia who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote and participate in referenda, as well as participate directly or through their freely elected representatives in State administration and local self-governance.

18. Article 35 (amended by the referendum) states:

"The family is the natural and fundamental unit of the society.

"Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and start a family of their own free will. They enjoy equal rights to enter into marriage, during the marriage and upon divorce.

"Dismissal for reasons connected with maternity is prohibited. Every woman-employee shall, in case of pregnancy and childbirth, have the right to paid maternity leave and parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child ".

19. The fifth paragraph of Article 39 stipulates that all citizens have an equal right to receive a free education on a competitive basis in State institutions of higher learning and other specialized educational institutions in the manner prescribed by law.

20. Article 3 of the Labour Code pertains to principles of labour law. Paragraph 3 of that article provides for equal rights for the parties of labour relations regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, citizenship, social status, religious belief, marital status, age, ideological beliefs or opinions, membership in a party, trade union, or social organization or other circumstances unrelated to an employee's performance.

21. Article 143 of the Criminal Code specifies criminal liability for a direct or indirect violation of human or civil rights and freedoms that is based on nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, or property or other status and that has damaged the citizen's lawful interests.

22. Article 156 of the Criminal Code specifies criminal liability for the groundless refusal to hire, or groundless dismissal of, a woman because she is pregnant or of any other person because that person has a child under the age of 3.

23. The Law of the Republic of Armenia on the Human Rights Defender, which established the institution of the country's Human Rights Defender, has been in effect since 1 January 2004.

Under Article 2 of that law, the Human Rights Defender is an independent, unaffiliated official who, in accordance with the Constitution and Republic of Armenia law, as well as the generally recognized principles and norms of international law, defends human rights and fundamental freedoms violated by State and local self-governing bodies and officials.

Under paragraph 1 of Article 8 of that law, any individual, regardless of nationality, citizenship, place of residence, sex, race, age, political or other views or capacity, has recourse to the Human Rights Defender.

24. The resolution of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No. 550-A, of 25 September 2002, created an interdepartmental commission headed by the deputy minister of social security (the ministry is now the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues) to develop a national programme for the improvement of women's status.

On 8 April 2004, the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No. 645-N approved the National Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for the Period 2004–2010.

25. The Programme establishes the principles, priorities and basic directions of the current State policy for resolving women's issues. It is based on relevant provisions of the Constitution and is geared to fulfilling the commitments called for by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the recommendations of the 1995 Fourth World Conference in Beijing, the documents of the Council of Europe's Committee for Equality between Men and Women, and other international instruments ratified by the Republic of Armenia.

26. The Programme calls for providing equal rights and opportunities for women and men at the decision-making level in the public and political spheres, improving the socio-economic status of women and improving women's health and eradicating violence against women, to include trafficking in women and girls, as well as will help to eliminate poverty within the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which was approved by the government on 8 August 2003 (resolution No. 994 N).

27. Other important areas of the Paper involve the implementation of appropriate measures in education and culture, the coverage of women's issues by the mass media, and institutional reforms.

28. The Election Code establishes a 15-percent quota for women to be chosen from proportional lists instead of the former 5-percent quota, and at least one out of every 10 candidates on the list must be a woman.

29. The new Family Code, adopted in 2004, takes into account equally the interests both of men and women. For purposes of enforcing the principle of equality of the spouses, the concept of paternity was also inserted into a number of articles aimed at protecting maternity and children (Article 1, parts 1, 3 and 4; Article 24, parts 1, 2 and 3; Article 46, parts 1 and 2; Article 77, paragraphs a, b and c).

30. A gender focus has also been included in the Labour Code that took effect in June 2005. In a number of cases involving work such as overtime work, night work, and, inter alia, watchman's work, pregnant women and women with children are allowed to do such work, but only if the employee herself consents to do so, that is, only if she is afforded the opportunity to freely make the choice herself. A ban is imposed only on having pregnant women and women with children under the age of 1 do work that involves harmful working conditions and hazardous factors that affect the health of the mother and child. Those and other norms are provided for in articles pertaining to guarantees for pregnant women and for employees with children and in chapters

pertaining to working hours, vacation time, wages, benefits, safety, and employee health (articles 144, 148, 155, 172 and 258).

31. Absolutely new is the provision prohibiting violations of the equal rights of women and men and sexual harassment of co-workers and subordinates: under Article 221, such behaviour is regarded as a gross violation of labour discipline and entails sanctions.

32. In 2005, the Republic of Armenia adopted laws on social assistance, on employment and the social safety net in the event of unemployment, and on State labour inspection.

33. These laws prohibit all forms of discrimination and any type of physical violence and/or psychological abuse. They lay the foundation for protecting women against domestic violence and provide for an entire array of social services and assistance for large families and single mothers. They are geared to managing labour migration. Declared as priority programmes are employment programmes for non-competing groups of the public that consist primarily of women and youth.

34. In addition, procedures are established for inspecting facilities to identify violations of labour norms and monitor compliance with guarantees established by law, including guarantees for individuals under the age of 18 and for women. Hiring-related discrimination on the basis of sex is prohibited, and measures are provided for protecting the violated rights of an employee.

35. As the legislative base is being updated, subordinate legislation is being drafted for purposes of enforcement. All that legislation, however, entered into force only comparatively recently (and the date of entry into effect has been pushed back for some articles), many have not undergone gender analysis and, overall, the tempo of the reforms varies from field to field, which makes it too early to speak of real, tangible results. Nonetheless, there is every reason to assert that serious change is under way not only at the legislative level, but also at the institutional, programme, and psychological levels.

Article 3

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

36. The continuing economic blockade, the socio-economic adjustments associated with the transition to a market economy and the high levels of unemployment and poverty are placing a multitude of obstacles on the path to democratization and the rule of law. Women are the most vulnerable component of society as a result of the negative aspects of those processes, which is why the government is devoting greater attention to protecting their interests.

37. Operating in the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues is the Department of Women's, Family, and Children's Issues, which, in essence, constitutes the main national mechanism for the social protection of women, as well as gender equality.

38. The National Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for 2004–2010 calls for measures in the socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres.

39. Sections of the programme have plans to conduct a gender analysis of existing legislation and to generate a new strategy and new, efficient mechanisms for implementing gender policy.

40. As full-fledged members of society, women in the Republic of Armenia enjoy all the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, among which is the right to access to cultural assets.

41. Article 40 of the Constitution:

“Everyone shall have the right to freedom of literary, aesthetic and scientific and technical creation, to make use of scientific achievements, and to participate in the cultural life of the society”.

42. The rights of citizens to cultural accessibility are also consolidated by laws and statutes of the Republic of Armenia: the law on the fundamental principles of legislation in the field of culture (adopted by the National Assembly in November 2002) and the Conceptual Framework of the Republic of Armenia for the Preservation, Dissemination, and Development of Culture (adopted in October 2000 by resolution of the Government No. 46).

The second document defines the principles underlying cultural policy: freedom of cultural activities, accessibility of cultural assets, etc.

43. It should be noted that the accessibility of cultural assets for all members of society is also provided by provisions of the European Cultural Convention of 1954, to which Armenia acceded in February 1997.

44. At present, based on the National Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for 2004–2010, cultural institutions are planning to do a number of things to monitor processes associated with the dissemination and promulgation of information that treads on the dignity of women and has a negative impact on society's perception of the role of women.

45. According to the Programme's schedule of events and based on current trends in the development of society, plans call for the following:

- business courses that will help women working in the cultural sphere to acquire new skills and knowledge,

- brochures on gender-policy issues and women's rights to enhance society's level of awareness in this area.

46. At present, the Ministry of Culture is headed by a woman. The deputy minister of culture is also a woman.

47. The percentages for men and women employees average 30 percent and 70 percent, respectively.

Among the 397 women working in the theatre, 53 are honoured or folk actresses of the Republic of Armenia.

48. The National Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society for 2004–2010 calls for events in the socio-economic, political, and cultural spheres.

49. The priority areas declared are the fight against human trafficking, particularly trafficking in women and children, and the fight against HIV/AIDS and domestic violence. Special attention is focused on issues involving assistance to the economic activities of women and the broader recruitment of women to management bodies.

50. In March 2004, an agreement on the joint implementation of the regional project "Gender and Politics in the Southern Caucasus: Armenia and Georgia", the components of which were largely consonant with the goals and objectives of the National Program of Action, was signed by the government of Armenia, the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues, and UNDP.

51. Conferences, seminars and round tables devoted to gender issues—including mixed events for representatives of NGOs, the mass media, and regional governing bodies for the discussion of all the components of the programme of action and opportunities for generating strategies to improve the status of women—are being conducted within the framework of the National Programme and the agreement. Individual re-training programmes are under way for women elected to the Organization of Local Communities. Booklets with information on the recently ratified optional protocol to this Convention pertaining to the procedure for filing individual and group complaints have been published and disseminated. Seminars and talk shows covering the problem of domestic violence have been conducted for journalists.

52. Gender analysis of existing laws is drawing to a close, as a result of which a new strategy and new, efficient mechanisms for implementing gender policy will be generated.

Article 4

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in this Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

53. The National Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for 2004–2010 can be regarded as the principal temporary special measure aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women. The Programme, being non-discriminatory in point of fact, is geared to restoring the role of women in those spheres of the life of society in which, at present, women's influence and status are waning and in which women are in the direst need of the support of the State for the protection of their interests.

54. The National Programme calls for an annual report to the Government regarding the programme's implementation. The Ministry of Labour and Social Issues is the programme coordinator.

55. The new version of the Constitution gives new expression to individual articles that declare citizens' rights to work, education, housing, and health protection. In a more expanded format, those rights are assigned in Article 48, which addresses the fundamental objectives of the State in the economic, social, and cultural spheres.

Article 48. The fundamental objectives of the State in the economic, social and cultural spheres are:

- 1) *To care for and protect the family, mothers, and children;*
- 2) *To promote employment and improve working conditions for the public;*
- 3) *To stimulate housing construction and promote improved housing conditions for every citizen;*
- 4) *To implement programmes for protecting public health and to promote the creation of conditions for effective, accessible medical services;*
- 5) *To promote the participation of youth in the political and cultural life of the country;*
- 6) *To encourage the expansion of athletics and sports;*
- 7) *To implement programmes to prevent and treat disability, and to encourage the participation of the disabled in the life of the society;*
- 8) *To promote the development of free higher and other special education;*
- 9) *To promote the development of science and culture;*
- 10) *To pursue a policy that ensures environmental safety for the current and future generations;*
- 11) *To promote the easy access of every person to national and universal assets;*
- 12) *To provide a decent standard of living for the elderly.*

The State, within the limits of its capabilities, shall be obliged to take measures to implement the objectives assigned in this article.

56. Articles on the protection of mothers and children are also contained in the Labour and Family codes, as indicated in Article 2 of this report (Labour Code—articles 144, 148, 155, 172 and 258; Family Code—Article 1, parts 1, 3 and 4; Article 24, parts 1, 2 and 3; Article 35, Article 46, parts 1 and 2; Article 77, paragraphs a, b and c).

57. The new version of the Constitution gives new expression to individual articles that declare the rights of citizens to work, education, housing, health protection, etc. Those rights are assigned in a more expanded format in Article 48, which pertains to the fundamental objectives of the State in the economic, social, and cultural spheres. In accordance with that article, the family, maternity, and children are placed under the auspices of the State. Moreover, the State is obliged to promote the participation of youth in the political, economic and cultural life of the country; to promote employment and improved working conditions for the public; to stimulate housing construction and facilitate the improvement of housing conditions for every citizen; to take measures to ensure a decent standard of living for the elderly; to implement programmes to prevent and treat disability and encourage the participation of the disabled in the life of society; etc.

Article 5

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

58. One section of the National Programme calls for work and continued interaction with the mass media so as to overcome the prejudices and stereotypes existing in society and modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women. Plans call for seminars for journalists, the preparation on a competitive basis of television reports and information-analysis articles, the conduct of discussions and round tables on radio and television, etc.

59. NGOs play a large role in this process. Specifically, over the last four or five years; in the context of the projects "Gender Awareness and Gender Sensitivity: Prerequisites for an Equitable Democracy" and "Gender Expertise as a Prerequisite for the Formation of a Democratic Culture and Legal Awareness", with the support of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (Warsaw), the Centre for Gender Studies of the Association of Women with a University Education has been conducting programmes geared to raising gender awareness and consciousness among the students of an array of institutions of higher learning and general-education schools, among activists of public organizations and among representatives of the country's legislative and executive branches; they indicate that, with every passing year, a positive perception of gender equality is taking hold in the society, and democratic values such as respect for the citizenship and the rights of women to participate in socio-political life are taking shape among students who have taken courses pertaining to gender disciplines.

60. The institutionalization of gender education in Armenia that is under way within the context of a social partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science, along with the conduct of seminars on the integration of a gender component into State policy that involve the participation of the Ministry of Territorial Administration's participation, and the gender analysis of legislation are helping to eliminate gender stereotypes and to change notions about the role of women in Armenian society. The approaches to gender issues in State policy have also begun to change. The government resolution for improving the status of women and enhancing their roles in society for 2004–2010 defined the measures for achieving gender equality in the country.

61. In the 2006–2007 school year, gender-related interdisciplinary and special courses continued to be taught at:

1. Yerevan State Economic University
2. Yerevan Galik University
3. Yerevan branch of the St. Petersburg Institute for Foreign Economic Relations, Economics and Law
4. M. Nalbandyan Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute
5. Kh. Tumanyan Vanadzor State Pedagogical Institute
6. Goris State Pedagogical College
7. Interlingua Linguistics University
8. Yerevan Northern University
9. Yerevan State University of Physical Culture
10. Goris Pedagogical College.

62. Based on the draft public standards developed for gender education and the experience garnered over the past three years, new programs of gender-related courses were created and improved, and seven interdisciplinary and 13 special gender-related courses continue to be taught at 10 universities.

63. The following interdisciplinary and special gender-related courses, begun in the 2005–2006 school year, continue to be taught:

- *interdisciplinary courses:*
 - "Introduction to Gender Theory" in the stomatology and pharmacology departments of the Yerevan State Medical Institute
 - in the department of linguistics of the Yerevan branch of the St. Petersburg University for Foreign Economic Relations, Economics and Law
 - "Fundamentals of Gender Awareness" in the department of journalism of Yerevan Northern University
 - "Introduction to Gender Issues" in the department of journalism
 - "Gender Equality in the System of Human Rights" in the department of basic military training and physical education
 - "Gender-based Discourse of History" in the department of history

- "Culture Studies and Gender" in the department of foreign languages of the Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute
- "Gender and Discrimination" in the department of Russian philology of Vanadzor State Pedagogical Institute
- "Fundamentals of Gender Awareness" in the translation department and the Romance/Germanic languages department of the Yerevan Interlingua Linguistics University
- "Introduction to Gender Theory" at the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture
- *special gender-related courses:*
 - "Gender and Economics" in the department of business and economics of resource management at the Yerevan State Institute of Economics
 - "Gender and Economics" in the department of mathematics and cybernetics at the Yerevan State Institute of Economics
 - "Gender and the Law" in the department of law of the L. Kalashyan Armenian Open University
 - "Gender and Economics: Legal Aspects" in the physics and mathematics department
 - "Gender and Psychology" in the scholastics department of Vanadzor State Pedagogical Institute
 - "Gender Aspects of Ethnocultural Studies" in the department of history
 - "Gender-based Discourse of History" in the history and philological department of the Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute

The gender courses are aimed at:

- passing on information geared to forming an egalitarian democratic culture,
- forming a sense of gender equality and the aspiration to it,
- developing an informed attitude toward the elimination of gender stereotypes that hamper the equality of men and women and the ability to identify and eliminate discrimination in the political and socio-economic spheres
- providing a glimpse into the world of violence and human trafficking,
- developing the ability to evaluate and denounce negative behaviours toward women.

64. Particular attention is being devoted to familiarizing students with UN, Council of Europe and OSCE documents on gender equality and domestic human-rights legislation, as well as international instruments ratified by Armenia, aimed at achieving gender equality.

65. Overall, for all the institutions of higher learning, the course has been taken by 687 students, among which the number of adolescents (176) was greater than in the past year.

66. Gender-awareness lessons have been taught since September 2006 in 30 general-education schools, including seven schools in Yerevan, nine schools in Shirak Marz (Province), seven schools in Lori Marz, three schools in Syunik Marz, and one school each in the Ararat, Armavir, Kotayk and Aragatsotni marzes. In the schools, the teaching is done in 35 classes consisting of four at the seventh-grade level, nine at the eighth-grade level, 17 at the ninth-grade level, and five at the tenth-grade level (with five schools each having two instructors to do the teaching). The classes consist of a total of 883 students, 491 of whom are girls and 392, boys. A total of 351

schoolchildren, 199 of whom are girls and 152, boys, are taking the classes in Yerevan and nearby regions. The lessons are being taught to 288 children in Shirak Marz (157 girls and 131 boys) and to 244 in Lori Marz (135 girls and 109 boys).

67. Developed and published as teaching aids are two books—*Conceptual Framework for the State Policy in Gender Education. Draft Public Standards for Gender Education and Gender Education in the Higher School. Draft Public Education Standards*—which, in practical terms, provide the higher school with the requisite curricula for the interdisciplinary course "Fundamentals of Gender Awareness" and for the specialties of history, law, economics, philosophy, pedagogy, cultural studies, history [sic], pedagogy [sic], psychology, etc.

68. More than 30 books in the Gender Studies series have been published, as have the textbooks *Fundamentals of Gender Awareness, Gender and Discrimination, Gender and Economics, Gender-related Transformations in the History of Armenia, Gender-based Discourse of History, Gender Focuses of Ethnocultural Studies and Gender and the Law*. Work has been completed on the teaching-aid package "Lessons on Gender Awareness" for general-education schools, which includes a textbook, teaching guidelines, a gender-education standard, and a programme.

Article 6

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

69. The struggle against human trafficking is a fundamental, high-priority issue for the Government of Armenia.

70. An October 2002 decision of the prime minister created an interdepartmental commission to eliminate human trafficking, and its members include representatives from all concerned ministries and departments, experts from National Assembly and government staffs, and representatives from public organizations. The interdepartmental commission is collaborating with non-governmental and international organizations that address human-trafficking issues.

71. The interdepartmental commission drafted the Conceptual Framework to Combat Human Trafficking and the National Programme of Action for 2004–2006, which were approved by the government in January 2004. The commission studied the suggestions of a human-trafficking focus group consisting of international organizations accredited in Armenia, as well as the U.S. Department of State.

72. The Second National Programme of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings for 2007–2009, which was adopted by the government in December 2007, encompasses such areas of activity as improvement of legislation, a study to determine the extent of human trafficking in Armenia and outside it and implementation of programmes to render assistance to victims of human trafficking and to protect them. Special attention has been devoted to the creation of a mechanism for the referral of victims of human trafficking.

73. In March 2004, the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the representative office of the UN Development Programme in Armenia signed a 2-year Agreement on the Implementation of the Programme to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Assistance in the Development of the Capabilities and Means of the State to Eliminate the Phenomenon, and Provision of Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking. The governments of the Netherlands and Norway provided financial support for the programme.

74. The programme essentially employs measures called for by the National Programme. Three primary implementers have been recruited for that work, which is being performed under the control of the interdepartmental commission: the representative offices of the UN Development Programme and the International Organization for Migration in Armenia, and the representative office of the U.S.-based United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) in Armenia.

75. UNDP's Programme to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in Armenia got under way in 2004 and was extended for another three years in order to further develop the policy aimed at combatting human trafficking on an institutional level, as well as to provide direct assistance to victims of human trafficking.

76. In April 2004, the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues and the international public organization UMCOR signed a protocol of cooperation whose purpose was to provide comprehensive information on human trafficking to the representatives of State structures who were in direct contact with the public. The work was done in stages. Courses were arranged for employees of capital-city and regional social services and employment centres. At the moment, the third stage of the programme is drawing to a close: a working group was formed that is completing the development of a handbook on mechanisms for returning victims of human trafficking at the national level.

77. To expand institutional capabilities, networks of local and regional non-governmental organizations and mass media were created in January 2005 and remain in operation.

78. For purposes of cooperation, the police's organized crime bureau, the general procurator's office, and the migration agency have signed memoranda of understanding with UNDP.

79. The Human Trafficking Bureau of the Republic of Armenia Police has been in operation since June 2005.

80. In February 2004, the representative office of the OSCE in Armenia began a programme to assist in enhancing criminal law pertaining to human trafficking and witness protection, the goal of which is to create an integral field of law for the effective criminalization of human trafficking in the republic, as well as to improve the protection of victims and witnesses.

81. An additional six articles of the Criminal Code that have been reviewed by Council of Europe experts and were developed by the Ministry of Justice to create mechanisms to protect witnesses and to enhance liability for crimes against children and for cybercrimes have been submitted to the Republic of Armenia National Assembly.

82. Criminal liability for human trafficking is covered by articles 132 and 132.1 of the Criminal Code.

“Article 132. Recruitment, transport, delivery, concealment or procurement of people for purposes of exploitation.

1. Recruitment, transport, delivery, concealment or procurement of people for purposes of exploitation, with the use of violence or the threat of violence or with the use of other types of coercion, by means of kidnapping, fraud, the use of the vulnerability of an individual's position or the procurement of the consent of the person in charge of that individual via payment or provision or derivation of gain

2. The same acts,

1) if committed against a person under the age of 18;

2) if committed against a person who, because of mental disorder, does not have the ability to fully or partially recognize the nature or significance of his or her actions or to control them;
shall be punishable by incarceration for 7–10 years.

3. The acts addressed in the first and second parts of this article,

1) if committed against two or more individuals;

2) if committed by a group of persons by previous concert;

4) if they involve the use of an official position;

5) if they involve the use of violence that represents a danger to life or limb or the threat of such violence;

shall be punishable by incarceration for 7–10 years.

4. The acts addressed in the first and second parts of this article,

1) if committed by an organized group;

2) if they result in the accidental death of the victim or in other grave consequences;

shall be punishable by incarceration for 10–15 years.

5. This article takes exploitation to mean prostitution or other sexual exploitation, coerced labour or services, enslavement or placement of another into a state equivalent to slavery, and removal of organs.

Article 132.1. Recruitment into prostitution or other sexual exploitation, coerced labour or service, enslavement or placement of another into a state equivalent to slavery.

1. Recruitment into prostitution or other sexual exploitation, coerced labour or service, enslavement or placement of another into a state equivalent to slavery with the use of violence or the threat of violence or with the use of other types of coercion, by means of kidnapping, fraud, the use of the vulnerability of an individual's position or the procurement of the consent of the person in charge of that individual via payment or provision or derivation of gain,

shall be punishable by incarceration for 5–10 years.

2. The same acts,

1) if committed against a person under the age of 18;

- 2) *if committed against a person who, because of mental disorder, does not have the ability to fully or partially recognize the nature or significance of his or her actions or to control them;*
- 4) *if committed against two or more individuals;*
- 5) *if committed by a group of persons by previous concert;*
- 6) *if they involve the use of an official position;*
- 7) *if they involve the use of violence that represents a danger to life or limb or the threat of such violence;*

shall be punishable by incarceration for 7–12 years.

3. *The acts addressed in the first and second parts of this article,*

- 1) *if committed by an organized group;*
 - 2) *if they result in the accidental death of the victim or in other grave consequences;*
- shall be punishable by incarceration for 12–15 years.”.*

83. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and two protocols supplementing the convention—the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air—were ratified on 25 March 2003. Ratified in 2005 were the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. Armenia also signed the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings, on 16 May 2005.

84. Mechanisms have been developed for referring human trafficking victims from the police and national security services to the UMCOR rehabilitation centre, which was created within the framework of the programme to combat human trafficking. What is more, that project has promoted and virtually founded the practice of referring victims between IOM and UMCOR. Victims have undergone psychological, medical and social rehabilitation in two operational temporary shelters of UMCOR and the NGO Hope and Help. The shelters, as well as the migration agency, operate telephone hotlines. The OSCE is providing assistance to the government in developing the referral mechanisms.

85. With the assistance of IOM, a border control information system to help prevent human trafficking was developed and, in May 2005, introduced at the Zvartnots International Airport in Yerevan.

86. Under the IOM programme, special training workshops were organized for border guards and police, and classes are periodically held at the legal institute of the Ministry of Justice to upgrade the skills of law-enforcement officers in preventing human trafficking, prosecuting criminals, and helping and protecting victims and witnesses.

87. One of the essential aspects of the preventive work was to set up a dialogue with the public with regard to the national policy for combatting those phenomena.

88. Under the Criminal Code, prostitution is not a crime. But the Criminal Code provides for punishment for inducement to prostitution for monetary purposes and for facilitating prostitution:

“Article 261. Inducement to prostitution for monetary purposes.

1. If the elements indicated in articles 132 and 132.1 of the code (see above) are absent, inducement to prostitution for monetary purposes shall be punishable by a fine amounting to 200- to 300-fold the minimum wage or by incarceration for 1–3 years.

2. The same acts,

1) if committed by a group of persons in previous concert;

2) if they involve the use of an official position;

shall be punishable by incarceration for 2–6 years.

3. The acts addressed in the first and second parts of this article,

1) if committed against a person under the age of 18;

2) if committed against a person who, because of mental disorder, does not have the ability to fully or partially recognize the nature or significance of his or her actions or to control them;

3) if committed by an organized group;

shall be punishable by incarceration for 3–8 years.

Article 262. Facilitating prostitution.

1. If the elements indicated in articles 132 and 132.1 of the code (see above) are absent, organizing, managing, or maintaining houses of prostitution or using a public facility for prostitution; making apartments or other spaces available for prostitution; and facilitating prostitution in any other way for monetary purposes shall be punishable by a fine amounting to 300- to 500-fold the minimum wage or by incarceration for 1–4 years.

2. The same acts,

1) if committed by a group of persons in previous concert;

2) if they involve the use of an official position;

shall be punishable by incarceration for 2–6 years.

3. The acts addressed in the first and second parts of this article,

1) if committed against a person under the age of 18;

2) if committed against a person who, because of mental disorder, does not have the ability to fully or partially recognize the nature or significance of his or her actions or to control them.

3) if committed by an organized group;

shall be punishable by incarceration for 3–10 years”.

89. Prostitutes are subject to the administrative liability specified in Article 179 of the law on administrative offences.

90. The rights of women who are victims of prostitution are protected. Such women are not arrested or detained if they have not committed a criminal act. Nor are victims of prostitution arrested or detained in cases in which, during coerced prostitution, they are forced against their

will to commit such crimes as using falsified papers or crossing the State border using forged documents.

91. The police work closely with public organizations to prevent human trafficking and prostitution, particularly to show the situation as it really is and to properly shape public opinion regarding the problem. In addition, women who are victims of prostitution and human trafficking undergo rehabilitation in the public organizations Democracy Today, the Centre for Women Victims of Violence, the Red Cross, etc.

92. The police are conducting a myriad of preventive measures to deter prostitution among juveniles, including inspection raids and meetings with teaching staff, parental committees and their representatives. Particular attention is being devoted to underprivileged juveniles. Pupils of special schools are also a constant focus.

93. Women engaged in prostitution are often subjected to physical and sexual violence by their clients. Their clients, accordingly, are criminally liable.

94. Prostitutes are regarded as a risk group for the spread of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. According to law-enforcement practices, they are sent to a dispensary, where they undergo a state-ordered examination and receive the requisite treatment. The police in 2000–2005 sent 1,766 prostitutes to the dermatologic and venereal disease centre of the Ministry of Health.

95. Eleven juveniles and 1,800 women were involved in prostitution and registered with the Republic of Armenia Police in 2000–2005.

96. In 2000–2005, the figures for those held administratively liable for prostitution were as follows:

20 2000	20 2001	20 2002	20 2003	20 2004	20 2005
14 149	16 163	72 72	17 171	17 175	99 99

Data provided by the Republic of Armenia Police

97. The country recorded no cases of sex tourism for that period.

98. The police plan to develop and introduce a system of parameters characterizing violence, as well as to create an information base that is compiled from a study of cases of violence and from statistical data. Those things are to be done in cooperation with UNDP.

99. The measures undertaken in Armenia to prevent human trafficking are geared to suppressing not only sexual exploitation, but also labour exploitation.

100. In the context of combatting labour exploitation, the Labour Code contains articles that prohibit violence against workers, form of coerced labour and labour contracts with children under the age of 14, as well as their recruitment for work; the Code also has

articles that establish State oversight of compliance with the law by employers. The labour rights of citizens are protected via legal protection and a system of injury compensation and fines.

101. The concept of illegal labour, i.e., work done without a labour contract or under an unlawful contract, has been introduced. The degree of liability for coerced labour has been established.

102. Armenia ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) 1930 Forced Labour Convention and 1957 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention on 25 October 2004 and the ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour on 22 March 2005.

103. The migration agency developed and submitted to the government the draft law on the regulation of external labour migration, which calls for licensing as crucial leverage for the State over the operation of firms and organizations that hire individuals and send them abroad for work. Efforts are also under way to conclude bilateral agreements with the governments of the host countries.

104. Article 14 of the law on employment and the social safety net in the event of unemployment pertains to migration of the labour force. Pursuant to it, the government is implementing a unified policy for regulating internal and external labour migration that calls for entry into international treaties to set up field operations and to protect the labour rights of migrants and the right to warn citizens of the country of the inadvisability, for a number of reasons, of travelling to another State for a job.

105. The State employment service has broad powers: from the right to obtain information from local and foreign employers on available jobs to the right to make recommendations based on its monitoring of the labour market and other forecasts to secondary special schools and institutions of higher learning regarding professions that are in demand, as well as the right to implement programmes geared to regulating the internal and external migration of the work force.

106. Among a number of institutional innovations (along with the State labour inspectorate) is the creation of regional divisions for protecting women's and children's rights. A government resolution has named individuals at the deputy minister and regional deputy manager levels who are responsible for the implementation of programme documents (the Programme to Improve the Status of Women and Enhance Their Role in Society, and the Strategic Programme to Protect Children's Rights). Programmes—State and international, short-term and long-term—are being implemented along with legislative reforms to ensure their viability.

Article 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

107. In terms of the law, the women of Armenia enjoy political rights that are equal to those of men.

108. In practice, however, despite a certain amount of progress, women are still inadequately represented at decision-making levels. Only 12 of 131 National Assembly deputies, for example, are women, three of whom occupy high posts. One is deputy chairman of the National Assembly, one is chairman of the permanent parliamentary commission, and one is deputy chairman of the permanent parliamentary commission. In the government, only one woman holds the post of minister, and only two, the post of deputy minister. Women are also underrepresented in regional and local self-governing bodies. Only one of 10 marz governors is a woman.

109. The Election Code establishes a 15-percent quota for women to be chosen from proportional lists instead of the former 5-percent quota, and at least one out of every 10 candidates on the list must be a woman.

110. The most balanced representation of men and women is found in mid-level management. The numerical predominance of women is seen in the social sphere and in the fields of education, health care, culture, and service. Women are particularly active in the non-governmental sector, where their role in the formation of a democratic civil society is steadily growing.

111. The law on civil service, which regulates relations pertaining to the main principles of civil service in Armenia, including the legal status of civil servants, entered into force in November 2002.

112. The law establishes the right of every citizen of the country to hold a civil service position regardless of sex (Article 11), defines protective mechanisms with regard to when civil servants who are on pregnancy leave or who have a child under the age of 3 undergo attestation (Article 19), prohibits officials from being dismissed from their job in connection with a staff reduction or absence from work for a lengthy period if they are pregnant or have a child under the age of 3 (amended Article 33) and establishes equal pay for equal work without any discrimination (Article 29).

113. The Republic of Armenia has ratified the UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women. Accession to the Convention was indicated in the List of Measures for the Implementation of the

National Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for the Period 2004–2010.

Article 8

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

114. Adopted on 24 October 2001 was the law on the diplomatic service, which *"regulates relations pertaining to the principles underlying the organization of the diplomatic service of the Republic of Armenia, its management, one's service or termination of one's service in that body, career advancement, the award of diplomatic ranks and the establishment of the legal status of persons who perform diplomatic service and pertaining to the social guarantees for those persons and for their family members during and after the tenure of service and the funding of the diplomatic service, as well as other relations pertaining to the diplomatic service (Article 1 of the law).*

115. Under Article 6 of that law,

"The diplomatic service of the Republic of Armenia is governed by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, this law, international treaties and other legal acts of the Republic of Armenia; the labour relations of diplomats are regulated by Republic of Armenia labour laws, unless otherwise specified by the law on the diplomatic service that regulates those relations; if international treaties of the Republic of Armenia establish norms other than those provided for under this law, the norms of the international treaties shall prevail".

116. The law on the diplomatic service defines the diplomatic service as a profession and does not include a single provision that would place a restriction on it for reasons of sex. Restrictions on the right to be appointed to the diplomatic service pertain solely to persons

- who have been found by a court to be incompetent or of limited competence;
- whose rights to hold a given post have been removed by a court;
- who suffer an illness that could be an impediment to the performance of their official duties and to the exercise their authority; a list of such illnesses has been approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Article 25 of the law).

117. An open or an internal competition, the rules for which are set by the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Article 26), is announced to fill vacant diplomatic service posts. In cases specified by the law, appointment to a diplomatic service post may be made without a competition.

118. For purposes of determining a diplomat's suitability to the post he or she occupies and for purposes of career advancement, attestation—the rules for which are set by the government—is held once every three years.

119. The law also establishes the rights and duties of the diplomat, which are assigned in Article 44 of the law. That same article states:

“Diplomats shall be prohibited from working with persons who are close relatives by blood or through marriage (parents, spouses, children, brothers, sisters) if their service involves the direct subordination or control of one to the other”.

120. A special article (Article 47) of the law defines the rights of the spouse of a diplomat who has been assigned to serve in a foreign State. Specifically, it states:

“1. The spouse of a diplomat who has been assigned to serve in a diplomatic office in a foreign State, upon return from the foreign State, shall be reinstated in his or her job in a State institution and shall receive a wage no lower than that he or she received before departure to the foreign State, unless otherwise specified by law.

“2. The amount of time spent by the spouse with his or her spouse serving in a diplomatic office in a foreign State shall be credited toward the State social insurance of the spouse of the diplomat, and the spouse of the diplomat shall be eligible to receive benefits duly provided for by the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

“3. The spouse of a diplomat shall be entitled to work in the country in which his or her spouse is serving if such work is allowed by international treaties of the Republic of Armenia or by intrastate regulations”.

121. At present, 192 men and 86 women are employed in the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs system.

122. A total of 75 men and 67 women work in the central offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and 117 men and 19 women are employed in foreign diplomatic missions. Given the current system of rotation set up by the law on the diplomatic service (Article 32), those figures are constantly changing. In Armenia's diplomatic missions abroad, women are represented at all levels of the diplomatic service, although only one woman is serving as an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia as of the signing of this report.

Article 9

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

123. Under Article 30.1 of the Constitution, a child born of citizens of the Republic of Armenia shall be a citizen of the Republic of Armenia. Every child one of whose parents is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia shall have the right to citizenship of the Republic of Armenia. The procedure for being granted or terminating citizenship of the Republic of Armenia shall be defined by law.

124. Under Article 6 the law of the Republic of Armenia on citizenship, a Republic of Armenia citizen's marriage to a foreigner does not, in and of itself, cause a change in citizenship. Nor does the change of citizenship of one spouse cause, in and of itself, a change in the citizenship of the other spouse (paragraph 1).

125. Article 11 of the law on citizenship states:

“A child whose parents are citizens of the Republic of Armenia at the moment of the child's birth, regardless of the birthplace, acquires the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia.

“A child one of whose parents is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia at the moment of the child's birth and the other of whom is unknown or is a person having no citizenship acquires the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia.

“In the case in which one of the parents at the moment of the child's birth is a citizen of the Republic of Armenia and the other is a foreign citizen, the child's citizenship is decided by the parents' written agreement.

“In the absence of such an agreement, the child acquires the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia if he or she was born in the Republic of Armenia, or in case of his or her not acquiring the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia her or she becomes a person having no citizenship, or if the parents live in the Republic of Armenia permanently (paragraph 2)”

126. The Republic of Armenia acceded to the UN Convention on the Nationality of Married Women in 1994.

Article 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;

c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;

e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;

f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;

g) The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;

h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

127. The Republic of Armenia ensures the right to education, regardless of national origin, race, sex, language, creed, political or other persuasion, social origin, wealth or other status.

Under Article 39 of the Constitution

“Everyone shall have a right to education.

“Basic general education shall be compulsory, except in cases prescribed by law. The law may establish a higher level of compulsory education.

“The secondary education in state educational institutions is free of charge.

“The law shall define the principles of autonomy of higher educational institutions.

“The procedures for the establishment and operations of educational institutions shall be defined by the law.

“All citizens shall have the right to free education in State higher and other professional educational institutions on the basis of competition as prescribed by the law. In cases and in the manner prescribed by law, the State shall provide financial and other assistance to higher and other educational institutions conducting specialized education programs, as well as their students”.

128. In 1999, the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia approved the law on education, thereby promoting the development of the education system. This law also ensured equality of men and women.

129. The State Programme for Educational Development for the Period of 2001–2005, the aim of which is to lay the groundwork for the development of education and to ensure socio-economic development, was approved in 2001.

130. The Government of the Republic of Armenia in 2003 approved the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, one of the main areas of which consists of assurance of the quality and accessibility of education at all levels.

131. The law on higher and postgraduate education was adopted in 2004. The law defines principles of State policy in the area of higher education such as accessibility of education in terms of capabilities, competitiveness, transparency, etc. The law also defines the academic freedoms of students, teaching staff, and researchers. In particular, students have the right to choose their specialty, their educational institution and their type of study programme, as well as the right to participate in the consideration of all issues that bear on university activities and in the work of its electoral bodies.

132. With an eye to ensuring the accessibility of pre-school education and the preparation of children for school, short-term classes have been set up since 2003 in all regions of Armenia for children six years of age who are not enrolled in the pre-school education system. Workbooks and procedural manuals have been published for those classes.

133. In work to reform general education, particular importance is being given to the *Education Financing and Management Reform Project*, which was financed by World Bank loans. The programme completely solved the problem of producing and distributing textbooks to students. A textbook-rental system was introduced, and its goal is to provide basic textbooks approved by the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Education and Science. Created at the same time was the *Textbook Revolving Fund*, which produces textbooks on the basis of a school's needs. As a result of the programme, textbooks are provided free of charge to 10% of the students—underprivileged children.

134. Today, Armenia's policy for the development of the education system is linked to current processes of the international educational community. Armenia is implementing a policy for integration into the international system of education, which expects the structure and content of education to conform to the requirements of a democratic society and market relations. With that in mind, special significance is being attached to international cooperation in the field of education at all its levels.

135. For the reform of the system of pre-school education, with the assistance of a number of international organizations, programmes to develop that field are under way, namely, *Pre-school Education, Guardianship and Development; Education of Parents; Step by Step; and*

Development of Inclusive Education of Children. In those programmes, which are being implemented with the support of UNICEF, World Vision International, and the Step by Step Benevolent Foundation, pre-school teachers, parents, and community representatives have been trained and teaching materials have been developed.

136. In particular, the aim of the program Education of Parents is to provide parents and guardians of children the requisite knowledge and skills, as well as to expand the involvement of parents and children in pre-school education through the introduction of alternative services. The programme provides instructional support particularly to those children who do not attend pre-schools, so as to properly set up the process of education in the family.

137. General-education schools in Armenia continue to teach the course "Civil Education," which includes three subjects: "Human Rights" (eighth-grade level), "Civil Education" (ninth-grade level) and "The State and the Law" (tenth-grade level). School teachers have been re-trained. The main purpose of those subjects is to teach children to respect democratic principles.

138. Continuing to enjoy great success is the teaching in general-education schools (grades 1–7) of the subject "Life Skills," which is being done with the support of the UN Children's Fund. That subject includes topics such as "Gender Challenges", "The Home and the Family", "Discrimination" and "Rights and Duties", which are also geared to illuminating gender issues. The requisite programme materials for teaching those subjects in grades 8 and 9 will be developed in the near future. The programme will include issues that pertain to career orientation, a healthy lifestyle, environmental awareness, stress management, and other topics. Also planned is the step-by-step introduction of those subjects in all schools of Armenia. Already developed is the programme course "A Healthy Lifestyle", which is being evaluated in 30 schools of the republic. The programme also involves courses on gender issues, women's equality and the elimination of violence against women.

139. In order to introduce new methods of teaching along with this course, materials will be collected for children of different ages and books on sex education will be published.

140. The list of elective subjects in 50 colleges includes the subject "Fundamentals of preparation for family life". The curricula in 20 colleges include the subject "Fundamentals of sex education".

141. Taught in some higher education institutions is the subject "Fundamentals of ethics", thanks to which students are learning about the ethics of gender roles.

142. Also being developed are the necessary training materials and techniques, the goal of which is to change gender stereotypes.

143. The National Programme also calls for special courses on gender issues for public and political figures, as well as for State employees. Gender issues will be introduced into textbooks and curricula, and the textbooks of senior-level classes will present information on the rights of women and gender issues.

144. To provide a social safety net and gender equality for teachers, the country's budget funds were used in 2005 to raise teachers' wages, which are now 20% higher than the country's average wage. Plans call for increasing teachers' wages before 2009, if Armenia's State budget can cover the increase.

145. Within a pilot programme to reform secondary education, the number of teachers was cut back and schools with only a small number of pupils were merged. The Ministry of Education and Science, along with the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues, is implementing a programme to provide support to teachers who have lost their jobs. In the programme Optimization of the School Staff and Social Support, such teachers are provided with additional monetary compensation, and vocational training courses and psychological services are being arranged. A total of 1,460 teachers, 90% of whom were women, were brought into the program in 2005.

146. Recent years have seen a marked reduction in the volume of scientific and technical work being done. State funding of that field has also been reduced. The funding constituted 0.3% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1991 and 0.2% in 2003 and 2005. In number, men predominate in postgraduate education.

147. In order to ensure the expansion of science and to bring young people into that field, a programme of reforms was developed for science. The wages of scientists and research associates were raised by 37.5% in 2005.

148. Programmes continue for the social integration of refugees living in Armenia. Since 1997, within the programme Courses in the Armenian Language for Non-Armenian-Speaking Citizens, the Ministry of Territorial Administration's migration agency and the Ministry of Education and Science, with the assistance of municipalities, have been conducting special educational programs aimed at helping refugees achieve fluency in Armenian and teaching them Armenian history and culture, customs and traditions.

149. In 2005, education funding constituted 14.6% of the State budget, or 2.74% of the GDP, which is only half of the international percentage (4.7%). For purposes of comparison, we note that that figure was 7.2% and 2% in 1991 and 2000, respectively.

150. In 2005, some 84.5% of the funding for the system of education went to general secondary education. State funding of higher and postgraduate professional education constituted 7.5% of the total for the State education budget; secondary professional education, 2.6%; and primary vocational education, 1.2%. State funding of non-formal and adult education amounted to 3% and 1.2%, respectively.

151. In 1996, State pre-school institutions and some of the non-formal education institutions were transferred to bodies of local self-government and are now being funded by community budgets. Non-State educational institutions do not receive State funding.

152. Analysis of statistical data indicates that in Armenia, sexual discrimination does not exist among students at any level of education. The goal set forth in Millennium Development Goal 3

and enunciated by the UN (promotion of gender equality and expansion of women's rights), which includes ending sexual discrimination at various levels of education (specifically, in primary and secondary education by 2005 and in vocational education by 2015), has been fully achieved in Armenia.

153. In Armenia, in terms of primary education, the tradition of equal enrolment of boys and girls began in the nineteenth century.

154. In 2005, the average countrywide figure for enrolment of children was 91.8% in primary schools (grades 1–3) and 92.1% in elementary schools (grades 1–8). The average countrywide figure was 89.2% for general-education secondary schools (grades 1–10). Under the law of the Republic of Armenia on education, secondary education, which includes primary and secondary schools, is compulsory. It should be noted that, according to the statistics, the literacy rate or level of education in Armenia is 99.8%.

155. In 2005, enrolment in pre-school institutions was 21.5% (of the total number of children aged 1–6). Girls constituted 50.6% of the total.

156. In general elementary education (grades 1–8), the percentages for boys and girls were roughly equal, i.e., 51.5% and 48.5%, respectively. The negligible difference was essentially due to demographics. In recent years, however, the balance has shifted in favour of girls in the senior grade levels of the schools. In the 2005/2006 school year, for example, girls in senior grade levels constituted 51.6% of the total number of students.

157. In vocational education, girls also predominate in terms of number. In the 2005/2006 school year, the difference was appreciable in secondary vocational schools, where girls accounted for 66.4% of the total number of students. Over the past five years in particular, the number of girls has been increasing in both free and fee-based training.

158. In institutions of higher learning, girls account for 51.5% of students. A high level of enrolment of girls is also seen in non-State institutions of higher learning.

159. In the 2005/2006 school year, girls made up 51.5% of the total number of students in State institutions of higher education and 64.7% of all students in non-State institutions. In State institutions of higher education, girls represented 44.8% of all students in the system of study that is free of charge and 54% in the fee-based system.

160. In the institutions of higher education, girls predominate in the following specialties: economics, law, health care, education, and the arts.

161. The system of postgraduate education presents a different picture. Men accounted for 63.2% of the total number of students pursuing a candidate-of-science degree, whereas women predominated among those working toward a master's degree and made up 58.6%. Women accounted for 29.4% of those working toward a doctorate.

162. Interstate agreements have enabled the younger generation to attend schools in foreign countries. Girls accounted for 30% of those studying at institutions of higher education in foreign countries.

163. In pre-school institutions, teaching staffs consist mainly of women, and women constitute 83.7% of teachers in general-education schools.

164. A relative increase in the number of women is also being seen in the administrative field in the education system. Women accounted for 37.8% of general-education school principals in 2003, some 39.4% in 2004, and some 39.8% in 2005.

165. Women accounted for 76.7% of instructors in State secondary vocational education institutions and 45.3% in institutions of higher education.

166. Women made up 46.6% of those in science, 17.1% of those with doctorates, and 42.3% of those with candidate-of-science degrees.

167. The above figures indicate that in education, teaching staffs are unevenly balanced in terms of gender. In general education, staffs consist of a growing number of females (women account for 84% of teachers).

168. On the one hand, women have traditionally predominated in the field of education. On the other hand, that predominance has also been fostered by certain socio-economic factors. Beginning in the early 1990s—a period in which the country's socio-economic conditions worsened dramatically—and continuing today, low wages and a poor social safety net have resulted in the flight of high-quality personnel from the education system, and many men have preferred to leave the teaching profession.

169. By and large, it should be noted that the State's primary objective in the field of education is to ensure the quality and accessibility of education at all levels, given that education is an important factor in the reduction of poverty and in socio-economic development.

Number of children in State pre-school institutions:

Year:	2002	2003	2004	2005
Pre-school institutions	681	682	637	623
Girls	22,488 (50.1%)	23,247 (50.4%)	22,618 (49.7%)	24,186 (50.6%)
Boys	22,361 (49.9%)	22,894 (49.6%)	22,852 (50.3%)	23,605 (49.4%)

Teaching staff of State pre-school institutions

Year:	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total number of teachers:	5,397	5,333	4,920	5,060
Women teachers	5,394 (99.9%)	5,329 (99.9%)	4,912 (99.8%)	5,055 (99.9%)

Number of students in State general-education schools

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
General-education schools	1,481	1,439	1,400	1,427
Total number of students:	520,579	498,450	481,184	471,316
Female students	258,653 (49.7%)	246,118 (49.4%)	237,183 (49.3%)	231,747 (49.2%)
Number of students (grades 1–8):	424,372	402,957	385,249	369,802
Female students	208,029 (49%)	196,171 (48.6%)	187,291 (48.6%)	179,306 (48.5%)
Number of students (grades 9–10):	96,207	95,493	95,935	101,514
Female students	50,624 (52.6%)	49,947 (52.3%)	49,892 (52%)	52,441 (51.6%)

Teaching staff of State general-education schools

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total number of teachers:	54,276	45,967	44,097	41,721
Women teachers	45,245 (83.4%)	38,451 (83.6%)	36,827 (83.5%)	34,908 (83.7%)

Number of students in State vocational institutions

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
Secondary vocational institutions/branches	77/5	81	81	83
Number of students:	27,584	28,636	27,805	27,837
Female students	18,475 (66.9%)	19,784 (69%)	18,882 (67.5%)	18,497 (66.4%)
Students attending free of charge:	6,194	5,689	6,200	6,680
Female students attending free of charge	4,287 (69.2%)	4,331 (76.1%)	4,531 (73%)	4,447 (66.6%)
Students attending on a fee basis:	21,390	22,947	21,605	21,157
Female students attending on a fee basis	14,188 (66.3%)	15,453 (67.3%)	14,351 (66.4%)	14,050 (66.4%)

Teaching staff in State secondary vocational institutions

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total number of lecturers:	4,157	4,217	3,888	3,741
Women lecturers	3,044 (73.2%)	3,149 (74.6%)	2,987 (76.8%)	2,871 (76.7%)

Number of students in State institutions of higher education

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
Institutions of higher education/branches	20/10	20/10	20/10	22/11
Number of students:	54,064	55,928	62,499	73,716
Female students	26,872 (49.7%)	28,781 (51.46%)	32,636 (52.2%)	38,007 (51.5%)
Total number of students in system for studies free of charge:	18,726	19,189	19,708	19,869
Female students in system for studies free of charge	8,669 (46.3%)	8,822 (46%)	8,894 (45.1%)	8,912 (44.8%)
Total number of students in fee-based system of study:	35,338	36,739	42,791	53,847
Female students in fee-based system	18,203 (51.5%)	19,959 (54.3%)	23,742 (55.6%)	29,095 (54%)

Female students as a percentage of the total number of students in State institutions of higher education (by specialty)

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
Economics, total number of students:	12,573	13,610	15,821	9,491
Female students	4,954 (39.4%)	6,120 (44.9%)	7,800 (49.3%)	4,426 (46.6%)
Law, total number of students:	1,821	1,937	2,506	3,329
Female students	604 (33.16%)	678 (35%)	789 (31.5%)	1,157 (34.7%)
Health care and athletics, total number of students:	4,301	4,387	5,326	5,335
Female students	1,469 (34.15%)	2,012 (45.8%)	3,331 (62.5%)	1,630 (30.5%)
Education, total number of students:	9,303	9,220	10,321	14,325
Female students	6,301 (67.7%)	6,201 (67.2%)	7,555 (73.2%)	13,401 (93.5%)
Arts and cinematography, total number of students:	2,504	2,303	2,503	4,145
Female students	1,295 (51.7%)	1,010 (43.8%)	1,698 (67.8%)	2,213 (53.4%)

Faculty at State institutions of higher education

<i>Year:</i>	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total number of faculty:	8,495	8,975	9,390	9,763
Women faculty	3,906 (45.97%)	4,047 (45%)	4,280 (45.6%)	4,426 (45.3%)

Postgraduate education

Year:	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of master's degree students:	1,871	2,530	3,030	3,541
Female master's degree students	972 (51.9%)	1,266 (50%)	1,668 (55%)	2,077 (58.6%)
Number of candidate-of-science students:	1,292	1,377	1,490	1,528
Female candidate-of-science students	443 (34.28%)	488 (35.43%)	542 (36.4%)	563 (36.8%)
Number of doctoral candidates:	28	28	30	34
Female doctoral candidates	6 (21.42%)	8 (28.57%)	8 (26.6%)	10 (29.4%)

Research institutions and specialists

Year:	2002	2003	2004	2005
Research institutions	96	99	93	102
Total number of specialists:	6,737	6,277	6,685	6,892
Women specialists	3,065 (45.49%)	2,842 (45.27%)	2,961 (44.3%)	3,209 (46.6%)
Doctors of science:	476	496	487	542
Women doctors of science	83 (17.43%)	87 (17.54%)	81 (16.6%)	93 (17.1%)
Candidates of science:	1,758	1,698	1,811	2,029
Women candidates of science	688 (39.1%)	672 (39.57%)	734 (40.5%)	859 (42.3%)

Source: National Statistical Service

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality with men and women, the same rights, in particular:

a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;

b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;

c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;

d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;

e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;

f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;

b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;

c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;;

d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

170. The labour rights of citizens of Armenia are protected by the Constitution and Republic of Armenia law. The State budget has had a social tenor since 2005.

171. Under the Constitution, every person has the right to choose his or her profession, to receive a just wage and to have safe working conditions, and the State is obliged to undertake measures to promote employment and improve working conditions.

172. Issues involving the public's social safety net, particularly those associated with pensions and various social payments, are regulated by the Labour Code and the laws on State pensions (2003), on social assistance, on State allowances, and on employment and social protection against unemployment. Particular attention is being devoted to questions involving youth employment. A 14 December 2006 government resolution created the Youth Career Guidance Centre, the purpose of which is not only to provide assistance in career guidance and job placement for youth, but also to implement measures geared to enhancing competitiveness on the labour market, building work skills, studying and analyzing the labour market and the prospects for its development, etc.

173. An entire array of Labour Code articles consolidate the Constitutional right of citizens to the protection of their health and to safe working conditions, including protection of reproductive function. The government has approved the list of professions and jobs that are harmful or hazardous to health.

174. Their impact is strengthened by the law on State labour inspection and by the new structure created under that law—a labour inspectorate that is entrusted with monitoring compliance with the enumerated norms (see also Article 2 of this report). Specifically, the inspectorate performs the functions of protecting the labour rights of workers, monitoring working conditions and identifying unregistered or illegal workers who are being used by employers; investigates cases of sexual discrimination in the workplace; and takes measures to protect the violated rights of workers. It also has the right to review cases involving the hiring or firing of individuals for reasons of nationality, sex, creed, or other considerations, and it prohibits using women for heavy labour.

175. Operating in the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues is the National Institute of Labour and Social Research, which give organizations, entrepreneurs, and trade unions professional advice regarding labour and wage management and provides them with relevant information.

176. In November 2004, the Programme of Technical Cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues of the Republic of Armenia, Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen (Employers) of the Republic of Armenia, Confederation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Armenia and the International Labour Organization for 2004–2006 was signed, and among the measures to be implemented in the programme were the inclusion of gender issues and the maximally efficient use of collective bargaining and agreements for gender mainstreaming and gender equality.

177. In keeping with the requirement of Article 12 of the law on social assistance, a draft regulation was developed on the provision of temporary housing for individuals who find themselves in difficult circumstances, such as disability, extended unemployment, family conflict, violence, loneliness, helplessness, social isolation, recent release from prison, or other extraordinary situations. At present, the draft has been submitted for review to the Government of Armenia.

178. The State employment service is implementing programmes to reduce unemployment. Particularly noteworthy are a paid public works programme half of which (44%), as of 1 June 2006, consists of women; vocational training programmes (in which 57% of the participants are women); and subprogrammes implemented under the programme for optimizing secondary educational institutions and social assistance. Projects geared to non-competitive and vulnerable groups of the populace are also being prepared

179. The 8 August 2003 decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia No. 994-N approved the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which aims at creating decent living conditions for individuals who are the most vulnerable members of society and who are in greatest need of State care. At present, the programme is undergoing gender analysis; for that purpose, a special interdepartmental working group was created, and the National Institute of Labour and Social Research was launched in the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues. Based on the results of the gender analysis, many components of the programme will be carried out in strict conformance with the principle of gender equality.

180. The National Programme calls for a number of measures aimed at improving the status of women in terms of labour and employment, namely:

- to draft and implement programmes that provide employment for women in special programmes that promote employment for the public;
- to develop mechanisms that guarantee the steady enhancement of the professional qualifications of women in order to boost their competitiveness on the labour market and that enable, in the process, a combination with family obligations;
- implement programmes within the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper that are aimed at reducing poverty among women (particularly microcredit programmes offered on favourable terms), thereby promoting the development of small- and medium-scale businesses;
- channel the resources of donor organizations to the development of small business by setting up special business courses for women;
- implement special programmes geared to developing folk crafts that provide employment for women.

181. Annual programmes supporting small- and medium-scale businesses include a broad spectrum of measures aimed at developing business in Armenia. They include innovations and the introduction of new technologies, the protection of intellectual property and support for the market rollout of goods and services produced by small- and medium-scale businesses and for informational and consulting assistance, as well as programmes providing financial aid to small- and medium-scale businesses, particularly credit guarantees, and programmes providing financial assistance to first-time entrepreneurs.

182. The above areas of support also fully apply to women entrepreneurs. It must be noted that most of the measures called for, which are geared to providing assistance to existing and emergent small- and medium-scale businesses, also apply to women entrepreneurs.

183. Together with international and foreign organizations, in 2002–2006, programmes for providing State assistance to small- and medium-scale businesses in the above-mentioned areas aided more than 16,000 emergent and existing such businesses, among which approximately 24% were women entrepreneurs.

184. The results of the programmes implemented show that women entrepreneurs are making more use of the credit guarantees made available to them, of training and consultation programmes and programmes supporting the market rollout of goods and services produced by small- and medium-scale businesses and are participating in first-time entrepreneur assistance programmes in which, under the guidance of experts, they draft their business plans and, after evaluating the feasibility of the plans, start their own businesses. In 2004–2006, assistance was given to 95 emergent women entrepreneurs, who made up more than 43.8% of the entrepreneurs

to whom assistance was given in that area. At the same time, eight participants in the 2006 programme were given financial support, four of them being women entrepreneurs.

185. In 2004–2006, the programme for providing credit guarantees to small- and medium-scale businesses gave more than 20 women entrepreneurs credit guarantees worth 78.0 million dram, providing a credit package of 144.0 million dram, which amounts to 13.8% of the total for guarantees made available.

186. During that same interval of time, the programme supporting the market rollout of goods and services produced by small- and medium-scale businesses provided support to 64 women entrepreneurs, which accounts for 25% of the assistance provided in that area.

187. In 2005–2006, training programmes such as Fundamentals of Management, Knowledge of the Market, Financial Management, Compiling Financial Reports, Explanation of the Tax Laws, Sales Techniques and Republic of Armenia Labour Code provided support to 456 women entrepreneurs, which constitutes 56% of the assistance given in that area.

188. The assistance given to women entrepreneurs in the informational and consultation programmes amounted to nearly 12% of all such assistance in 2002–2006 and 12.4% in 2006 alone.

189. In the informational and consultation programmes, in terms of the attraction of financial resources, 21 entrepreneurs, five of whom were women, attracted 72.6 million dram in 2006.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connexion with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

190. The government of the Republic of Armenia is continuing to pursue a focused policy to provide equal access to medical services. Under the 1996 law of the Republic of Armenia on public medical care and services, women and men are guaranteed an equal right to medical services.

191. The health of mothers and children is a priority in the field of health care and is protected by the State under Article 32 of the Constitution: "The family is the fundamental unit of society. The family, the mother, and the child are under the care and protection of the society and the State".

192. The State provides free medical services during pregnancy, childbirth, and the post-natal period and free services to all women at the primary care level and, to socially disadvantaged women, at the hospital level. The volume of funding for such special programmes is increasing from year to year.

193. Under obligations accepted by Armenia under a number of international conventions and resolutions in the field of health care, the Ministry of Health during the period under report drafted a series of documents that have already entered into force, among them:

- Law on reproductive health and reproductive rights (adopted by the National Assembly in 2002);
- Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Armenia on approval of the strategy for protecting the health of mothers and children for 2003–2015 (adopted in 2003);
- Resolution on approval of the rules and conditions for the provision of gametes by reproductive donors, as well as by individuals who are not reproductive donors, and the storage of the gametes and embryos provided (adopted in 2003);
- Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Armenia on approval of the rules and conditions for induced abortions (adopted in 2004);
- In 2004–2005, free preventive examinations of adolescent girls 15 years of age and cervical cancer screenings for women 30–60 years of age were inserted into State health care programmes;
- In 2002, a representative of the Ministry of Health was included in the women's advisory board under the office of the Republic of Armenia prime minister.

194. For purposes of expanding access to medical services, all the groundwork has been laid to develop a broad obstetric-gynaecological service network represented by a number of treatment facilities such as:

- the U.S.–Armenian Mammography Centre (in operation since 1998);
- three high-level women's medical centres;
- 10 maternity hospitals;
- 44 in-patient and outpatient departments in city medical associations;
- 125 women's clinics and departments in outpatient/polyclinic facilities;
- 617 midwife/doctor's assistant stations.

195. To protect women's health, a reproductive health programme has been developed, mandatory criteria have been introduced for setting up preventive medical assistance for women and juveniles, and the volume of State funding for medical assistance for women and children has been expanded.

196. Particular attention is being focused on ensuring the accessibility of medical services for rural women and on improving the quality of those services. Given that the main reason for the late diagnosis of many diseases was that medical services were not very accessible to broad strata of the population, including rural women, some services at the primary-care level were fee-based, and modern medical technologies and the skills needed to use them were lacking, the government issued a decision to expand the list of free primary-care services in 2005, and, in 2006, medical assistance and services at the primary-care (outpatient/polyclinic) level became free for all strata of the population.

197. Analysis of the causes of maternal mortality in 2002–2005 revealed that the main causes of maternal mortality were unrelated to pregnancy. In 2005, deaths unrelated to pregnancy made up about 60% of the total number of maternal deaths. A significant percentage of those deaths occurred in rural locales, which was due to poor facilities and equipment, as well as a lack of expertise and skills among rural medical personnel.

In light of that, family medicine has been introduced into the Armenian health care system, and physicians and nurses from rural locales are being given priority in terms of being selected for that specialty.

198. In order to improve the quality of medical services in rural locales, the following measures have been implemented:

- **rural outpatient clinics have been renovated and equipped as family physician offices (81 outpatient clinics in all);**
- **primary-care physicians and nurses have been retrained (approximately 700 physicians by the end of 2006) in special reproductive-health, obstetrics, and gynaecology modules;**
- **free mammograms were given to socially disadvantaged women through 2005 and, beginning in 2006, for all women, when prescribed by a doctor;**
- **free training for nurses and midwives of rural treatment facilities.**

199. Beginning in 2001, the number of births was noted to be higher than in previous years by an average of 1.9%. By comparison with other CIS countries, despite something of a decline last decade, the rate of natural population growth continues to be positive, hovering at around 2.1.

200. Birth rate, mortality rate, natural population growth, 2002–2005

Year	Absolute		Per 1000 population		
	Births	Natural growth	Birth rate	Mortality rate	Rate of natural growth
2002	32,229	6,675	10.1	8.0	2.1
2003	35,793	9,779	11.2	8.1	3.1
2004	37,520	11,841	11.7	8.0	3.7
2005	37,499	11,120	11.7	8.2	3.5

Data provided by the National Statistical Service

201. In recent years, the average life span of women has remained higher than that of men, with the mortality rate dropping in all age groups.

202. Life expectancy for women as compared with that for men

Year	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy for men	69.8	69.9	70.3
Life expectancy for women	75.9	75.8	76.4

Data provided by the National Statistical Service

203. In the Republic of Armenia, women give birth primarily in hospitals (98–99%), which makes it possible to maintain reproductive health, reduce maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality and prevent purulent sepsis complications. The period 2002–2005 saw a substantial decline in "home births": to 0.6% of the total number of deliveries in 2005 from 1.7% in 2001.

204. The most important indicator for women's health and the quality of medical care being provided is the maternal mortality rate, a reduction of which is one of the Millennium Development Goals. Recent years have seen something of a decline in the maternal mortality rate, but the drop has been rather slow and exceeds the WHO permissible levels of 15 per 100,000 live births for Eastern Europe and 25 per 100,000 for individual countries. Maternal mortality in Armenia is hovering around 19 per 100,000 live births, which in recent years has exceeded the average WHO target figure for Central and Eastern Europe (8.8 per 100,000) and remains rather high. That figure, however, is considerably lower than the figure for other countries of the region, given that the average for the CIS is 40 per 100,000.

205. It should be noted that for countries with a rather small population (under 5 million) and a low birth rate, the annual fluctuation of the maternal mortality rate is rather large and cannot be regarded as objective since WHO recommends that the indicator be considered with the moving average technique at three-year intervals..

206. Maternal mortality rate

1996–1998	27.4
1999–2001	36.0
2002–2004	19.9

Data provided by the National Statistical Service

207. Results of studies of the aetiological pattern of maternal mortality show that the main causes of such mortality in Armenia are perinatal haemorrhage and hypertensive disorders. In recent years, abortions and puerperal purulent sepsis complications have been giving way to extragenital pathologies and other conditions unrelated to pregnancy.

208. Changes have been noted over the past decade in the reproductive behaviour of the populace: there has been a marked decline in the average number of children in families (the trend is to have no more than 1 or 2 children), and the overall fertility rate has been dropping (1.2 per 1,000 women in 2001, and 1.4 in 2004).

209. In terms of its child mortality rate, Armenia is among those countries with a moderate level of child mortality. In recent years, the level of infant mortality in particular has not risen, but the rate of its decline has diminished considerably:

210. Infant mortality per 1,000 live births

2002	14.0
2003	12.0
2004	11.6
2005	12.3

Data provided by the National Statistical Service

211. The Republic of Armenia adopted a law legalizing abortion in 1956, but the main provisions of the law governing the rules for artificial termination of pregnancy were revised in 1996.

212. Any woman may, if she wishes, terminate an unwanted pregnancy up to the twelfth week of pregnancy. Between the twelfth and twenty-second weeks of the pregnancy, the pregnancy may be terminated solely if there are medical or social indications for doing so. Unfortunately, abortion is one of the most widespread methods of family planning in Armenia.

213. According to the statistics, most women turn to abortion more often than not, and the use of birth control pills is not a generally accepted means of avoiding unwanted pregnancies.

214. Level of artificial abortions, 2002–2005

<i>Year</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>
Rate per 1,000 live births	277.7	288.1	282	285
Rate of abortions per 1,000 women of childbearing age	10.8	11.8	11.6	11.9

Data provided by the Ministry of Health

215. Anaemia in pregnant women is one of the indicators of the socio-economic well-being of a populace. In recent years, early anaemia in pregnant women has shown no tendency to decline. A diet that is unvaried and is unbalanced in terms of proteins, vitamins, and minerals remains the cause of anaemia in pregnant women and of low-birth-weight babies.

216. Anaemia in pregnancy, 2002–2005

<i>Year</i>	<i>Anaemia—early forms (%)</i>	<i>Anaemia—late forms (‰)</i>
2002	2.6	13.8
2003	3.4	20.03
2004	4.5	24.64
2005	3.0	44.56

Data provided by the Ministry of Health

217. Implementation of the programme Improvements in Reproductive Health, which is a subprogram of the National Programme, has helped to reduce syphilis and gonorrhoea morbidity. Morbidity for those diseases was 12.5 and 26.3 per 100,000 population in 1999 and 6.1 and 17.7 in 2005.

218. In 1998–2005, Armenia recorded 461 HIV/AIDS virus carriers, of whom 272 were Armenian citizens. A total of 99 were women, and 15 were children under the age of 15.

219. AIDS was confirmed in only four of those individuals, and HIV was diagnosed in four pregnant women. The overwhelming majority of women carriers (78,8%) were in the 20–29 age group.

220. In 2006, the number of newly identified cases was 59 for HIV and 40 for AIDS; the number of deaths was 17.

221. Some 30,000 examinations have been performed in the last two years (2005 and 2006) for the early detection of HIV/AIDS carriers, and 5,385 of those examinations were of pregnant women.

222. The examinations detected the following:

- 170 seronegative individuals
- 78 AIDS virus carriers
- 1 child born of a mother who had AIDS.

223. However, those (official) statistics for HIV/AIDS hardly reflect the true picture of how widespread HIV/AIDS is; in all likelihood, it exceeds those figures severalfold.

224. Malignant neoplasms constitute one of the most widespread pathologies among women in Armenia. They are the No. 1 cause of death in women. Particularly widespread are breast cancer and cervical cancer. The period of 1999–2005 saw increased rates of morbidity for breast cancer. The main reason for the rise in mortality is the late diagnosis of advanced cases of the pathology, when treatment can no longer produce the desired results. Among malignant neoplasms in women, breast cancer is most prevalent, accounting for 23.8% of cases; in 50% of cases, the affected women are 40–45 years old.

225. In recent years, no appreciable rise has been recorded in the morbidity rate for cervical cancer. The disease, however, is coming back and is being detected in advanced form. A factor contributing to that is the poor screening system, which is the reason for the spread of such sexually transmitted diseases as papillomavirus, genital herpes, and chlamydia. For that reason, to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, at the level of the first-echelon treatment facilities—the polyclinics—the existing dermatovenerologic offices are treating all strata of the populace free of charge (under a State contract).

226. To reduce morbidity and mortality among women from cancer of the reproductive organs, in 2004, with the assistance of the United Nations Population Fund, some 2,600 women of reproductive age were tested to determine the extent of sexually transmitted diseases and precancerous/cancerous conditions. The testing identified precancerous cervical conditions in one out of eight women tested (12.5%) and genital chlamydia in one out of 10 (10.3%). The data obtained were analyzed, and a national programme was developed on the basis of that analysis—Early Diagnosis, Treatment and Prevention of Cervical Cancer.

227. Lung cancer, which is No. 1 overall in terms of neoplasm-related morbidity, is only No. 6 among women. Because of a rise in the number of women who smoke, however, there is a slight growth trend in that disease among women.

228. To discourage smoking, the National Assembly in 2004 adopted a law on restricting the sale, consumption, and use of tobacco, which imposed restrictions in that field. Extending the State policy against smoking, the State health care budget for 2006, for the first time ever, allocated 100,000,000 dram for those purposes.

229. Alcoholism and drug abuse are not particularly widespread among the women of Armenia, although it should be noted that in recent years, in connection with socio-economic changes, there has been something of a rise in drug abuse in general, particularly among the youth.

230. In terms of budget funds directed to obstetrics and women's reproductive health, annual appropriations have been increasing, and that has already had a perceptible positive impact.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Funding for obstetrics (hospital-based)</i>	<i>Funding for free outpatient services for women</i>
2002	850,000.0	275,220.0
2003	1,309,109.0	283,150.0
2004	1,571,040.0	466,700.0
2005	1,867,041.1	466,700.0
2006	2,006,905.2	1,008,293.4

Data provided by the Ministry of Health

231. To improve women's and children's health (particularly in rural areas), not only are State budget funds being allocated, but programmes involving cooperation with international non-governmental organizations are also being implemented.

232. With the assistance of the U.S. agency USAID, in the context of Project NOVA and Project PRIME II, medical personnel in the marzes of Gegarkunik, Tavush, Lori, Gyumri and Kotayk, beginning in 2004, took advanced courses in the following programmes:

- Safe Motherhood: 186 midwives and nurses of midwife/doctor's assistant stations;
- Integrated Management of Gynaecology Patients: 50 gynaecologists and dermatovenereologists;
- Reproductive Health: 46 family physicians;
- Organizing Assistance for Children and Mothers: 83 primary medical care directors.

233. The U.S. agency USAID, in the context of Project NOVA, has decided to continue the programme and, in the next three years, plans to set up training for specialists from the remaining five regions of the country and to provide rural medical facilities with the necessary inventory and medical equipment.

234. A great deal of work in this field has already been done by the Jinishian Memorial Foundation, whose funds were used in 2006 to train 105 rural nurses from the Vayk, Lori and Tavush marzes of Armenia..

235. Cooperation continues with the United Nations Children Fund and the United Nations Population Fund in terms of improving the reproductive health of women and adolescents.

Article 13

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

a) The right to family benefits;

b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;

c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

236. The law of the Republic of Armenia on State allowances defines the concept of "allowances" as (a) lump-sum and (b) periodic monetary payments; the types of allowances as (a) a birth grant and (b) a family allowance or allowance to persons caring for a child up to the age of 2; and the objectives of the assignment of allowances. A family needs-evaluation system has been developed. The basic indicators are:

- income of each family member
- makeup of the family
- employment and social status of the family members

237. The system of points that is used to rate each family is periodically reviewed, which makes it possible not only to increase the amounts for the social payments established under the law on State allowances, but also to make changes to the lists of beneficiaries.

238. The 28 December 2006 resolution of the government approved, beginning January 2007, new amounts for State allowances and amended and supplemented an entire array of government resolutions. A new type of payment was established for families receiving the family allowance: a lump-sum allowance for the birth of a third child and for the birth each child born thereafter.

239. The Ministry of Labour and Social Issues and the United Nations Development Fund for Women in May 2006 signed a protocol of intent according to which the parties were obliged to develop a system for monitoring mechanisms at the national level that would facilitate the enforcement of the provisions of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the implementation of the Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for the Period 2004–2010 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals and UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Created for that purpose was an interdepartmental working group that was to develop gender-based indicators and a strategy for meeting the commitments to establish gender equality. UNIFEM committed to providing the technical support for the group's work.

240. In 2003, the Ministry of Labour and Social Issues started a State programme to provide housing for graduates of orphanages. The programme encompasses a period that began in 1991 and involves an entire array of measures to help integrate these children into society. Not only are apartments with the requisite furniture and housewares acquired for the orphanage graduates, the graduates are also given medical exams, treatment is arranged for them, they are given proper counselling, and issues associated with their schooling and job placement are addressed. To date, 97 apartments have been acquired. An additional 56 apartments are slated to be acquired in 2006 for their use.

241. Recent years have seen an acceleration of work to provide apartments to refugees, handle their social problems, integrate them into society, and help them obtain Armenian citizenship.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;

b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;

c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;

d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;

e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment;

f) To participate in all community activities;

g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;

h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

242. According to the data of the National Statistical Service, as of 1 January 2007, the rural population was 1,156,900, or 35.9% of the total population.

243. The average annual percentage accounted for by agricultural production in the total gross national product over the past five years was 20.8%. Of Armenia's 929 communities, 870 are rural. According to the data for the past five years, food exports account for 11.7% of the total sales volume, and imports, 17.9%, which points to the extreme importance of the agrarian sector in the structure of the Armenian economy and, in that connection, to the enormous contribution of women not only to increasing the prosperity of their families, but also to developing the economy of the State as a whole, since women participate in farm production on a par with men, enjoying the same rights and taking an active part in all types of collective work.

244. At the same time, the poverty level in rural population centres, according to the data for 2005, was 28.3%, which is 1.5 percentage points below that for cities.

245. According to the data for 2005, the level of employment in agriculture accounts for approximately 45% of the total number of employed. More than 50% of women in the agrarian sector are engaged in heavy physical labour; the level of manual labour remains high (70%). In addition to keeping house and caring for children, rural women are also burdened with the heavy physical labour associated with caring for farm animals and working in the fields.

246. In light of that, additional measures are ultimately slated to be adopted to guarantee a social safety net for rural women during pregnancy and to provide them with childcare allowances and other social benefits.

247. Within the framework of the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention, as a result of the implementation of educational and other special programmes, the last five years have seen steady positive shifts in terms of the enhancement of the equality of rural women and the improvement of the quality of their lives, in particular:

- the country has used international financial credits to implement programmes such as Economic Development of Rural Areas, Improvement of the Ameliorative State of Land, and Agricultural Financing;
- positive changes have taken place in terms of the total elimination of domestic violence;
- a high level of access to education has been achieved and, consequently, also to high-paying work;
- stereotypes on gender roles are being eliminated;
- in families everywhere, the interests of the children have become paramount;
- the average life span of women and the birth rate are increasing, and morbidity among women and children is decreasing;

- the participation of women in decision-making in rural communities with regard to issues such as budgets, social programmes, infrastructure development, and increase entrepreneurial activities is increasing.

248. The availability of preventive medical services by permanent medical staff is also improving. Centrally allocated State budget funds were used in 2005 to introduce primary (polyclinic) public services in Armenia. At the same time, accessibility to health-care services and to higher and secondary education in rural population centres is somewhat lower than that for urban dwellers. Nonetheless, it must be noted that it is equal for women and men.

249. In matters involving the improvement of the socio-economic status of rural women, their advancement in public life, and the elimination of individual manifestations of gender inequality, particular attention in the context of the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention is being devoted to the development of production, market and social infrastructures, especially in the highland, mountainous, and border regions of Armenia. Studies have shown that women living in high-mountain rural communities (at altitudes greater than 1,700 m above sea level) suffer the worst plight. In light of that, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2005 helped to develop the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Mountainous and Highland Regions of the Republic of Armenia, which calls for the priority development of the infrastructures of those areas.

250. An important factor in improving the living standards of rural women is the creation of jobs outside agriculture, which is called for by the Strategy for Sustainable Agriculture Development for the period up to 2015 (which was approved by the 14 April 2004 governmental resolution No. 682-N).

251. Measures are being taken to issue accessible credits (at reduced interest rates) and to encourage folk crafts that women traditionally engage in—carpet weaving and other types of work done at home, as defined by the Programme to Improve the Status of Women and to Enhance Their Role in Society in the Republic of Armenia for the Period of 2004–2010.

252. Those programmes are being funded by microfinance institutions. Specifically, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has allocated credit resources for those purposes.

253. Governmental and non-governmental organizations are also implementing a number of measures to increase the accessibility of credits and loans, as well as to do such things as form a land market, consolidate land allotments and cooperativize agricultural production.

254. Women in Armenia are independent economic operators, and the legal force of their signatures and the ability to enter into business relations on their own behalf, with no need for a third-party guarantee, are guaranteed by Armenian law. Any act that is discriminatory against a woman or renders her dependent in that regard is barred, however, and the right of ownership of

real estate, including land, is also guaranteed. At present, of 870 rural communities in Armenia, only 16 are headed by women.

255. In the context of the improvement of the socio-economic status of women and the enhancement of their role in the economic sphere and in socio-political life, it is important to note the institutional adjustments under way—including the encouragement of the creation of cooperatives, partnerships, associations and other voluntary alliances—with the broad involvement of women.

256. Another important aspect of the improvement of the socio-economic status of rural women is the struggle against unregulated migration. Migration from rural population centres, including from highland and mountain regions, is primarily of an economic nature. Studies have shown that household incomes of US\$250–300 a month are capable of minimizing migration processes.

257. Among the vulnerable groups of rural women are women refugees, who make up 54% of the total number of refugees. The refugees are from Azerbaijan and, although urban dwellers, were resettled primarily in rural areas of Armenia, where most of the work available involves cultivating the land and doing other kinds of farm work, rendering their adjustment an acute problem.

Article 15

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.

2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.

3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.

4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

258. Under Article 14.1 of the Constitution, everyone is equal before the law (see Article 2 of the report).

259. On the grounds of Article 20 of the Civil Code, the capacity to have civil rights and to incur obligations (civil legal capacity) is accorded in equal measure to all citizens. (Under the second paragraph, part 2, Article 1 of the Civil Code, "citizens" are taken to also mean citizens of foreign states and stateless persons.)

260. Article 437 of the Civil Code states: "citizens and legal persons are free to enter into contracts". No one may be forced to enter into a contract, except in cases in which the obligation

to enter into a contract is specified by this code, by law, or by a voluntarily accepted commitment.

261. Article 8 of the Criminal Procedure Code establishes that all persons are equal before the law and are protected by the law without discrimination.

262. Under Article 31 of the Constitution, everyone shall have the right to own and use the property belonging to him or her and to dispose of or bequeath it as he or she sees fit. No one may be deprived of property, except in cases prescribed by law and in accordance with judicial procedure.

263. Under Article 5 of the Civil Procedure Code, civil justice shall be administered the basis of the equality of citizens and legal persons before the law and the courts.

264. Paragraph 1 of Article 25 of the Civil Code states: "a citizen may not be limited in legal capacity or dispositive capability other than in the cases and by the procedure established by statute". Paragraph 3 of that same article states that the full or partial renunciation by a citizen of legal capacity or dispositive capability and other transactions directed at the limitation of legal capacity or dispositive capability are void.

265. Article 25 of the Constitution stipulates that everyone residing legally in the Republic of Armenia shall have the right to freedom of movement and choice of residence in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

266. Republic of Armenia law places no impediments before women, on an equal basis with men, to become attorneys or judges, to give testimony as witnesses, or to engage in any activity that is not at variance with the law.

Article 16

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

a) The same right to enter into marriage;

b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;

c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;

d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;

f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;

h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

267. Under Article 35 of the Constitution, a woman and a man of marriageable age have a right to marry and start a family of their own free will. They enjoy equal rights in entering the marriage, during the marriage, and upon dissolution of the marriage.

268. The same standard is specified in paragraph 3 of Article 1 of the Family Code. Under the Code, women and men enjoy equal rights upon entry into marriage, during the marriage, and upon dissolution of the marriage.

269. Under paragraph 4 of that same article of the Family Code, legal regulation of family relations is done in accordance with the principles of the voluntary nature of the marital union of the man and the woman, the equal rights of the spouses in the family, the resolution of family issues by mutual consent, their care for each other's well-being, and the paramount importance of the protection of the rights and interests of the juveniles and disabled members of the family.

270. Article 49 of the Family Code provides that parents have equal rights and responsibilities with regard to their children (parental rights).

271. Article 135 of the Family Code establishes that only adult, legally capable persons may be named as guardians (wards) of children. When a child is placed with a guardian (ward), the guardian's (ward's) moral values and other personal qualities are taken into account, as are his or her ability to meet the responsibilities of a guardian (ward), the relationship between the guardian (ward) and the child, the relationship between the guardian (ward) and the child's family members and, if possible, the wishes of the child. Persons who suffer from chronic alcoholism or drug abuse, persons who have committed premeditated crimes against life or limb, persons who have been suspended from their responsibilities as guardians (wards), persons whose parental rights have been removed, persons whose parental rights have been restricted, persons who are

formerly adoptive parents if the adoption was cancelled through their fault and persons who, for reasons of health, cannot carry out the responsibilities associated with raising the child may not be named as guardians (wards).

272. The same principles are operative for the adoption of a child. No gender-based restrictions are stipulated among the restrictions listed by Article 116 of the Family Code for adoption.

273. Article 24 of the Family Code gives each of the spouses freedom of choice in terms of work, occupation, profession and residence.

274. Issues of maternity, paternity and upbringing and education of the children, as well as other issues of family life, are resolved by the spouses together, based on the principle of the equality of the spouses.

275. Under Article 25 of the Family Code, upon entry into marriage, the spouses may choose the surname of one of the spouses as the family name, or each may keep his or her name.

276. Under Article 31 of the Constitution, each has the right to own and use the property belonging to him or her and to dispose of or bequeath it as he or she sees fit. The exercise of one's property rights may not bring harm to the environment or violate the rights or legal interests of other persons, society, or the State. No one may be deprived of property, except in cases prescribed by law and in accordance with judicial procedure.

277. Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 163 of the Civil Code establish that an owner is entitled to do anything, as he or she sees fit, with his property, as long as his or her actions are not at variance with the law and do not violate other parties' interests that are protected by law, including alienation of the property to ownership by other parties; transfer of the rights of use, possession and disposition to other parties; pledge of the property or disposal of it in any other fashion. The owner may transfer his or her property to another party in a trust.

278. Paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the Family Code states: a marriage is considered legal solely if it is performed at a civil registry office.

279. Article 9 of the Family Code establishes that marriages are to be performed at State civil registry offices in the manner prescribed by Republic of Armenia law, with the mandatory presence of the persons entering marriage. The rights and responsibilities of the spouses begin when the marriage is registered with State civil registry office.

280. Under paragraph 1 of Article 10 of the Family Code, entry into marriage requires the mutual, freely given consent of the man and the woman entering into the marriage and their attainment of marriageable age—17 for women, and 18 for men.

281. In Armenia, the issue of violence against women and domestic violence became the topic of regular, open discussion only recently.

282. In 2006, an order issued by the chief of the Republic of Armenia Police created a working group headed by the deputy chief of police to enforce in a timely and proper manner the National Programme, specifically the measures the programme calls for to prevent violence against women and domestic violence. To accomplish that, the police information centre keeps a separate record of crimes committed against women, and a separate programme is being developed. Seminars are also slated for those law-enforcement officials who work directly with the public.

283. In August 2003, a new Chapter 20 was added to the new Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia: "Crimes against Families and Juveniles".

284. The police department has a juvenile division that handles problems involving juveniles who have been recruited into prostitution. It works with such juveniles on a daily basis. They are placed in various institutions (orphanages, boarding schools, etc.); psychologists, physicians, and teachers work with them; work is also done with the families of the juveniles.

285. Officials in that division conduct monthly raids across the country to identify juveniles engaged in prostitution and the juveniles who recruited them into prostitution.

286. For purposes of prevention, lectures are given on various legal topics in educational institutions.
