



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Fifty-second session

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List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of periodic reports

Bulgaria

The pre-session working group examined the report of Bulgaria, consisting of its combined fourth to seventh periodic reports (CEDAW/C/BGR/4-7).

General

1. The State party's report was due in March 1995 and was received in September 2010. Please explain the reasons for the failure to submit the report on time in line with article 18 of the Convention. Please provide information on the process of preparing the report and the extent of related consultations with non-governmental organizations. Please also explain whether the report was submitted to Parliament and adopted by the Government.

Legal status of the Convention and legislative and institutional framework

2. Please provide information on the measures taken by the State party to raise awareness about the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations. Please also provide information on the outcome of the cases mentioned in paragraph 13 of the report, especially on any sanctions imposed, as well as updated information on cases decided by the courts and the Commission for Protection against Discrimination related to sex-based discrimination and sexual harassment, and indicate whether the provisions of the Convention were directly applied or invoked in any such cases.

3. Please provide information on the steps taken by the State party to adopt specific law on gender equality, in line with the recommendation accepted by the State party during its universal periodic review in 2010 (see A/HRC/16/9 and Add.1). Please also provide information on the steps taken to implement the other universal periodic review recommendations related to women's rights accepted by the State party during the review of Bulgaria (ibid.).



4. Please describe the mandate and powers of the Ombudsman in relation to gender equality and indicate whether there are plans to appoint a special ombudsperson for women or a deputy ombudsperson specializing in women's issues.

National machinery

5. Please provide detailed information on the mandate and the human and financial resources of the Women and Men's Equal Opportunity Sector in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (CEDAW/C/BGR/4-7, para. 19) and on the role of the 22 coordinators/experts on equal opportunities in various ministries (ibid., para. 32), as well as on the results achieved through those mechanisms.

6. Please describe the results achieved so far through the implementation of the National Strategy for Promotion of Gender Equality 2008-2015 and explain how the Strategy is in conformity with the Convention (ibid., para. 9).

Temporary special measures

7. Please provide concrete examples of temporary special measures, including quotas, adopted to promote and accelerate de facto or substantive equality of women and men, such as measures under articles 24 (employment) and 38 (balanced representation in public bodies) of the Protection against Discrimination Act (ibid., paras. 37-39). Does the law establish any sanctions for non-compliance with such quotas?

Traditional stereotypes

8. What measures is the State party taking to eliminate traditional stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, which overemphasize the role of women as mothers and wives and that of men as the main breadwinners of a family (ibid., para. 42)? What measures are being taken to address discrimination against women, in media and advertisements, including the portrayal of women as sex objects in some media?

Violence against women

9. Please indicate whether there are criminal law provisions specifically criminalizing domestic violence and subjecting it to ex officio prosecution, and describe their relationship with the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (ibid., paras. 45-49 and 312-317). Please provide information on the 2010 amendments to the Act (ibid., para. 316), as well as updated information on the number of complaints, prosecutions and convictions and the sentences imposed in cases of domestic violence, disaggregated by sex and age of victims and perpetrators. Please also indicate whether marital rape is specifically criminalized, and describe the types of support, counselling and rehabilitation available to women victims of rape.

10. Please provide information on the number of geographically distributed State-funded shelters and centres available to women victims of violence, including domestic violence, and their children and on the measures taken to provide adequate support to non-governmental organizations offering shelter and legal, social and psychological assistance to those victims (CEDAW/C/49/D/20/2008, para. 9.16).

11. Please provide sex-disaggregated statistical data on the number of protection orders issued per year, the possibility for the police to issue emergency protection orders, and the standard of proof required for the issuance of interim protection orders and other protection orders in cases of domestic violence (CEDAW/C/BGR/4-7, paras. 46 and 313).

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution of women and girls

12. What measures is the State party taking to fight the root causes of trafficking in human beings such as poverty and social exclusion, and to what extent is the specific vulnerability of Roma and refugee women and girls reflected in the National Programme on Prevention and Counteracting Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims (*ibid.*, para. 71)?

13. Please provide information, disaggregated by sex, age and nationality, on the number of reported cases of trafficking in persons, prosecutions, convictions and the sentences imposed on perpetrators since 2008. Please also indicate whether women victims of trafficking receive legal assistance during criminal proceedings and whether special protection, including temporary residence permits, is granted to victims who are unwilling or unable to cooperate with the prosecution authorities (*ibid.*, para. 57).

Participation in political and public life and decision-making

14. In the light of the low number of women in Parliament (*ibid.*, para. 89), women Ministers (*ibid.*, para. 94), women mayors and municipal councillors (*ibid.*, para. 115), and women in decision-making positions of the judiciary (*ibid.*, para. 117), please explain:

(a) The reasons why “neither the election laws nor the Political Parties Act provide for quotas for women for electoral positions” (*ibid.*, para. 77);

(b) Any plans to amend the election laws with a view to introducing a quota for the underrepresented sex;

(c) What measures, including temporary special measures, the State party is taking or envisaging to increase the representation of women at decision-making levels in the judiciary and in the public administration, including at the local level.

Education

15. Please provide detailed information on the enrolment and dropout rates for Roma girls and boys at the primary and secondary levels of education and on the participation of Roma women and girls in higher education. What measures are being taken to avoid the segregation of Roma children in schools and to raise awareness among Roma parents about the importance of sending their daughters to school?

16. In the light of the comparatively low participation of women in traditionally male-dominated fields of vocational education (*ibid.*, para. 148) and their concentration in traditionally female-dominated fields of study (*ibid.*, para. 160), please provide information on the efforts made by the State party to promote the diversification of such choices and to encourage women and men to choose non-traditional fields of training and education.

Employment and social security

17. Please provide information on the measures taken to address the significant gender pay gap in both the public and private sectors, e.g., by promoting the diversification of women's professional career tracks, and to promote the development and use of objective job evaluation, particularly in the private sector (ibid., paras. 196, 197 and 206). What measures are in place to mitigate the adverse impact of women's lower wage levels and earlier retirement age on their pensions and to address the feminization of poverty (ibid., paras. 190 and 206)?

18. In the light of the unequal distribution of family responsibilities (ibid., para. 200), please provide additional information on:

(a) Whether the measures aimed at facilitating the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities provided for in legislation and collective agreements, such as childcare leave in respect of children up to 2 years of age (ibid., para. 170), are also available to fathers;

(b) The percentage of fathers making use of paternity leave, parental leave and flexible work arrangements for the raising of young children (ibid., paras. 199-201 and 204);

(c) The progress made in extending the coverage of care services and facilities for young children and other dependent family members (ibid., para. 199).

Health

19. Please provide information on the measures taken to further reduce the abortion rate, especially among young women and teenagers (ibid., paras. 152, 222, 226 and 229 and annex, table 10), namely by providing affordable access to and information on modern contraceptives and by introducing education on sexual and reproductive health and rights into regular school curricula. In the light of reports about the verbal and physical abuse of women during delivery or abortion and illegal requests for additional payments by hospital staff, what measures are being taken by the State party to put an end to such conduct?

Disadvantaged groups of women

20. Please provide detailed information on measures, including temporary special measures, taken to eliminate multiple forms of discrimination against women belonging to minorities, in particular Roma women and girls, including in political and public life and in the areas of education, employment and health. Please also provide detailed information on the early and forced marriage of Roma girls, including statistical data, and information on the measures taken by the State party to address this problem (ibid., paras. 295-296).