



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women
Sixty-second session**

Summary record (partial)* of the 1342nd meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 30 October 2015, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Hayashi

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(*continued*)

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (continued)

Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovenia (continued)
(CEDAW/C/SVN/5-6; CEDAW/C/SVN/Q/5-6 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Slovenia took places at the Committee table.*

Articles 10 to 14

2. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that permanent residents enjoyed a number of rights, including the right to social protections, health care and other services. Persons seeking Slovene citizenship had two years to complete the necessary formalities in order to avoid becoming stateless upon renouncing foreign citizenship. Family reunification was not dependent on having Slovene citizenship, since family members of permanent residents or third-country nationals could also join their family in Slovenia.

3. **Mr. Klančnik** (Slovenia) said that, under the Citizenship Act, certain categories of persons were entitled to dual citizenship. They included persons of Slovene ancestry who had not been citizens, persons who had lived in Slovenia all their lives, refugees, persons who served the national interest who wished to acquire citizenship, minors and citizens of the countries of the European Union. There had still been cases of persons seeking Slovene citizenship who had been prohibited from renouncing their former citizenship. In such cases, the Government provided guarantees that they would not become stateless in the process of acquiring Slovene citizenship.

4. Regarding family reunification, permanent residents as well as persons who had lived in Slovenia for a period of one year on a temporary permit had the right under the law to be joined by their immediate family members. A similar approach was taken in relation to refugees and third-country nationals in need of subsidiary protection.

5. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia), replying to a question on gender segregation in education, said that discussions were currently under way in Slovenia on how to boost the numbers of women studying natural sciences and technical subjects and to encourage more men to take up professions more traditionally associated with women. The approach favoured was through awareness-raising campaigns and projects aimed at eliminating stereotypes in education, rather than through the introduction of quotas, which could have potentially negative consequences. While the natural sciences and computer sciences fields were still largely dominated by men, the proportion of women had been steadily increasing, thereby giving credence to the softly-softly approach so far taken.

6. **Ms. Javornik** (Slovenia) said that, in keeping with the national priority placed on achieving gender equality in education, an initiative had recently been adopted aimed at reducing gender inequalities at all levels of education and increasing the participation of female and male students in fields where they were traditionally underrepresented. Between 2008 and 2011, the proportion of women enrolled in mathematics, computer science and the natural sciences had been on an upward trend, while the number of women registering in traditionally women-dominated subjects had fallen slightly.

7. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport had implemented various measures aimed at detecting and addressing gender stereotypes and fostering equal opportunities in education. There were also proposals to develop targeted programmes

in schools and teacher training. Equal opportunities initiatives included a project analysing the use of feminine suffixes to assess the pervasiveness of stereotypes in the media and education. In that connection, the Commission for the Promotion of Women in Science of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport played an important role in promoting gender equality. Moreover, the Commission would be involved in drafting a higher education strategy to address the issues raised by the Committee. In the long term, efforts aimed at tackling deeply rooted stereotypes would begin from preschool age onwards.

8. Measures to increase the participation of Roma girls in education included placing greater emphasis on learning about Romani and Slovene languages and culture. The Government had earmarked funds to staff certain nurseries and schools with Romani-speaking teaching assistants in order to facilitate the integration of Roma children in the education system. The assistants were helping them to overcome language and other barriers and providing a link between parents and the school. The Government had also introduced a Roma “educational incubator” programme under which extra tutoring at home, various leisure activities and careers advice and support were provided for Roma pupils.

9. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that in view of the fact that young people had been hardest hit by the economic crisis, various strategies had been adopted to promote their employment. One such measure, due to expire at the end of 2015, had provided employers with incentives to recruit young employment seekers by exempting them from the payment of employer contributions for a period of two years for employing a person under 30 years of age. The unemployment rate for men had improved more quickly than for women, largely due to the recovery of the construction sector. Even so, the proportion of women employed had risen from just under 50 per cent to almost 55 per cent between 2011 and 2014, indicating that initiatives aimed solely at unemployed women were not necessary. There were plans, however, to introduce further measures to address the issue of the disproportionately high number of educated young women out of work. Nevertheless, that imbalance would in all likelihood right itself to some extent once employment in the traditionally women-dominated public sector recovered in the way that the construction sector had. To that end, negotiations on lifting the public sector pay freeze were shortly due to be finalized with trade unions, and the Government had proposed pay increases to promote youth employment.

10. A survey had been conducted on the gender pay gap by the trade unions with a view to closing it. Her Government attached great importance to social dialogue and collective bargaining between trade unions and employers and encouraged both to reach agreements to help bridge the gender pay gap and strike a better work-life balance.

11. The share of unemployed women with disabilities was significantly lower than the share of unemployed men with disabilities. While there were no specific plans targeting women with disabilities, certain special measures, such as a quota system, had already been introduced to boost employment for persons with disabilities in general. A fine could be levied if a company failed to comply with those quotas.

12. **Ms. Salecl** (Slovenia) said that the gender pay gap in Slovenia was one of the lowest in the European Union, although, admittedly, it varied depending on the industry and the age group. In the public sector, the average gross wage was the same for men and women. In other sectors, however, men between 55 and 64 years of age often earned a much higher average wage.

13. Women entrepreneurs made up a significantly lower share of the workforce than their male counterparts. In that connection, one of the priority areas for the

Operational Programme for Human Resources Development for the period 2007-2013 had been to promote entrepreneurship among young people, particularly women. A new employment programme was currently in development which would incorporate a gender perspective and the principle of equal opportunities for women and men.

14. In 2011, women accounted for nearly half the persons who had found employment under such initiatives as the Employ.me programme, which sought to increase the employability of disadvantaged unemployed workers. In 2014, the Employment Service had organized various activities to tackle unemployment among the Roma, in which some 2,500 persons had participated; almost half of the participants were women.

15. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the compulsory public health insurance scheme in Slovenia provided universal coverage and was based on the principle of equal access to services. However, special clinics had been set up to provide primary health care to persons who did not have insurance, such as the homeless. Persons who received social benefits were eligible for financial assistance to help cover the cost of insurance.

16. **Ms. Gortnar** (Slovenia) said that the issue of women's health, including reproductive health, had been taken up in a recently adopted resolution by the National Assembly on a National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The relevant provisions of the resolution were designed to promote and protect prenatal and perinatal maternal health. A national health-care programme for the period 2015-2020 provided for comprehensive health care for women.

17. Sex education was a part of the national primary and secondary school curricula in Slovenia. Special awareness campaigns had been organized to promote safe sex and the use of contraceptives among sexually active young people. The efforts made in that respect had been reflected in a low abortion rate among young women and a low teenage pregnancy rate. In November 2015, an expert conference would be held on issues relating to Roma women and girls, including reproductive health and family planning.

18. **Ms. Zou Xiaqiao** said that she was concerned by reports that the economic situation of women, especially of older women, had worsened significantly with the adoption of new social legislation. The majority of people living below the poverty line were women. She asked what measures had been taken to deal with the issue and to provide better economic and social protection, particularly for women belonging to vulnerable groups. She wondered whether there were any plans to review the current social legislation and to take measures to incorporate a gender perspective into the law. She wished to know whether data had been collected on the impact of the new social legislation on women as compared to men. She asked what measures were in place and what human and financial resources had been allocated towards achieving the objective of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. Had measures been taken to integrate a gender perspective into the implementation process?

19. She said she would appreciate more information on the main objectives of the new National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, in particular in relation to women entrepreneurship, and on the budget for the Programme. She wondered whether there was a preferential policy for extending microcredit to women, in support of women's entrepreneurship, and whether women were able to apply for and receive bank loans on an equal footing with men.

20. **Ms. Gabr** said she wished to know what steps the State party planned to take to end discrimination against rural women and improve their living conditions, especially as they managed farms but received little recognition for their work. She asked if the

National Programme of Measures for the Roma for the period 2010-2015 would be assessed. She encouraged the State party to carry out an impact assessment and to include the results in the next periodic report. Such an assessment was of particular significance, as Slovenia did not keep statistics disaggregated by ethnicity. The fact that women's life expectancy was increasing meant that the State must take greater care of older women and confront the problems facing them, such as poverty, as was noted in the report of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons on her mission to Slovenia (A/HRC/30/43/Add.1). Measures to tackle poverty and improve access to services were necessary, in particular for women, who received a smaller pension than men. She was concerned about reports that many older women were not able to afford care homes and some faced violence in the home when compelled to live with their children. She would welcome any information about any measures taken to prevent such violence.

21. It was important to differentiate between economic migrants and refugees. However, special protection for women and children should be guaranteed in any case. She encouraged the State to become a party to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. She would appreciate it if the delegation could comment on the State party's reservation to article 59 of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which dealt with autonomous residence permits for victims whose residence status depended on their spouse or partner and who, in the event of the dissolution of the marriage or relationship, found themselves in particularly difficult circumstances. Further information on how the State party was fulfilling its obligations to protect women with disabilities under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities would also be helpful.

22. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that more than 100,000 migrants had entered Slovenia since the start of the migration crisis, which posed a significant challenge for a country with a population of just over 2 million. Emergency health care, food and shelter were being provided to those migrants. Most migrants did not apply for international protection in Slovenia, as they considered it to be a transit country, with many spending 24 hours or less there. That situation notwithstanding, women and children were given priority and provided with the necessary care. Since a significant number of the female migrants arriving in Slovenia were pregnant, every effort was made to ensure that they received the appropriate care. Women and children accounted for roughly half the migrants entering Slovenia and particular attention was given to reuniting families.

23. **Mr. Klančnik** (Slovenia) said that teams of police officers were assigned the task of reuniting family members, in close cooperation with humanitarian organizations and the Government. Women with small children, women in need of medical care and other vulnerable persons were accorded special attention.

24. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the economic crisis had made it difficult to conduct an accurate gender impact assessment of the new social legislation. The overall number of people receiving social benefits had increased since the legislation's entry into force in 2012, but the proportion of women to men had remained evenly divided. The new method of assessing individual wealth which had been introduced under the law took into account ownership of property as well as income.

25. Women with small pensions were entitled to special allowances to supplement their incomes. However, there had been a decrease in applications for such allowances, because potential applicants who owned property wrongly feared their homes would be taken away if they applied for them. While that was not the case, it was true that upon the death of a person who had received such an allowance, a portion of the estate would be repaid to the Government. An amendment to the

legislation was being prepared to exclude property under a certain value from being taken into account in granting the allowance.

26. In 2013, a number of measures had been adopted to lend support to single parents, most of whom were women, and to older women. Although the risk-of-poverty rate had not changed since 2014, it was expected that those measures would yield an impact on the figures in the coming years. Strategic plans for the future were underpinned by a social mobilization package of measures on which 112 million euros would be spent over a period of seven years and which included special programmes for the long-term unemployed.

27. **Ms. Lovšin** (Slovenia) said that, even during the economic crisis, Slovenia had continued to provide social benefits adjusted to the cost of living to large families, single parents and older persons. While poverty had been exacerbated by the crisis, the proportion of women to men living in poverty had not changed. Older women remained the most vulnerable group of all. The retirement age was currently the same for men and women under a new law on pensions, with the result that, in the future, women would work for as many years as men and would therefore be entitled to the same pension and social security benefits.

28. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the Government was in the process of establishing a comprehensive long-term care system so that older persons who wished to live at home could do so for as long as possible. Older women who could not afford care were eligible for financial support towards both home and institutional care costs.

29. **Ms. Salecl** (Slovenia) said that efforts had been made to close the gender pay gap and facilitate equal access to the labour market for women. The Government had also devised an action plan that included specific support measures for women entrepreneurs.

30. **Ms. Jeram** (Slovenia) said that the situation of rural women had improved considerably in recent years. A significant number of women agricultural workers were now registered with the social security system and regularly paid into a pension fund. However, only 27 per cent of women agricultural workers owned the land they cultivated. Measures had therefore been adopted under the Rural Development Programme to eliminate negative gender stereotypes and promote women's ownership of family farms. Incentives had also been introduced to encourage rural women to actively participate in public life and keep up to date with the latest agricultural developments.

31. **Ms. Gortnar** (Slovenia) said that the Government had made a reservation to article 59 of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, because it required additional time to fully incorporate the Convention's provisions into domestic legislation. The article was covered under the Aliens Act, which was currently under review. She expected that the review would resolve the issue.

32. **Mr. Klančnik** (Slovenia) said that the deadline for nationals of other former republics of Yugoslavia who had been stripped of their residency rights when Slovenia became independent to apply for compensation had been extended until June 2017. As of 2015, 97 per cent of compensation claims had been settled.

33. **Ms. Nadaraia**, noting the increasing rate of femicide in the State party, asked whether Slovenia would consider implementing a preventive mechanism to protect women at high risk of gender-based violence, including women who reported being stalked or harassed by former partners.

34. **Ms. Schulz** said that she would like further information on the national data collection system, including whether disaggregated data was systematically published online so that it was easily available to all interested parties.

35. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the Government had introduced specific legislation to prevent gender-based violence with a view to reducing the rate of femicide. It had also established a national programme that provided psychosocial support to women victims and had set up numerous safe houses and crisis centres across the country. As to the availability of national data, the National Statistics Office collected disaggregated data wherever possible. However, data protection legislation prohibited the collection of information pertaining to ethnicity or race.

36. **Ms. Boškić** (Slovenia) said that the Government was in the process of elaborating a series of measures to prevent gender-based violence and had established a system to improve the exchange of information between the relevant authorities on cases involving violence against women.

37. **Mr. Klančnik** (Slovenia) said that the national police force received regular training on identifying and handling cases of gender-based violence and robust procedures to prevent femicide were in place.

Articles 15 and 16

38. **Ms. Leinarde** asked what specific measures had been taken to support single working mothers and address the double burden faced by middle-aged working women who often had to juggle full-time employment with caring for older relatives and other family members. Noting that the Marriage and Family Relations Act had originally been drafted in 1976, she said she wished to know what steps had been taken to bring its provisions into line with modern-day family life. Lastly, she asked what additional efforts would be made to combat forced and early marriages and cultural norms that adversely affected the advancement of women.

39. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) said that the Government remained committed to combating forced and early marriages and would continue to implement measures aimed at eradicating the practices. It had also adopted various policies and forms of financial assistance to support single working mothers, including a child maintenance fund from which payments were made to mothers in cases where fathers failed to fulfil their alimony obligations.

40. **The Chairperson** said she wished to thank the delegation for the constructive dialogue which had enabled the Committee to gain further insight into the situation of women in Slovenia. She commended the State party for its efforts and urged it to take all necessary measures to address the Committee's concerns and recommendations.

41. **Ms. Vuk** (Slovenia) thanked the Committee members for their valuable and insightful comments and recommendations and said that her country looked forward to receiving the Committee's concluding observations.

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 5.10 p.m.