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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women****Concluding observations on the combined eighth and ninth  
periodic reports of Greece\***

1. The Committee considered the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Greece (CEDAW/C/GRC/8-9) at its 2041st and 2042nd meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.2041 and SR.2042), held on 6 February 2024.

**A. Introduction**

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State party of its combined eighth and ninth periodic reports prepared in response to the list of issues prior to reporting (CEDAW/C/GRC/QPR/8), as well as its follow-up report to the previous periodic report (CEDAW/C/GRC/CO/7/Add.1). It welcomes the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State party on its distinguished delegation, which was headed by Ms. Zafeiroula Dimadama, Secretary General for Equality and Human Rights. The delegation also included representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, Ministry of Citizen Protection, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry for Migration and Asylum, Ministry of Justice, and the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

**B. Positive aspects**

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2013 of the State party's seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/GRC/CO/7) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular the adoption of:

(a) Law 4604/2019 on Substantive Gender Equality, Preventing and Combating Gender-Based Violence, which aims to promote gender equality and address issues related to sexual and gender-based violence;

(b) Law 4706/2020, which provides for a minimum quota of at least 25 percent of persons of either sex on listed company boards;

(c) Law 4648/2019 and 4604/2019, which introduces a 40 percent quota for the representation of women candidates on electoral lists in each constituency respectively for national and European elections;

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its eighty-seventh session (29 January -16 February 2024).

(d) Law 4555/2018, which introduces a 40 percent quota for the representation of women candidates on electoral lists for regional and municipal elections;

(e) Law 4386/2016, which establishes a minimum quota of one-third of women candidates on the National Committee of Research and Innovation, the Sectoral Research Councils, the Regional Councils of Research and Innovation, and the Scientific Committees of Research Institutes.

5. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, such as the adoption and establishment of the following:

(a) The National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025;

(b) The National Disability Action Plan, in 2020;

(c) The National Strategy for Equality of LGBTIQ+ 2021-2027;

(d) The National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons 2021-2023;

(e) The National Action Plan for the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation, in 2023;

(f) The National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, in 2023.

6. The Committee welcomes the fact that, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State party has acceded to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), in 2018.

### **C. Sustainable Development Goals**

**7. The Committee welcomes the international support for the Sustainable Development Goals and calls for the realization of de jure (legal) and de facto (substantive) gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee recalls the importance of Goal 5 and of the mainstreaming of the principles of equality and non-discrimination throughout all 17 Goals. It urges the State party to recognize women as the driving force of the sustainable development of the State party and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect.**

### **D. Parliament**

**8. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see [A/65/38](#), part two, annex VI). It invites the Hellenic Parliament, in line with its mandate, to take necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the submission of the next periodic report under the Convention.**

### **E. Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

#### **Status and visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations**

9. The Committee notes the training and awareness-raising activities for the general public and capacity building for the judiciary and the police on the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto. However, it notes with concern that women, especially rural women, women belonging to ethnic minorities, and women with disabilities are often not aware of their rights under the Convention and the remedies available to claim them.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Raise awareness among women of their rights under the Convention and the legal remedies available to them to claim violations of such rights and ensure that information on the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee's general recommendations is accessible to all women in accessible formats;**

(b) **Consider establishing a comprehensive mechanism for the implementation of the present concluding observations and involve non-governmental organizations promoting women's rights and gender equality in the work of the mechanism, taking into account the four key capacities of a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up, namely, engagement, coordination, consultation, and information management;**

(c) **Ensure that the Convention, the Committee's jurisprudence and its general recommendations are made an integral part of systematic capacity-building for all judges, prosecutors and lawyers, with a view to enabling them to directly apply or invoke the provisions of the Convention in court proceedings or interpret national legislation in the light of the Convention, and of training for government officials, police officers and other law enforcement officials.**

#### **Legislative framework**

11. The Committee notes that the State party has adopted a framework of laws and policies to protect women's rights and promote gender acknowledges its pioneering work on enshrining equality before the law. However, it is concerned about the limited effectiveness and the need for monitoring and evaluation of these laws. The Committee is further concerned about the lack of effective application of the principle of intersectionality to address intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women belonging to disadvantaged groups.

12. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure the effective application of legislation prohibiting sex-based discrimination;**

(b) **Apply the principle of intersectionality to ensure access to public services for women facing intersecting forms of discrimination;**

(c) **Devise a comprehensive system to collect data on cases of discrimination against women, disaggregated by age, nationality, disability and socioeconomic status.**

#### **Women's access to justice**

13. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) Legal illiteracy among rural women, women with disabilities, and women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace, and the reluctance of women to file complaints about gender-based violence and discrimination due to the prevalence of judicial gender bias and gender stereotypes among law enforcement personnel;

(b) That refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women continue to face barriers to access to justice, which are often exacerbated by their lack of trust in the judiciary and law enforcement authorities or fear of retaliation.

14. **The Committee, recalling its general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice, recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Enhance women's and girls' knowledge of their rights and the remedies available to claim them, including by integrating education on women's rights and gender equality into curricula at all levels of education and conducting legal literacy campaigns;**

(b) **Expand measures to inform refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women of the remedies available to them in cases of violations of their rights, including via dedicated websites and social media, in accessible languages.**

**National machinery for the advancement of women**

15. The Committee commends the State party for the establishment in 2019 of the National Council for Gender Equality (NCGE), which acts as an advisory body to the General Secretariat for Equality and Human Rights, and is composed of representatives from ministries, academia, and civil society organizations. However, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) That the NCGE, which acts as the national machinery for the advancement of women, lacks sustainable human, technical and financial resources to discharge its mandate effectively;

(b) That notwithstanding the unequivocal mandate under the Law on Substantive Gender Equality 4604/2019 to advance gender mainstreaming, the systematic implementation of gender mainstreaming and the incorporation of gender-responsive budgeting across all government departments remain deficient.

**16. Recalling the guidance provided in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular regarding the conditions necessary for the effective functioning of national machineries, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Increase the human, technical and financial resources allocated to the National Council for Gender Equality (NCGE) and provide capacity building to strengthen the gender-specific expertise of its staff to enable it to effectively coordinate efforts to mainstream gender across all government departments;**

(b) **Adopt an integrated gender-responsive budgeting process and allocate sufficient budgetary resources for the advancement of women's rights.**

**National human rights institution**

17. The Committee welcomes the re-accreditation of the Greek National Commission for Human Rights (GNCHR) with "A" status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), in 2017. However, it notes that the Sub-Committee on Accreditation encouraged the GNCHR to: (a) publicize vacancies broadly; (b) maximize the number of potential candidates from a wide range of societal groups and educational qualifications; (c) promote broad consultation and/or participation in the application, screening and selection process; (d) assess applicants on the basis of pre-determined, objective and publicly-available criteria; and (e) select members to serve in their individual capacity rather than on behalf of the organization they represent.

**18. The Committee recommends that the State party implement the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation to strengthen the Commission for Human Rights and ensure that it is provided with adequate human, technical and financial resources to carry out its mandate effectively and independently, in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles, annexed to General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993) and seek the advice and technical support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in this regard.**

**Temporary special measures**

19. The Committee recognizes the temporary special measures in place to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality of women and men in political and public life. It notes with concern, however, the absence of temporary special measures other than electoral quotas, such as temporary measures to address intersecting forms of discrimination against rural women, women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority of Thrace and women with disabilities.

**20. Recalling its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/GRC/CO/7, para. 17), the Committee recommends that the State party adopt temporary special measures, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation**

**No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, to accelerate substantive equality of women and men, in particular as regards rural women, women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace, older women and women with disabilities, in all areas under the Convention where women are underrepresented or disadvantaged, including in political and public life, education, employment and health care.**

#### **Stereotypes and harmful practices**

21. The Committee notes the State party's efforts to combat gender stereotypes and harmful practices by launching awareness-raising campaigns. However, it remains concerned about the persistence of deep-rooted stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, which overemphasize women's traditional role as mothers and wives, thereby undermining women's social status, autonomy, and educational and professional opportunities. The Committee also notes with concern the significant number of women and girls in the State party who have undergone or are at risk of female genital mutilation.

**22. Drawing attention to the joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, as revised, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen measures, including awareness-raising and education campaigns, to eliminate stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society;**

(b) **Continue to systematically collect disaggregated data on the incidence of female genital mutilation and other harmful practices in the State party;**

(c) **Provide information on support services available to survivors of female genital mutilation; adequately fund mandatory training for health professionals and social workers on the identification and referral of women and girls at risk of female genital mutilation to appropriate support services; and ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted and adequately punished.**

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

23. The Committee remains concerned at the prevalence of gender-based violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, in the State party. It also notes with concern:

(a) That the Penal Code does not specifically criminalize femicide;

(b) The high incidence of domestic violence in the State party, owing to discriminatory social norms legitimizing such violence, the low prosecution and conviction rates in cases of domestic violence and marital rape, and underreporting due to victims' fear of stigmatization or reprisals, their economic dependence on abusive partners, legal illiteracy, and lack of trust in the law enforcement authorities;

(c) The lack of information on the effective enforcement and monitoring of protection orders, in particular restraining and separation orders, for in cases of domestic violence, which exposes women survivors of such violence to a risk of revictimization;

(d) The lack of adequate victim support services for women seeking to escape violent relationships and the insufficient number of adequate shelters across the State party.

**24. In line with its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, and with Sustainable Development Goal 5.2 on the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Amend the Penal Code to specifically criminalize femicide;**

(b) **Encourage reporting of domestic violence against women and girls by raising awareness among women and men, including through educational and media campaigns with the active participation of women’s organizations, on the criminal nature of gender-based violence against women, challenge its social legitimization and destigmatize and protect women from reprisals for reporting incidents of gender-based violence;**

(c) **Ensure, through mandatory and continuous capacity-building for judges, prosecutors, police officers and other law enforcement officials, that gender-based violence, including sexual violence against women, is effectively investigated and prosecuted, that perpetrators are adequately punished and that protection orders are effectively enforced and monitored, with sanctions in case of non-compliance;**

(d) **Adequately fund victim support services, by strengthening the 20 State-run shelters, subsidizing shelters run by non-governmental organizations, and expanding the network of specialized, inclusive and accessible shelters for women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence, taking into account their specific needs, and provide women and girls who cannot safely return to their homes with psychosocial counselling, financial support, education, professional training, income-generating activities, affordable housing and, if necessary to ensure their safety, a changed identity.**

#### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

25. The Committee commends the State party on its efforts to strengthen its legal and policy framework to combat trafficking in women and girls, including the operationalization of the National Referral Mechanism for the Protection of Human Trafficking Victims (NRM) in 2019. It also notes that the amendments to the Criminal Code, in force since 1 July 2019 (Law 4619/2019), provide an extended definition of “exploitation”, which also covers the subjection of a person to servitude or servitude-like practices, regardless of the victim’s consent. However, the Committee notes with concern that art. 323A of the Penal Code does not fully align with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), particularly regarding the issue of consent. It also notes with concern:

(a) That the State party remains a country of origin and destination for trafficking in women and girls for purposes of sexual and labour exploitation;

(b) That refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls are at a higher risk of trafficking for purposes of sexual or labour exploitation due to the lack of adequate protocols for victim identification;

(c) The high number of girls exploited in prostitution in the State party;

(d) The lack of adequately funded, inclusive, and accessible shelters for victims of trafficking, including women with disabilities;

(e) The significant number of Roma girls that are being forced to marry and subsequently forced to beg or commit crimes.

26. **With reference to its general recommendation No. 38 (2020) on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, the Committee recommends that the State party amend Article 323A of the Penal Code to fully align it with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), in particular as regards the requirement of consent. The Committee is of the view that harmonizing Article 323A with the Protocol's requirements on consent will not only strengthen the legal framework within the State party but also contribute to the global effort to combat trafficking in persons in a manner consistent with established international norms and obligations. It further recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Provide capacity-building for judges, prosecutors, police officers and other law enforcement officials, border police, health-care providers and other first responders in order to ensure the early identification of victims of trafficking and their referral to appropriate protection and rehabilitation services. Ensure the implementation of the instructions for the police on early identification of trafficking victims, and conduct a comprehensive and systematic assessment of the process of early identification of victims of trafficking, in particular women and girls, and their referral to appropriate services and protection, in particular in refugee camps, and ensure refugees with adequate information on their rights and allow civil society organizations and other relevant organisations to be present during the identification procedure;**

(b) **Promptly investigate, prosecute and adequately sentence those responsible for trafficking, and ensure that cases of trafficking are dealt with in an acceptable timeframe and reduce the burden of lengthy proceedings. Please also take concrete steps to expedite the victim certification process irrespective of victim cooperation in law enforcement efforts and ensure that victims are provided with information and granted an appropriate reflection and recovery period;**

(c) **Significantly increase the number and funding of inclusive and accessible shelters for victims of trafficking, including women with disabilities, in both urban and rural areas and ensure that they have access to free legal aid, interpretation, adequate medical assistance, psychosocial counselling, financial support, education, professional training and access to income-generating opportunities;**

(d) **Combat the exploitation of women and girls in prostitution, prosecute and punish perpetrators, reduce the demand for prostitution and provide exit programmes for women wishing to leave prostitution, including alternative income-generating opportunities, and combat institutionalized biases that hinder the identification of victims of trafficking and ensure that women forced into prostitution can be identified, treated and protected as victims of trafficking;**

(e) **Strengthen efforts to protect the rights of Roma girls at risk of forced marriage, crimes or trafficking and ensure to strengthen their position in the education system;**

(f) **Strengthen efforts, including by allocating sufficient resources, to increase labour inspectors, enhance training capacity for the labour inspectorate and law enforcement.**

#### **Equal participation in political and public life**

27. The Committee welcomes the adoption of Laws 4648/2019 and 4604/2019 by the State party on gender parity, which establishes a minimum quota of 40 percent for women's representation on candidate lists for each electoral constituency respectively for national and European elections. It notes with concern, however, that women currently hold only 24 percent of seats in the Hellenic Parliament. The Committee further notes with concern the persistence of structural barriers to women's participation in political and public life, in particular as regards rural women, women with disabilities and women belonging to ethnic minorities.

28. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life, as well as target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to ensure women's full and effective representation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Fully implement the letter and spirit of the State Party's law on temporary special measures and ensure gender equality in the nomination lists for international bodies as well as gender equal representation of women, including rural women, women with disabilities, women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace, in**

**Parliament and municipal councils, the Government, the civil service and the foreign service, in particular at decision-making levels;**

**(b) Provide capacity-building on political leadership and campaigning skills as well as access to campaign financing for women candidates to public office, in particular rural women, women with disabilities, and women belonging to ethnic minorities.**

#### **Nationality**

29. The Committee notes that according to Law 3226/2004, protection measures, including free legal aid, are available to stateless women in all civil, criminal and administrative courts proceedings, provided that they have legal or habitual residence in the European Union. However, the Committee notes with concern shortcomings and delays in birth registrations and in the registration, issuance and renewal of identity cards for refugee women and girls in the State party. The Committee further notes that the State party has not ratified or acceded to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the 2006 Council of Europe Convention on the Avoidance of Statelessness in relation to State Succession, and the 1997 European Convention on Nationality.

**30. With reference to its general recommendation No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women, the Committee recommends that the State party facilitate birth registration procedures and access to identity cards for refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls through online procedures, reduce the costs for birth certificates, and deploy mobile civil registration units to ensure that all children born in the State party are registered at birth and have access to identity documents. The Committee also recommends that the State party accede to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the 2006 Council of Europe Convention on the Avoidance of Statelessness in relation to State Succession, and the 1997 European Convention on Nationality.**

#### **Education**

31. The Committee commends the State party on the adoption of Law 4589/2019, which establishes Gender Equality Committees in all universities as an advisory body for promoting gender equality in academic life. However, it notes with concern the disproportionately high levels of illiteracy among rural women, women with disabilities, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls and women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and girls and women and girls belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace.

**32. With reference to its general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education and recalling its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/GRC/CO/7, para. 27), the Committee recommends that the State party continue promoting the importance of girls' education at all levels, as a basis for their empowerment, and reduce illiteracy rates among women and girls, with a focus on rural women, women with disabilities, women and girls belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and girls and women and girls belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace, and refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, and take targeted measures including awareness-raising and special scholarships to increase enrolment, retention and completion rates among girls and women in secondary and higher education.**

#### **Employment**

33. The Committee notes the legislative measures adopted by the State party to improve labour standards and aligning them with international and European Union (EU) standards, including Law 4808/2021. However, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) The persistent 10 percent gender wage gap;



(b) Women's concentration in lower-paid jobs and in the informal economy, a sector in which they are exposed to exploitation and have no access to social security systems;

(c) The large number of women engaged in unpaid care work in the State party;

(d) The high unemployment rates among rural women, women with disabilities, and women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace;

(e) The underreporting of sexual harassment in the workplace due to limited access to information on newly established reporting mechanisms.

**34. In line with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals on the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Effectively enforce the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, in order to narrow and eventually close the gender pay gap, by (i) conducting regular labour inspections, (ii) applying gender-neutral analytical job classification and evaluation methods, (iii) conducting regular pay surveys, and (iv) encouraging employers to publish a narrative with their gender pay gap data, with a view to better understanding the reasons behind the gender wage and pension gap, and to take appropriate remedial measures;**

(b) **Enhance women's access to formal employment, targeting in particular disadvantaged groups of women, and extend social protection schemes to women employed in the informal economy;**

(c) **Recognize, reduce and redistribute the burden of unpaid care work on women by providing affordable childcare facilities and care services for older persons and promoting equal sharing of domestic and family responsibilities between women and men;**

(d) **Improve access to employment and training opportunities for disadvantaged groups of women, such as women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace, women with disabilities and migrant women;**

(e) **Provide mandatory training for employers and employees on the criminal nature of sexual harassment and on employers' responsibility to apply a zero-tolerance approach and prevent and report incidents and ensure that employees have access to information on available confidential complaint mechanisms;**

(f) **Ratify the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization.**

## **Health**

35. The Committee welcomes the preventive reproductive health-care programme of the State party, which includes breast and cervical cancer early detection and vaccination against human papillomavirus for girls, provided free of charge by the Ministry of Health through its National Screening Program and National Vaccination Program. However, it notes with concern:

(a) That cesarean sections are performed in more than fifty percent of childbirth procedures;

(b) High rates of early pregnancy, the absence of mandatory age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights in the school curriculum and the insufficient training of teachers in this field;

(c) The limited access for women and girls, particularly women and girls with disabilities, women in detention and refugee and migrant women and girls, to sexual and

reproductive health services and information, including information on responsible sexual behaviour, as well as to family planning and affordable modern contraceptives;

(d) The violations that gave rise to the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case *O.G. and Others v. Greece*, where the Court ruled that the State party had violated the right to respect for the private life of HIV-positive sex workers by imposing blood tests on sex workers and publicly disseminating their personal data upon the order of a prosecutor in 2012.

**36. In line with its general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health and targets 3.1 and 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to reduce global maternal mortality and ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen women's access to quality health services, in particular for rural women and women with disabilities, including by improving the health-care infrastructure, increasing budgetary allocations for the health sector and conducting informational campaigns on women's health. In particular, it recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Provide effective access for women to obstetric services, including emergency obstetric services and ensure that caesarean sections are performed only exceptionally when medically required;**

(b) **Take adequate measures to carry out a national survey on reproductive health, adopt and implement a national strategy for reproductive health, sexuality and family planning and introduce mandatory age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights in school curricula, including education on modern forms of contraception to reduce early pregnancy and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections;**

(c) **Ensure that women have access to adequate sexual and reproductive health services and information, including safe abortion and post-abortion services and affordable modern contraceptives, to prevent early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, especially for women and girls with disabilities, women in detention and refugee and migrant women and girls;**

(d) **Adopt concrete measures to ensure that women and girls with HIV/AIDS have free access to antiretroviral medicines to prevent mother-to-child transmission, promote voluntary HIV testing, raise awareness among women and men, including those who engage in risky sexual behaviour and those living with HIV, of their responsibilities in reducing the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections to their partners, and integrate a gender perspective into its policies to combat HIV/AIDS.**

#### **Economic empowerment of women**

37. The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the State party to promote women's economic empowerment, including the availability of low-interest loans and other forms of financial credit for women entrepreneurs and rural women, and the training provided to women entrepreneurs on business management and financial literacy. However, it notes with concern the disproportionately high levels of poverty and limited access to economic and social benefits among disadvantaged groups of women, in particular women with disabilities and women belonging to ethnic minorities.

**38. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen efforts to reduce poverty among women, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups of women, such as women with disabilities and women belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma women and women belonging to the Muslim minority in Thrace, promote their access to low-interest loans without collateral and their participation in entrepreneurial initiatives to empower them economically and provide them with opportunities to acquire the necessary skills to fully participate in economic life.**

### Rural women

39. The Committee notes with concern that rural women have limited access to health care, social protection, and other basic services, including public transportation.

40. **In line with its general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women and target 5.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that rural women, especially those in remote areas, have adequate access to health care, social protection and other basic services, including public transportation.**

### Women with disabilities

41. The Committee notes with concern that women with disabilities face intersecting forms of discrimination in the State party, especially with regard to access to justice, education, employment, and health care.

42. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 18 (1991) on disabled women, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that women and girls with disabilities are able to access justice, inclusive education, employment and health services, including sexual and reproductive health services.**

### Refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls

43. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) That refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women and girls face intersecting forms of discrimination and disproportionate levels of gender-based violence in the State party, particularly in border areas, and that undocumented migrant women are exposed to a high risk of sexual exploitation, forced labour and recruitment, including by human trafficking networks;

(b) Allegations of “push-backs” (summary forced returns) of third-country nationals, including many women and girls, who are reportedly summarily and forcibly returned to Türkiye without effective access to asylum procedures and protection in Greece, which may amount to refoulement.

44. **The Committee reminds the State party of its obligation of non-refoulement under international law, and in line with its general recommendations No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women, No. 30 (2013) on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, and No. 26 (2008) on women migrant workers, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Address intersecting forms of discrimination against refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women, protect them from gender-based violence, particularly in border areas, and prosecute and adequately punish perpetrators;**

(b) **Ensure that women and girls entering the territory of the State party always have access to asylum procedures and that they are not forcibly returned when there are substantial grounds to believe that there is a real risk of irreparable harm and protect those women from such practices;**

(c) **Ensure the application of a gender-sensitive approach in receiving refugee and asylum-seeking women and in considering asylum claims, including by training immigration officers on gender-sensitive interviewing techniques, and that gender-based violence against women is recognized as a protection ground.**

### **Disaster risk reduction and climate change**

45. The Committee commends the state party for the implementation of a gender perspective in environmental and climate policies design, however, it is concerned that women, in particular rural women, women with disabilities, women living in poverty and migrant women, are disproportionately affected by climate change, as they often live in exposed areas and lack the necessary coping mechanisms to increase their climate change resilience.

46. **In line with its general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, the Committee recommends that the State party review its climate change and disaster response strategies, taking into account the negative effects of climate change on the livelihoods of women, and ensure that women are equally represented as men in the development, adoption and implementation of legislation, policies and programmes on climate change, disaster response and disaster risk reduction, by in particular:**

(a) **Collecting disaggregated data on the impact of climate change and natural disasters on women and girls;**

(b) **Ensuring the incorporation of a gender perspective in climate change and disaster risk reduction legislation, policies, financing and programmes to address the specific needs of women and girls and build their resilience and effective adaptation to climate change;**

(c) **Increasing climate change and disaster risk management literacy and awareness among communities, women and girls, including rural women and women with disabilities, to empower them with knowledge to demand their rights, and effectively participate in climate change-related decision-making and the development of adaptation and loss and damage strategies and actions that build women's and girls' resilience to the impact of climate change.**

### **Marriage and family relations**

47. The Committee is concerned about the prevalence of child marriage in the State party, especially among the Roma community. It also notes with concern that in Thrace, Muftis are selected by the Muslim minority and recognized by the State, and have jurisdiction over Muslim marriage, celebrating child marriages legally recognized under Greek and Civil law, and in certain cases, applying Hanafi law, which contemplates the marriage of girls under the age of 15 with parental consent.

48. **The Committee urges the State party review the Civil Code in order to remove all exceptions to the legal minimum age of marriage of 18 years for both women and men and pursue its efforts to combat child and forced marriage, including by addressing the root causes of this harmful practice; encouraging reporting of cases; punishing complicit family members, religious and community leaders or law enforcement officers; and provide support services to girls victims of child and forced marriage, in accordance with joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019).**

### **Data collection and analysis**

49. The Committee is concerned about the absence of data collection in many areas relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

50. **The Committee recommends that the State party promote and build capacity for the collection of statistical data, including on the prevalence of gender-based violence against women, the prevalence of trafficking in women and girls, girls' and women's access to education and socioeconomic status, disaggregated by age and socioeconomic background, for the design and implementation of tailored gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes and budgets.**

### **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

51. The Committee calls upon the State party to use the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to further evaluate the implementation of the Convention to achieve substantive equality of women and men.

### **Dissemination**

52. The Committee requests the State party to ensure the timely dissemination of the present concluding observations, in the official languages of the State party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and municipal), in particular to the Government, the parliament and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation.

### **Ratification of other treaties**

53. The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments<sup>1</sup> would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, to which it is not yet a party.

### **Follow-up to concluding observations**

54. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 24(d), 26(a), 44(b) and 46(b) above.

### **Preparation of the next report**

55. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the tenth periodic report of the State party in line with a future predictable eight-year review calendar and following the adoption of a list of issues prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State party. The next periodic report should cover the entire period up to the time of its submission.

56. The Committee requests the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (see [HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I).

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<sup>1</sup>The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.