



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

HAUT-COMMISSARIAT DES NATIONS UNIES AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

REFERENCE: BN/follow-up/Finland/91

4 July 2025

Excellency,

In my capacity as Rapporteur on follow-up on concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), I have the honor to refer to the examination of the eighth periodic report of Finland, at the Committee's eighty-third session, held in October 2022. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/FIN/CO/8](#)) were transmitted to your Permanent Mission. You may recall that in paragraph 45 on follow-up to the concluding observations, the Committee requested Finland to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 20, 22 (c), 24 (b) and 28 (a) and (d) of the concluding observations.

The Committee welcomes the follow-up report ([CEDAW/C/FIN/FCO/8](#)) received on time on 14 October 2024 under the CEDAW follow-up procedure. At its ninety-first session, held in June and July 2025, the Committee examined this follow-up report and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 20 (a)** of the concluding observations that the State party **"take steps to criminalise sexist, misogynist and other forms of gender-related hate speech, including against migrant women and women belonging to national minorities"**:

The Committee takes note of the State party's indication that hate speech is criminalized as agitation against a population group under section 10 of the Penal Code, including an aggravated form of the offense. It notes that hate speech may also be punishable as defamation, aggravated defamation, or sexual harassment depending on the circumstances, and that gender-based motives constitute grounds for increased punishment under section 6:5.1 p 4 of the Penal Code. The Committee further notes that a legislative reassessment regarding the need to revise hate speech offenses is currently taking place. The Committee regrets, however, that no specific information has been provided on steps taken to explicitly criminalize sexist, misogynist and other forms of gender-related hate speech, as recommended. The Committee notes that while general hate speech provisions and gender-based sentencing enhancements exist, these may not adequately address the specific forms of gender-related hate speech identified in the recommendation.

The Committee considers that the State party has existing legal frameworks that may cover some aspects of the recommendation but has not taken specific steps to criminalize gender-related hate

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speech as recommended. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party relates partially to the recommendation but does not address the specific criminalization of gender-related hate speech. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 20 (a)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Take steps to criminalise sexist, misogynist and other forms of gender-related hate speech, including against migrant women and women belonging to national minorities.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 20 (b)** of the concluding observations that the State party **"strictly enforce the October 2021 amendment to the Criminal Code concerning the right to bring charges for threats in cases of gender-related hate speech"**:

The Committee takes note of the State party's clarification that the amendment to chapter 25, section 9, subsection 2 of the Criminal Code that entered into force on 1 October 2021 concerns the right to bring charges for illegal threats made against a person due to their work duty or public position of trust, and allows prosecutors to bring charges in specific circumstances involving workplace or public positions. The Committee notes that while research data indicating that women face a higher risk of violence in working life was an underlying factor behind the amendment, the State party acknowledges that the subsection does not directly address gender-based hate speech. The Committee regrets that the State party has not provided information on strict enforcement of provisions specifically addressing gender-related hate speech, as recommended, and notes the absence of detailed information on the practical application of the amendment.

The Committee considers that the State party has not addressed the specific enforcement of measures concerning gender-related hate speech as recommended. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party does not relate directly to the recommendation and clarifies that the referenced amendment does not address gender-related hate speech. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **unsatisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 20 (b)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Strictly enforce the October 2021 amendment to the Criminal Code concerning the right to bring charges for threats in cases of gender-related hate speech.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 20 (c)** of the concluding observations that the State party **"further strengthen measures to address gender-related hate speech and the portrayal of stereotyped images of women in the media, including by encouraging the media and**

the advertising sector to institute effective self-regulatory mechanisms to prohibit the use of such hate speech and promote positive and non-stereotypical portrayals of women and girls":

The Committee takes note of the adoption of the Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention to address digital gender-based violence. It further notes the implementation of the European Union Digital Services Act (DSA) in February 2024, which seeks to protect users from illegal and harmful content online and ensure fundamental rights are respected in the online environment. It notes the enactment of national supervisory provisions through the Act on the supervision of online intermediation services to ensure effective DSA implementation. The Committee also notes the Ministry of Transport and Communications' 2021 #WomenInTech blog-post series highlighting women working in the tech industry to encourage women and girls to study and work in technology. The Committee regrets, however, that no specific information has been provided on measures to address gender-related hate speech or stereotyped images of women in traditional media, or on encouraging the media and advertising sector to institute effective self-regulatory mechanisms to prohibit hate speech and promote positive portrayals of women and girls, as recommended.

The Committee considers that the State party has taken some steps related to online content regulation but has not addressed the broader recommendation concerning media self-regulation and gender stereotypes. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party relates partially to the recommendation but lacks specific measures addressing media self-regulation and gender stereotypes. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 20 (c)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Further strengthen measures to address gender-related hate speech and the portrayal of stereotyped images of women in the media, including by encouraging the media and the advertising sector to institute effective self-regulatory mechanisms to prohibit the use of such hate speech and promote positive and non-stereotypical portrayals of women and girls.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 22 (c)** of the concluding observations that the State party **"take immediate steps to repeal section 2 of the Sterilization Law and provide effective remedies for women victims of forced or involuntary sterilisation"**:

The Committee takes note of the State party's indication that the current Sterilisation Act (283/1970) removed the provision on forced sterilisation from the law and that the Act should not be interpreted as a means for carrying out forced sterilisations. It notes the State party's reference to the Act on the Rights and Status of Patients (785/1992) requiring mutual understanding with patients and the new Act on Disability Services and Assistance (675/2023) entering into force on 1 January 2025, which provides persons with disabilities the right to receive supported decision-making. The Committee regrets, however, that the State party has acknowledged the need for legislative development regarding the right to self-determination in the Sterilisation Act but states that no legislative amendments are currently being prepared. The Committee is concerned that section 2 of the Sterilization Law has not



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been repealed, as specifically recommended, and regrets the absence of information on effective remedies provided for women victims of forced or involuntary sterilisation.

The Committee considers that the State party has not taken steps to implement the recommendation. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party does not address the specific repeal requested and lacks information on remedies for victims. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **unsatisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 22 (c)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Take immediate steps to repeal section 2 of the Sterilization Law and provide effective remedies for women victims of forced or involuntary sterilisation.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 24 (b)** of the concluding observations that the State party "**give priority to prosecution over the use of mediation in cases of intimate partner violence and domestic violence and ensure that referral to mediation does not result in the discontinuation of criminal investigation and prosecution in these cases**":

The Committee takes note of the Government Programme of Prime Minister Petteri Orpo's Government (20 June 2023) stating that mediation in cases involving domestic or intimate partner violence will be discontinued as a rule, and that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is currently preparing a government proposal to implement this entry.

The Committee considers that the State party has taken steps to implement the recommendation by committing to discontinue mediation in domestic violence cases. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **been substantially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is clear and relates directly to the recommendation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **satisfactory**.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 28 (a)** of the concluding observations that the State party "**adopt measures, including temporary special measures such as statutory quotas or incentives, for political parties to include an equal number of women and men in their electoral lists, especially at the municipal level**":

The Committee takes note of the State party's information that in the 2023 parliamentary elections, the proportion of women candidates (42.9%) was higher than ever before, representing an increase of 0.9 percentage points from the 2019 elections. It notes that women accounted for 47.5% of candidates of all parliamentary parties and that the proportion of women candidates varied between 34.5% and 84.6% depending on the party. The Committee regrets, however, that no information has been provided on measures adopted to ensure equal representation of women and men in electoral lists, such as statutory quotas or incentives for political parties, as recommended. The Committee particularly



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regrets the absence of information on specific measures at the municipal level, despite the recommendation's emphasis on this area.

The Committee considers that the State party has not taken steps to implement the recommendation. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party does not relate to the recommendation and provides statistical data rather than information on adopted measures. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **unsatisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 28 (a)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Adopt measures, including temporary special measures such as statutory quotas or incentives, for political parties to include an equal number of women and men in their electoral lists, especially at the municipal level.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 28 (d)** of the concluding observations that the State party "**put in place temporary special measures, including statutory quotas, for the representation of women in decision-making positions in the defence forces**":

The Committee takes note of the State party's information that no statutory gender quotas apply to recruiting by the Finnish Defence Forces and that recruitment is based on skill, ability and proven civic merit under the Constitution. It notes that women's voluntary military service has been available since 1995 with equal content and requirements to men's service, and that the number of women in voluntary military service has increased from 567 in 1995-2004 to 1,305 in 2015-2024. The Committee also notes measures to improve gender equality, including shared quarters for male conscripts and women in voluntary military service since 2024. The Committee regrets, however, that no temporary special measures, including statutory quotas, have been put in place for the representation of women in decision-making positions in the defence forces, as specifically recommended. The Committee notes that while access to senior positions depends on years of service, with the longest-serving female soldier having 23 years of service, no proactive measures have been adopted to accelerate women's representation in leadership roles.

The Committee considers that the State party has not taken steps to implement the recommendation. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is extensive but does not relate to the recommendation and focuses on general recruitment principles rather than temporary special measures for decision-making positions. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **unsatisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 28 (d)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:



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Put in place temporary special measures, including statutory quotas, for the representation of women in decision-making positions in the defence forces.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jelena Pia-Comella'.

Jelena Pia-Comella
Rapporteur on follow-up
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women