



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

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

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

Addendum

**Replies of Cyprus to the list of issues to be taken up in connection with
the consideration of its sixth and seventh periodic reports***

* In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document has not been edited.

I. Introduction

1. The present document provides responses to the issues and questions submitted to the Government of Cyprus with regard to the consideration of its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports (2004-2010) (CEDAW/C/CYP/Q/6-7) – hereinafter “the responses to the questions”.
2. Like the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports (2004-2010) (CEDAW/C/CYP/6-7) hereinafter the “periodic report”, the present document was prepared by the Law Commissioner of the Republic who, pursuant to a Decision of the Council of Ministers, is entrusted with ensuring compliance of the reporting obligations of Cyprus under the international human rights instruments. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order is the competent Ministry for the purposes of the Convention and, through the National Machinery for Women’s Rights, was very much involved in the preparation of the present document. The information and data on the basis of which the present document was compiled was provided by the Ministries having competence for the specific matter (i.e. the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, the Statistical Service of Cyprus), as well as the Law Office of the Republic, the Police, the Commissioner of Administration (Ombudsman), the University of Cyprus and Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court. Information was also obtained from a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other agencies, such as the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family and the Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training, which could provide information in relation to the issues and questions submitted to the Government.
3. The information contained in the present document was discussed with all the above at ad hoc meetings with the Law Commissioner during the drafting stages. The present document will be communicated to all the above upon submission.

II. Responses to questions

General

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 1 of the list of issues (CEDAW/C/SRB/Q/2-3)

4. The process of preparing the periodic report is set out in paragraph 2 of the periodic report. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order /National Machinery for Women’s Rights maintains an open dialogue and continuous consultation on all issues with the NGOs which are members of National Machinery for Women’s Rights. The information provided by National Machinery for Women’s Rights is based on these consultations.
5. Under the Constitutional structure the obligation for country reporting as to the level of implementation of Human Rights instruments lies with the Executive. Thus, the periodic report was approved by the MFA and endorsed by the Council of Ministers. Following the examination of the periodic report and the communication of the concluding observations of the Committee, those are given appropriate publicity by all concerned (e.g. the Law Commissioner, the National Machinery for Women’s Rights). In this context, they are communicated to the Parliament.

Constitutional and legislative framework

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 2 of the list of issues

6. The scope of article 28 of the Constitution covers direct and indirect discrimination. This has been decided by the Supreme Court as far back as 1991 in the application of *Melpo Grigoriou v Nicosia Municipality* (application no. 541/86, judgment of 12 September 1991). The case concerns an application for equal pay without discrimination based on sex. The Supreme Court decided that the applicant had been discriminated against by her employees as she had the same service time, the same skills, the same duties, the same responsibilities and the same position as her male peers. The difference in payment was due only to the difference of sex. It is significant to note that the Supreme Court found discrimination in the said application applying directly article 28 of the Constitution. At the time, the law on equal pay for men and women in employment for work of equal value had not yet been adopted.

7. Considering the issue of direct and indirect discrimination the Supreme Court stated: “article 28 of our Constitution safeguards and guarantees the right to equality and prohibits direct or indirect discrimination based, among others, on sex”. The Supreme Court went further and stated that “article 28 of the Constitution contains an independent prohibition of discrimination.” Although the employer, Nicosia Municipality, is a public law organization established by law, the question of whether discrimination provided for in article 28 of the Constitution extends to acts of discrimination by public and private actors alike has been tackled by the Supreme Court in the above application. The Supreme Court stated: “by virtue of article 35 of the Constitution legislative, executive and judicial authorities must ensure the effective implementation of Part II of the Constitution referring to fundamental rights and duties.” As such according to the Supreme Court, Nicosia Municipality has the obligation deriving from Part II of the Constitution generally and article 28 specifically, to act in such a way as to safeguard and implement the fundamental right of equality, including the principle that men and women should receive equal pay for work of equal value.

8. In addition to the above it was established by case law in 2001 (in the case of *Yiallourou v. Evgenios Nicolaou*, Civil Appeal No.9931, Supreme Court (full bench) judgment of 8 May 2001) that violation of human rights is an actionable right which can be pursued in civil courts against those perpetrating the violation, for recovering from them, inter alia, just and reasonable compensation for pecuniary and non-pecuniary damage suffered as a result. The result is that a person who is discriminated against, whether directly or indirectly, in the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Cyprus Constitution (in Part II of its provisions largely reproducing those of the European Convention of Human Rights) can sue the State or private persons for damages and or other appropriate civil law remedies, for violating his constitutional right (under article 28) to enjoy the above rights and freedoms without such discrimination. The Supreme Court also referred to the need to interpret article 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights to guarantee an effective remedy before a national authority to everyone who claims his Convention rights have been violated. It stated that “in Cyprus the provisions of Article 13 form part of the domestic law, which safeguards the right to an effective remedy for violation of the rights safeguarded by the Convention (which to a large extent correspond to the rights safeguarded by Part II of the Constitution). Therefore, in addition to the nature of the rights inherent in the concept of judicial protection, and the provisions of Article 35 of the Constitution which give rise to the obligation of judicial protection, Article 13 of the Convention safeguards the right to a remedy concerning all of the fundamental rights which correspond to those protected by the Convention.”

9. The Convention has been invoked and referred to by domestic courts in various judgments. By way of example, the Convention was referred to by the Supreme Court in the application of *Nitsa Georgiou Zoukof and Georgia Andrea Zoukof v Cyprus Republic*

via *Paphos Greek school registrar* (case no. 912/89, judgment of 25 July 1990). The case concerned non employment in a high school canteen due to the fact that the applicants had been women and it would be difficult for them to have to cope with male teenagers. The Supreme Court inter alia referred to the right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment (article 11 (b) of the Convention). The application was, therefore, successful.

10. The Convention was also referred to by the Supreme Court in the application of *Kyriakos Papagiannis and others v Industrial Training Authority* (case nos. 652/89 and 676/89, judgment of 19 June 1992). The case concerned non employment in the above authority due to the fact that the applicant (a pregnant woman, who, on the day of the written examination was admitted to hospital and later on aborted her unborn baby) failed to attend written examinations. The Supreme Court inter alia referred to the right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding to the function of reproduction (article 11 (f) of the Convention) and to the obligation of States to refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation (article 2 (d) of the Convention). The application was, therefore, successful.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 3 of the list of issues

11. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the most cited reasons that have been reported with regards to women's reluctance to bring a case before the court are:

- (a) The long duration of the court proceedings,
- (b) Expenses that are required for the court proceedings,
- (c) A feeling that nothing good will come out of it,
- (d) The fear of social stigma (in case of sexual harassment).

12. The Department of Labour has been very active and has taken a number of steps in order to raise women's awareness and encourage them to seek action against discrimination. More specifically the following steps were taken:

(a) Informative material relating to the promotion of equal treatment and equality rights between women and men in the workplace was published and circulated (*Guide to Protection of Maternity, Pregnancy and Equal Treatment in Employment and Vocational Training – A guide for the obligations and rights of employers and employees*),

(b) Information on sexual harassment was published and circulated,

(c) Officers of the Department of Labour participated in training programmes targeted at Gender Equality Inspectors.

(d) A media campaign (radio and TV advertisements) that aimed to raise public awareness against discrimination was launched in 2010.

13. The Equality Authority (Ombudsman), which puts great emphasis on informing employees, employers, organisations and activists about the Authority's jurisdictions and about the provisions of the institutional framework relevant to the prohibitions of discriminations in employment and vocational training, has raised awareness through:

(a) The launching of a campaign that aimed to eliminate the occurrence of published adverts for job vacancies that refer to only one sex (in the context of this campaign, in December 2009, a letter giving detailed information on the illegal publication of adverts for job vacancies referring to only one sex was sent to all forms of press, electronic, radio and TV media as well as to the District Labour Offices in Cyprus),

(b) The launching of a Media campaign to raise public awareness in Cyprus on issues of discrimination (a campaign was organized in the Media during the months of June and July 2010),

(c) The Organisation of a seminar on training trade unionists on legislation against discrimination (in cooperation with the Cyprus Labour Institute INEK – PEO),

(d) The construction of a website containing information regarding the jurisdictions of the Equality Authority and the Authority against Racism and Discrimination (aiming at interactive internet communication with the public),

(e) The Funding of the Cyprus Gender Research Centre (CGRC) to conduct a survey on the profile of immigrant women in Cyprus and their needs for education and professional training.

14. In 2011, the Commissioner of Administration (Ombudsman) was appointed as the Commissioner of the Protection of Human Rights. According to this legislative framework, the Ombudsman has a very broad mandate to protect and monitor human rights. More specifically, the Ombudsman has the authority to ab initio investigate and issue Reports with recommendations concerning the promotion and protection of human rights, maintenance or expansion of them and compliance of public services with fundamental human rights' principles.

15. However, the new responsibilities and powers of the Commissioner were granted without the necessary human and financial resources in order to function effectively. This means that the Commissioner for the Protection of Human Rights operates within the same budget given to the Ombudsman's Office. Due to budget cuts, only one Officer is currently engaged to the new competencies.

16. The outcome of the 17 complaints that have been submitted to the Anti-Discrimination Body (Ombudsman) is the following:

(a) 3 were found to be admissible and the Equality Authority proceeded with a Report

(b) 5 were found to be unfounded or outside the Equality Authority's scope of powers

(c) 3 were found to be inadmissible or they were withdrawn by the complainant(s)

(d) 1 came to a successful closing following the intervention of the Anti-Discrimination Body

(e) 5 were sent letters informing the complainant(s) about the provisions of the anti-discrimination legislation

National machinery for the advancement of women

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 4 of the list of issues

17. The National Machinery for Women's Rights continues to run with the same number of staff (3 Officers). Additionally, external consultants continue to provide support and assistance for the carrying out of specific actions and programmes. The budget of the National Machinery for Women's Rights has been considerably decreased during the last years due to the financial crisis and the Government's efforts to reduce the budget deficit. More precisely, the budget was reduced from 980,000 euros in 2008 to 435,000 euros in 2010 and 450,000 euros in 2012. However, efforts have been made so annual subsidies to NGOs-members of the National Machinery would not be decreased.

18. The functions of the National Machinery for Women's Rights include the following:

- (a) Submission of recommendations to the Government on policies, programmes and laws promoting women's rights.
- (b) Monitoring, coordination and evaluation of the implementation of programmes.
- (c) Awareness raising programmes/campaigns aiming at the increase of women's representation in political and public life, the reconciliation of working and family life and violence against women.
- (d) Promotion of education and training programmes on gender equality issues.

4.3.1. The Equality Unit functions include the following:

- (a) Contribution of law reform, particularly in the area of family law.
- (b) Support and subsidization of women's organisations.
- (c) International and European relations in the field of gender equality.
- (d) Promotion of gender mainstreaming in public policies and action plans.
- (e) Provision of secretariat and scientific support to the National Machinery for Women's Rights.
- (f) Publications.

19. The functions of the Equality Unit have expanded as it has been assigned with the:

- (a) Coordination and implementation of the Cyprus Presidency programme in the field of gender equality.
- (b) Chairing of the Technical Committee on Gender Equality which deals inter alia with the monitoring of the implementation of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality.
- (c) Carrying out of a study on the existing gender equality bodies with a view to creating a unified body on gender equality.

20. The Ministerial Committee for Gender Equality, which was established in 2009, has focused its work on the following areas:

- (a) Evaluation and review of progress of the implementation of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2007-2013).
- (b) The signing and ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence by Cyprus.

21. The outcome of the study, which was carried out by the Technical Committee on Gender Equality, on the possibility of merging the existing gender equality bodies with a view of creating a unified body on gender equality, has revealed that the merging of these bodies at this stage is not recommended due to the following reasons:

- (a) The merging of the existing equality bodies will not lead to a significant reduction of resources provided by the national budget.
- (b) There is no significant overlapping of responsibilities between the Ministry of Justice and Public Order and the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. Both Ministries appeared to have very distinct responsibilities and roles.
- (c) In the event of establishing a new independent body, the need for a competent government department will still remain.

(d) The merging of the existing bodies will unavoidably lead to limitation of NGOs involvement.

Programmes and action plans

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 of the list of issues

22. In order to assess and measure the impact of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, an interim report on the evaluation of its implementation, covering the period 2007-2010 was carried out by an external consultant. The interim report revealed the following:

(a) Out of the 66 actions of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, 22 actions have been completed, 21 are currently under completion and 23 have not been implemented.

(b) Significant progress was made in the areas of employment and violence against women. However, little progress was observed in the areas of education, mass media and political participation in relation to gender stereotypes.

(c) The number of public officers involved in gender equality issues in all ministries has been increased.

(d) More emphasis was placed on training on gender equality issues, particularly through the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration.

(e) Multidisciplinary committees under other ministries that deal with equality issues have been set up. The National Machinery and/or a number of NGOs participate in these committees with the aim of pursuing gender mainstreaming in the specific area of competence.

(f) The Local Authorities became more active on gender equality issues.

23. However, the interim report also revealed that:

(a) Gender equality issues are still perceived as “female issues”.

(b) Gender mainstreaming has not generally been implemented.

24. In addition, the interim report suggested that future work should focus on:

(a) Changing social attitudes among women and men regarding gender equality issues and eliminating gender stereotypes through the educational system and the Media.

(b) Further promoting specialised training and awareness raising of relevant professionals on gender equality issues.

(c) Promoting of positive action measures as well as gender mainstreaming in all Government policies.

(d) Systematic monitoring and evaluation of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality.

(e) Further developing of research/improvement of statistical data.

25. The new Action Plan 2010-2012 against Trafficking in Human Beings (THB), which was prepared by the Multidisciplinary Coordinating Group against THB, sets an overall framework to address trafficking in human beings within the context of Cypriot reality. The National Action Plan 2010-2012, in contrast to the prior one, covers all aspects of the problem and includes practical measures and actions which must be implemented by the competent government authorities and the relevant NGOs within specified timeframes. It also provides the financing of these operations. Government officers from all relevant authorities are responsible for the implementation of the actions assigned to them. Each

government authority is responsible to finance the actions under its responsibility, as indicated in the NAP 2010-2012. For instance, the Ministry of Interior has financed the issuance of information material, campaigns, seminars, workshops and trainings of government officers. Similarly, the Police have financed and released posters, cards and leaflets to inform and sensitize the public on human trafficking. In the same way, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance has agreed to finance the NGO Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies to review and update the Handbook of Interdepartmental procedures. The budget of the Ministry of Interior for the activities of the Multidisciplinary Coordinating Group against THB and the implementation of its own actions in 2012 is €82,826.

26. Another development of particular importance is the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Handling of Family Violence 2010-2013 which was prepared by the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence. The Advisory Committee has allocated €2000 from its budget for the evaluation of the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Handling of Family Violence for 2012-2013. At the initial stages of the evaluation problems that relate to the implementation of inter departmental procedures in the Ministries of Health and Education and Culture were identified.

27. The National Action Plan on Employment ran for two years and was completed in 2006. The National Action Plan on Employment followed the target set by the European Union that aimed for 57 per cent of women aged 15-64 to be employed by 2005 and 60 per cent of women by 2010 and exceeded it. More specifically, in 2009, the female participation rate in the labour market was 62.5 per cent.

28. In addition, the National Action Plan on Employment introduced measures that aimed to ensure the balancing between professional and family life. These measures include the following:

- (a) Partial covering of child care expenses.
- (b) Provision of home help (in cases of one-parent families).
- (c) Monthly benefit for persons caring for dependents (children and elderly).

29. A programme for promoting female entrepreneurship came into effect in 2002 and still continues. Furthermore, the Cyprus Productivity Centre implements programmes for vocational training of inactive female labour force.

30. The National Action Plan on Social Protection and Social Inclusion was in effect for the years 2008-2010. It has not been renewed.

Violence against women

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 6 of the list of issues

Table 1

Data on the number of reported cases of domestic violence, prosecutions, convictions and sentences imposed since 2009 – Data provided by the Police.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Incidents reported</i>	<i>Criminal cases investigated</i>	<i>Filed in court</i>	<i>Withdrawn, Suspended, interrupted</i>	<i>Pending in court</i>	<i>Convictions</i>	<i>Acquittals</i>	<i>Pending for Investigating or Filing</i>
2009	826	485	420	240	24	114	42	0
2010	819	525	422	253	79	70	20	5
2011	711	440						

31. Currently, there are no government-run shelters for victims of domestic violence. However, the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family, an NGO, operates a shelter, for the operation of which, financial support is provided by the Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance through the Grants-In-Aid Scheme. In addition, the Association has secured public land for building a new shelter for women victims of domestic violence.

32. There are no statistical data concerning the number of restraining orders issued.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 of the list of issues

Table 2

Data on the prevalence and trends in other forms of violence against women and girls, including rape, sexual abuses and sexual harassment – Data provided by the Police

Data on Offences against Women

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Offences									
Rape	31	40	33	27	17	30	24	33	31
Rape of spouse	1	1	6	2	2	4	3	3	7
Attempt of Rape	3	1	1	1			2	2	2
Attempt of Rape of spouse							1		
Defilement of girls under 13 years of age		2	1	1			1	3	
Defilement of girls under 13 years of age (Family violence)	3	1				1			
Defilement of girls between 13 and 16 years of age	2	5	7	13	9	3	5	3	6
Defilement of girls between 13 and 16 years of age (Family violence)	1					1	1		1
Procuring defilement of women by threats, fraud or administering drugs	1			1			1		
Indecent assault on females	16	26	29	24	39	25	29	42	19
Indecent assault on females (Family violence)	2	1	1	1	5	1	7	2	3

33. With regard to the data disaggregated by regions, since 2004, the Equality Authority has received 40 complaints regarding sexual harassment, of which:

- (a) 22 in Nicosia
- (b) 7 in Limassol
- (c) 1 in Larnaca
- (d) 9 in Paphos
- (e) 1 in Famagusta

34. As for the outcome of these 40 complaints:

- (a) 8 were found to be admissible and the Equality Authority proceeded with a Report
- (b) 16 were found to be outside the Equality Authority's scope of powers

(c) 6 were found to be inadmissible or they were withdrawn by the complainant(s)

(d) 4 came to a successful closing whereby, following the intervention of the Equality Authority, the person against whom the complaint was submitted agreed to comply with the provisions of the anti-discrimination legislation

(e) 6 are still pending.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 of the list of issues

35. In line with the National Action Plan against trafficking of human beings, a number of actions have been implemented within the specific timeframes while a number of them are ongoing. However, it is estimated that some actions will not be completed by the end of 2012 and will have to be included in the new Action Plan 2013-2015.

36. Indicatively, some of the actions implemented in the period 2010- 2012 included the following:

(a) Issue and distribution of leaflets, by the Ministry of Interior, in different languages (English, Greek, Arabic, Russian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Spanish) that provide information on trafficking in persons, the legislative framework, ways to protect oneself, contact details of government services and NGOs (2010),

(b) Dissemination of information material to the airports by the Police,

(c) Preparation and distribution of information leaflets by the Social Welfare Services on the rights of potential and identified victims. The material is available in the languages of the countries of origin of victims. (English, Bulgarian, Spanish, Polish, Russian, Latvian, Romanian, Chinese, Ukrainian, French),

(d) Preparation of a comprehensive handbook on victim identification by the Office of Anti-Trafficking Police. The handbook constitutes a useful tool for Police Officers dealing with this issue,

(e) Publication of a Police manual that provides information on the victim's referral procedures,

(f) Organisation of two training seminars in collaboration with the US Embassy in Cyprus in October 2011 (The first seminar was addressed to Police Officers and Prosecutors. The second one was addressed to Judges, with the collaboration of the Supreme Court of Cyprus),

(g) Organisation of an event that aimed to inform and raise awareness of the media on trafficking in human beings. The event was organised by the Multidisciplinary Group and the Office of the European Commission in Cyprus in October 2011 (particular emphasis was given to the current situation in the area of trafficking in Cyprus and on the role of Media in combating women's trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation),

(h) Organisation of training for Government Officers working on THB in workshops organised specifically for the countries of South Eastern Europe (the Ministry of Interior and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development co-organised in Nicosia a Transnational Workshop on Enhancing Transnational Cooperation on Trafficking Cases in South-Eastern Europe (TRM-II), 8-9 November 2011),

(i) Organisation of training programmes for members of the Community Policing to acquire skills in recognizing potential victims of trafficking and then to inform the Office of Combating Trafficking in Human Beings,

(j) Organisation of a competition with prize, in cooperation with Universities / Colleges/ schools (co-organised by the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Education and Culture, September 2011-May 2012) for the preparation of posters and logo for the Multidisciplinary Coordinating Group,

(k) Organisation of a follow-up seminar on trafficking in human beings for Judges (May, 2012). This seminar was co-organised by the Ministry of Interior, the Supreme Court of Cyprus and the American Embassy. It emphasized the importance of expert witnesses during court proceedings,

(l) Organisation of a training seminar for Law Officers of the Attorney-General's Office, on 2 May 2012 and a training seminar on the theme of victim behaviour and trauma, for Social Welfare Officers, on 3 May 2012,

(m) Participation of Cyprus Police in conferences, seminars and lectures on combating human trafficking (both at international and national level) cooperation with International Organizations (e.g. INTERPOL, Europol) and participation in EMPACT Operational Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings.

37. Moreover, within the framework of transnational cooperation, Cyprus and Poland are co-beneficiaries of a 12 month project "Putting Rantsev into Practice – Strengthening multidisciplinary operational cooperation to fight trafficking in human beings" proposed by the Netherlands and approved for grant by the European Union in April 2012. The first phase of the project has already begun. The main objectives of the project are: to stimulate the implementation of member States' obligations as identified in the Rantsev decision and to develop and strengthen cross-border multidisciplinary operational cooperation.

38. Cyprus is also a co-beneficiary of the project "Towards a Pan-European Monitoring System of Trafficking in Human Beings" proposed by Portugal and approved for grant by the European Union in April 2012. The main objective of the project is to provide participating countries with a THB efficient monitoring system in the framework of best practices regarding the harmonization of procedures for the collection, treatment, analysis and sharing of information.

National referral mechanism

39. In cases where any Governmental or Non-Governmental Organisation reasonably suspects that a person may be a victim or a potential victim of trafficking they are obliged to refer this person to the Social Welfare Services.

40. The Social Welfare Services provide the victims with information on their rights and on available services, in a language they can understand, in order to protect their interests as victims. This information may, where possible, be given in writing, and includes, at least, the following:

- (a) the name of the State services or NGOs to which they may refer for support,
- (b) the type of support they are entitled to receive,
- (c) the procedure in relation to submitting their complaint to the prosecution authorities, the procedure for trying such cases and their role in connection with such procedures,
- (d) the terms and the procedure on the basis of which they may enjoy security and protection,
- (e) the extent and the terms on the basis of which they are provided with legal advice and/or legal aid,
- (f) the conditions on the basis of which they are entitled to compensation,

(g) the mechanisms available to them for defending their interests in the event they reside in another State or in the event of their repatriation.

41. As soon as the potential victim has been informed his/her case is referred directly to the Police, which is the competent authority to determine and identify a victim. The Police carry out interviews with the said person and a proper investigation to ascertain that the person is a victim of trafficking. The Police consider the issue of interviewing and handling of potential victims of paramount importance for the avoidance of re-victimization as well as for their protection. Interviews are conducted in separate rooms without interference and disturbance. Confidentiality and protection of the victims' identity are issues of serious consideration by the Police.

42. The identified victim of trafficking is then granted at least a month of reflection period intended to allow the individual to recover away from the perpetrator's influence in order to make a decision, with full knowledge of his/her rights, as to whether he/she wishes to cooperate with the prosecution authorities in the investigation of the offence or in judicial proceedings.

43. During the reflection period any person who has been identified as a victim, irrespective of his/her nationality, and wishes to cooperate with the competent authorities has the right:

- (a) to information as mentioned above,
- (b) to public assistance, if the victim does not have sufficient resources, in accordance with the provisions of the Public Assistance and Services Law,
- (c) of access to emergency medical treatment and further free medical treatment, if the victim does not have sufficient resources, from the Ministry of Health,
- (d) to treatment and psychological support, from the Ministry of Health,
- (e) to safety and protection from the Police,
- (f) to free translation and interpretation services, if deemed necessary,
- (g) to legal aid if the conditions set out in the Legal Aid Law, are satisfied,
- (h) to protection of their personal data, in accordance with the provisions of the Processing of Personal Data (Protection of Individuals) Law, as amended from time to time, and
- (i) of access to programmes or systems provided by the State or non-governmental organisations that have a protocol of cooperation or special agreements with the services involved in the Republic, depending on the case, whose aim is to integrate the victims into society, which may include training to improve their professional skills.

44. An identified victim of trafficking for sexual exploitation may remain in the shelter operated by the Social Welfare Services for a period not exceeding four weeks. The victim may prolong his/her stay in special occasions, if required. In the shelter the victim is provided with all the necessary support and information concerning the services available. The shelter is one of the options for accommodation available to victims. In case a victim chooses not to stay in the shelter, the Social Welfare Services provide financial assistance and support.

45. Upon the expiration of a temporary residence permit for reflection, or sooner, a victim who is a third country national and has expressed a clear intention to cooperate with the authorities is granted a residence permit for at least six months which is renewable. The

holder of such a residence permit has all the above-mentioned rights and, in addition, has the following rights:

- (a) the same access to the labour market as European citizens,
- (b) access to professional training and education provided by the Human Resources Development Authority, under the terms and conditions of its schemes, including the national procedures and policy decisions of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance applicable at the time, in relation to employment, training and education,
- (c) access to programmes and systems provided by the State, depending on the case, aiming to integrate victims into society, which may include lessons to improve their professional skills or preparation for their return to their country of origin.

46. A victim who decides to cooperate with the prosecuting authorities has the right to be informed, in relation to:

- (a) The follow-up given by the prosecuting authorities to his/her complaint,
- (b) The developments of the criminal proceedings,
- (c) The decision issued by the court.

47. A victim who wishes to be a prosecution witness and to cooperate with the prosecution authorities within the framework of criminal proceedings is deemed a witness that requires assistance within the meaning of the Witness Protection Laws.

48. The Republic indemnifies victims that cooperate with the prosecution authorities as witnesses in criminal proceedings for any costs incurred as a result of their participation in the criminal proceedings.

49. The residence permit of a victim is not renewed if the criminal proceedings have been completed by decision of the competent criminal court and the victim is safely repatriated unless the individual risk assessment effected by the Police indicates that the victim should remain in the Republic. The repatriation of the victim is undertaken by the Social Welfare Services in close cooperation with the Police. The victim is repatriated under conditions of safety, protection and dignity of the victim and in cooperation with the victim's country of origin in order to avoid re-victimisation.

Shelter

50. The Multidisciplinary Coordinating Group against THB established a Working Group on support and protection of victims. The Working Group was assigned by the Multidisciplinary Coordinating Group to report, inter alia, on the functioning of the existing shelter. The Working Group is chaired by the Social Welfare Services and consists of representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Anti-Trafficking Office of the Police, the Asylum Service and NGOs Stigma and KISA (Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism).

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 9 of the list of issues

Abolition of visas

51. Conditions of acquiring visas for third country nationals are regulated by the Aliens and Immigration Law. However, the type of visa (i.e. worker, performing artist etc.) is not regulated by the above-mentioned Law but by policy decisions.

52. Since the abolition of the "artist visa" and the introduction of the new policy, the examination to issue a permit for temporary employment of a performing artist to cabarets/other entertainment establishments is now processed by a special Committee,

chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. The authorities of Cyprus remain alert and the Committee examines every application thoroughly, in order to ensure that there is no misuse or abuse of the new system. The above-mentioned Committee examines the authenticity of documents submitted by applicants, and, when necessary, cooperates directly with the authorities or the applicant's country of origin or through the consular authorities of Cyprus in that country.

53. According to available data, since the implementation of the new policy, there was a decrease in the numbers of third country nationals entering the Republic to work as performing artists. While previously the number of third country nationals working as artists - singers at cabarets/nightclubs was estimated to be about 1,200, the numbers for the years 2010-2012 are the following:

Table 3

<i>Year</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number¹</i>
2010	Performing Artist	Female	477
2010	Performing Artist	Male	2
2011	Performing Artist	Female	352
2012	Performing Artist	Female	191

54. However, according to the Police, though there has not yet been any comprehensive study about effects in the patterns of trafficking after changing the legislation, an increasing trend in exploitation in the workplace is observed, but the relation between the legal changes and the different forms of exploitation is not clear.

Table 4

Updated sex-disaggregated data on the number of victims of exploitation of prostitution and trafficking, as well as data on the number of complaints, investigations, prosecutions and sentences imposed on perpetrators

	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
Victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation	23	34	26
Victims of trafficking and work exploitation	90	16	14
Women Victims	86	47	35
Men Victims	27	5	5
Complaints and Cases investigated	34	35	26
Cases Filed in Court	26	27	14
Cases under investigation, Pending filing on court		4	12
Convictions	8	2	5

¹ The numbers do not reflect the actual number of persons, as they include renewals, re-entries, change of employer. The actual numbers of persons are less. Since the implementation of the new policy 39 premises employing third country nationals as performing artists have closed down.

Table 5

Convictions for trafficking for sexual exploitation and sexual exploitation in 2010

The 2 convictions concern 2 persons and the penalties imposed are the following:

<i>Number of convicted persons</i>	<i>Penalty imposed</i>	<i>Offences</i>
1	22 months' imprisonment	Procuration, living on the earnings of prostitution, sexual exploitation, prevention and suppression of money laundering activities law
1	9 months' imprisonment	Procuration, living on the earnings of prostitution, illegal employment of immigrants

Table 6

Convictions for trafficking for sexual exploitation and sexual exploitation in 2011

The 5 convictions concern 15 persons and the penalties imposed are the following:

<i>Number of convicted persons</i>	<i>Penalty imposed</i>	<i>Offences</i>
1	1 year's imprisonment	Living on earnings of prostitution
2	4 months' imprisonment	Living on earnings of prostitution, suppression of brothels
3	3 months' imprisonment with 3 years' probation	Suppression of brothels
6	2 ½ months' imprisonment with 3 years' probation	Suppression of brothels
3	1st: 13 years' imprisonment 2nd: 11 years' imprisonment 3rd: 60 days' imprisonment	1st: Possession of a gun, kidnapping, rape 2nd: kidnapping, rape 3rd: accomplice after the commitment, false information to a police officer.

Participation in political and public life and decision-making**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 of the list of issues****Updated data on the participation of women**

55. Political appointments:

(a) Council of Ministers: 4 Ministers (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, Ministry of Health)

(b) The Auditor-General

(c) The Accountant-General

(d) The Ombudsman/Commissioner for Administration

(e) The Law Commissioner

- (f) The Commissioner for Children's Rights
56. Civil Service:
- (a) 3/11 (27 per cent) Permanent Secretaries
 - (b) 7/51 (14 per cent) Directors of Ministries' Departments
57. Elected positions:
- Parliament
6/56 (11 per cent) Members of Parliament
 - Municipal Councils
84/468 (17.9 per cent) Members of Municipal Councils
 - European Parliament
2/6 (33.3 per cent) Members of European Parliament
58. Judiciary:
- 2/13 (15 per cent) Supreme Court Judges
 - 47/106 (44 per cent) Judges
59. Cyprus supports the notion of a comprehensive strategy that includes measures which aim at tackling the root causes of inequality between men and women, such as the elimination of gender stereotypes through education and the media, the promotion of reconciliation of professional and family life, the elimination of all forms of violence against women etc.
60. The use of quotas is on the agenda of a number of NGOs, although it does not receive support by the Government or the civil society in general.
61. The National Machinery for Women's Rights has been very active in the field of women's participation in political life and in view of the Parliamentary and Local Authorities elections of 2011, carried out a campaign through the Media aiming at giving visibility to women's issues and women candidates.

International Service

62. There appears to be a fluctuation from year to year, but there is no drastic change in the overall representation of women at high level posts in the diplomatic service from that appearing in the periodic report.

Education and stereotypes

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 11 of the list of issues

Updated statistical data on the enrolment rate of girls for 2010-2011

63. The number of girls in primary school was 26.292/54.083 (48.6 per cent) and in secondary school: 31.118/63.764 (52 per cent). The number of girls at University level (Bachelor, Master and PhD level) enrolled in Cyprus and abroad including Cypriot Turkish-speaking women and women with disabilities for the academic year 2010-11 was 25.939 (58 per cent).

Updated statistical data for 2011-2012

64. The number of Greek Cypriot girls in primary school was 20.384/42.391 (48 per cent) and of Turkish Cypriot girls was 36/90 (40 per cent). The number of Greek Cypriot girls in secondary school was 24.384/46.443 (52.5 per cent) and of Turkish Cypriot girls was 10/23 (43 per cent). The number of girls in technical school was 645/4088 (15.7 per cent).

65. The total number of disabled children in secondary school is 1.303.

66. The research project titled “The gendered map of Cyprus Tertiary Education” which aimed to investigate, record and critically present the qualitative and quantitative Gendered Map in Cyprus Tertiary Education has indicated the following:

(a) Women comprise a minority in Cyprus Tertiary Education, as their number is smaller than that of men in all academic positions. This gap is bigger in the permanent academic positions (Professors: 22 women, 121 men; Associate professors: 48 women, 138 men),

(b) In contrast, women are the majority in the teaching assistant positions,

(c) Although the number of women in the permanent positions reached 30 per cent, they are almost absent in decision-making positions in their universities. The same applies for women-students in decision-making positions,

(d) For the years 1992-2011/, the mean number of female students in public and private institutions of Tertiary Education was higher, compared to that of male students. At both undergraduate and Master's level the mean number of women exceeded the mean number of men for the years 2005-2011, while at a PhD level, the mean number of men was higher than that of women,

(e) As far as the administrative staff is concerned, in 2010 women's number was bigger in the positions of scientific and non-scientific staff in all Educational institutions of Cyprus. However, most positions of directors were held by men,

(f) The choice of a sector of study tends to maintain the segregation of occupations between male and female: For the period 1994 to 2011, in both public and private universities, the percentages of women students were higher in the sectors of Education, Social and Human Studies, Philosophy, Health, Communication and the Arts. By contrast, the percentage of male students was higher in Engineering and Information Technologies. In the sectors of Economics, Management, and Pure Sciences in the public universities, the percentage of male students was higher during the period 1994 to 2006, while for the period 2005 to 2011, the percentage of female students increased and exceeded that of male students,

(g) Interviews with male and female academics showed that both recognize that there is a gender inequality due to the different roles attributed to men and women. However, the discrimination in Tertiary Education is recognized mainly by women academics,

(h) Women academics' discourse was emotional, expressing their experiences and emotions such as anger and indignation. By contrast, male academics in public and private universities, independent of rank, faced the issue of gender inequality on a macro-level, attributing theoretical rather than practical importance and expressing no emotions,

(i) Women academics in permanent ranks expressed more definitive opinions, while women academics in non-permanent ranks were circumspect and uncertain on how to explain the situation. The discourse of women academics in the private universities was less emotional; they focused more on the reconciliation of their career with their family. The

majority of male and female academics were ignorant of the European Union policies for the incorporation of the gender dimension in all practices and processes,

(j) Male academics and students gave a different interpretation of the issue. Male academics did not recognize the problem of inequality and faced the issue as a more theoretical one. By contrast, male students attributed the inequality mainly to the prejudices of society, while their own discourse also included prejudices.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 of the list of issues

67. The educational reform is an ongoing process, which promotes equality at various levels. The newly reformed Health Education Curriculum for all levels of Cyprus education, includes specific learning objectives that address various social problems including gender inequality, violence against women, sex education, violation of sexual and reproductive rights, racism, homophobia, delinquency, etc. These objectives include:

(a) Provision of relevant educational material that includes specific areas of gender equality and sexual and reproductive health to schools ("Social Learning for primary schools", "First steps", "Compasito" see: http://www.moec.gov.cy/agogi_ygeias/,

(b) Provision of guidance and support to teachers by health educators who visit schools,

(c) Provision of in-service training on human rights and gender equality for teachers,

(d) Collaboration with NGOs whose actions concern human rights, gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights (e.g. Cyprus Family Planning Association)

(e) Introduction of a series of workshops on "Shield against homophobia in education" (organized by the "Trainers Team of the Cyprus Youth Council" and the "Cyprus Family Planning Association").

68. The Action Plan on Gender Equality in Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture includes a number of actions and measures that address gender role stereotypes in the family and in society, such as:

69. Actions related to the structure of the Educational System

(a) Programmes to increase participation of girls in technical fields of study and the use of new technologies. Construction of a New Modern Apprenticeship scheme to attract girls.

(b) Programmes to prevent and combat violence and delinquency in school and family.

70. Actions related to in-service training:

(a) Special in-service training and sensitization for teachers of all levels of education and for career guidance counselors on gender equality issues, gender roles and stereotypes, gender and professions (i.e. separation in 'male' and 'female' professions), sex education and good practices to combat stereotypes.

71. Actions related to the school unit:

(a) Establish up-to-date educational material which will include a gender perspective in order to combat gender stereotypes from an early age, particularly by encouraging boys to actively participate in family life and girls in politics / public life and, by developing relationships based on equality and mutual respect between the sexes.

- (b) Programmes for informing and sensitizing boys and girls on choosing non-traditional 'male' and 'female' professions.
- (c) Implementing prevention / intervention programmes on gender issues.
- (d) Teaching the school subject of Vocational and Social Education.
- (e) Planning and application of classroom activities on gender issues (i.e. active participation of all students, encourage students' research on gender issues, application of suitable teaching techniques, watching relevant movies and plays, organizing and attending lectures on gender issues etc.).

72. Actions related to parents/family role:

- (a) Parents' training on communication skills, mutual respect and gender equality issues in order to foster a balance of power within the family.
- (b) Training of parents in order to enhance their awareness on the impact of their actions on their children's development.

Employment

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 13 of the list of issues

73. The outcome of the 230 complaints that have been submitted to the Equality Authority (Commissioner of Administration) based on sex discrimination is the following:

- (a) 46 were found to be admissible and the Equality Authority proceeded with a Report.
- (b) 130 were found to be unfounded or outside the Equality Authority's scope of powers.
- (c) 30 were found to be inadmissible or they were withdrawn by the complainant(s).
- (d) 19 came to a successful closing whereby, following the intervention of the Equality Authority, the person against whom the complaint was submitted agreed to comply with the provisions of the anti-discrimination legislation.
- (e) 5 are still pending.

74. With regards to the status of the project "Actions for Reducing the Gender Pay Gap" the implementation phase began in 2010. The project entails a wide range of measures that will be implemented by 2015. These measures include the following:

- (a) Theoretical and on-the-job training of Officers and Inspectors regarding the enforcement of equal pay and equal treatment in employment legislation. Approximately 50 Labour Relations, Equality and Ombudsman Officers will be trained. The programme will be concluded in March 2013,
- (b) Participation of Labour Relations Officers and Inspectors in study visits to other European Union member States in order to become familiar with procedures and techniques used by other inspectorates,
- (c) Establishment of a gender equality Certification Body that will evaluate enterprises which incorporate and apply organisational methods that are considered best practices in the area of equal treatment. The contract for this project was signed in September 2012,

(d) Actions to eliminate occupational and sectorial segregation, including interventions in education issues (i.e. specialised training programmes for all careers advice professionals and for all primary and secondary education teachers),

(e) Training of managerial staff of enterprises on the use of codes of practice regarding the enforcement of equal pay and on the use of job evaluation tools,

(f) Training programmes for trade unions and employers associations that include the development of manuals, guides, self-assessment tools, codes of practice and job evaluation tools for managers and human resource professionals,

(g) Examination of all collective agreements for the identification of direct discrimination regarding pay,

(h) A tripartite conference on exchanging best practices regarding equal pay (government officials, members of trade union and employers) will take place on 29-30 October 2012 in Limassol, Cyprus,

(i) Campaigns for raising awareness on equal pay through the Media (advertisements providing information on the pay gap between men and women and on the project "Actions for Reducing the Gender Pay Gap").

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 14 of the list of issues

75. The concrete measures that were taken to ensure the legal protection of migrant women employed as domestic workers were the following:

(a) Adoption of the term "domestic worker" instead of "housemaid" (the new term is currently in use),

(b) Submission of a bank guarantee both by the employer and the employee²,

(c) Requirement of basic knowledge of Greek or English and at least one year's experience in a similar position (it has been put into effect),

(d) Transfer of the responsibility for examining applications from the Ministry of Interior to the Department of Labour of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. The transfer shall take place after the examination by the Public Administration and Personnel Department regarding the administrative arrangements and personnel needs of the Department of Labour (it has not yet been transferred).

76. In addition, the Council of Ministers authorised a Ministerial Committee to submit a new proposal regarding the fees required for the submission and examination of applications, the fees for the issue of permits and the salaries of domestic workers. The proposal was submitted to the Council of Ministers and was discussed on 8/10/2010. The following were decided:

(a) Increase of the minimum gross salary of domestic workers by 10 per cent in two phases: 5 per cent from 1/1/2011 and 5 per cent from 1.7.2011 (The gross salary of domestic workers has already been increased by 10 per cent).

(b) The temporary residence and employment permits issued to domestic workers will be of two years duration instead of four.³

² Legislation is currently under review in order to enable authorities implement the aforementioned decisions.

³ Legislation is currently under review in order to enable authorities implement the aforementioned decisions.

(c) Revision of fees required for all categories of employment, visitors, immigration permits, long-term resident status and family reunification, in order to achieve a comprehensive and rational policy that reduces as much as possible the burdens for low-income, recipients of public assistance, the disabled and the elderly⁴

77. Furthermore, a mechanism for resolving complaints has been established in order to ensure the legal protection of migrant women employed as domestic workers. This mechanism functions at each District Labour Relations Office, where it is possible to examine complaints regarding violations of workers' employment contracts. The District Labour Relations Office aims to examine each complaint within three weeks from the date of submission.

78. Complaints submitted by migrant workers are initially filed with the Aliens and Immigration Department in which they are stamped and recorded. Next, the District Labour Relations office undertakes meetings with both parties in order to investigate the complaints and seek a mutually acceptable solution. During the meetings it is imperative that all persons present have a clear understanding of the issues being discussed and, therefore, talks may take place in both Greek and English. The Labour Relations Officer's report is then sent to the Migration Department of the Ministry of Interior for final decision. In the case where it is clear and evident that an employment contract of a migrant worker was violated, legal proceedings are taken against the offending employer to ensure that such violations will not be repeated. Additionally, the complainant migrant worker is granted the permission to seek employment with a different employer.

79. During the investigation of a complaint, in the case that the Labour Relations Officer identifies trafficking issues or sexual exploitation attempts, then the complaint is also forwarded to the authorities for further investigation.

80. In total, during 2010, 1,515 complaints were submitted by migrant workers, of which 1210 were submitted by domestic workers, whilst for the year 2011, 1,175 complaints were submitted by migrant workers, of which 989 were submitted by domestic workers.

81. There is no data with regards to the outcome of the complaints filed since 2010.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 15 of the list of issues

82. In the context of protecting the rights of all migrant workers in Cyprus, the Department of Labour Relations has established a procedure for the examination of complaints regarding the violation of terms and conditions of employment. The enhancement of this procedure is a continuous effort to safeguard and improve the working conditions of migrant workers, as these are stated in the contract of employment which is signed by both parties. The contract of employment specifies, among other, daily and weekly working hours, the amount of annual leave and paid public holidays. The gross salary in the contract of employment for foreign workers is that which is provided for in the respective collective agreement so as to safeguard equal pay.

83. With regards to the terms and conditions of employment of domestic workers, a model contract of employment is set by the Ministry of Interior, since there is no collective agreement in force.

⁴ Legislation is currently under review in order to enable authorities implement the aforementioned decisions.

84. In addition, an inspection mechanism has been set up so that inspections are carried out in order to safeguard the enforcement of the Equal Treatment of Women and Men in Employment and Occupational Training. To accomplish this target the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance proceeded with the appointment of 30 inspectors that are also responsible for the inspection of workplaces with regard to undeclared work.

85. It should be noted that these procedures do not abrogate migrant workers' rights to apply directly (through their attorney) to the Labour Disputes Court with regards to any contravention of any employment law for which the Competent Court is authorised to rule on. It must also be stressed that in the case that the worker's visa/work permit has expired he can still pursue any case he wishes to submit to the Labour Disputes Court, through his attorney, and when the case is examined by the Court, the worker will be granted a temporary visa in order to be present at the Court hearing if he/she so wishes.

86. Finally, it should be mentioned that the Department of Labour Relations also has the right, if it deems necessary, to submit charges against any employer regarding the contravention of any law for which the Department is competent, irrespective of the worker's decision to pursue or not, legal action, including cases regarding the employment of third country nationals as domestic workers.

Health

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 16 of the list of issues

87. There are no special health care programmes for migrant and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Roma women. All citizens, regardless of gender, physical, sensory, intellectual and mental disabilities or nationality, receive the same quality of Medical and Public Health services. The Council of Ministers has recently adopted a decision to promote the implementation of the National Health Insurance System. This decision entails a specific roadmap that includes all tasks that need to be fulfilled within a specified timeline. The implementation date based on this roadmap is the second half of 2015-beginning of 2016 at the latest.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 17 of the list of issues

88. Contraception:

- Contraceptives are easily accessible to all citizens. In the event that prescription is needed General practitioners/ gynaecologists are easy to access.
- All methods of contraception are free of charge only for medical reasons.
- Adolescent girls and boys can easily get prescription and free contraceptives when needed.
- When hormonal contraceptives are requested the GP or the gynaecologist provide contraceptives to youngsters after counselling / clinical examination.

89. Illegal or unsafe abortions are not registered. No official complaints with regards to health-related complications or deaths were reported.

90. The Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Ministry of Education has introduced various programmes of sex education in the school curricula. More specifically, the newly reformed Health Education Curriculum includes specific learning objectives related to sexual and reproductive rights. These objectives will be met through the implementation of various actions that are mentioned in 12.1.

Disadvantaged groups of women

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 18 of the list of issues

91. Migrant women that are European Union workers or third country nationals married to Cypriot or European Union nationals, or women who have a recognised refugee status have access to the public employment service on an equal basis as Cypriot nationals.

92. Within the framework of Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 women can be subsidized under every Measure and can use all the support opportunities in equal terms of men. The measures that have particularly been utilized by women are: "Setting up of young farmers", "Use of advisory services", "Modernization of agricultural holdings" and "Participation of farmers in food quality schemes".

93. For "Setting up of young farmers", the Department of Agriculture received 221 applications, out of which 75 (33.94 per cent) were submitted by women. Of the 75 applications, 50 were approved. For the "Use of advisory services", 128 applications were received, out of which 18 (14.06 per cent) were submitted by women and all of them were approved. Regarding the "Modernization of agricultural holdings", 873 applications were submitted under the first call (Scheme A), out of which 180 applications were submitted by women (21.31 per cent) and 37 of these were approved. Under Scheme B, a total of 1.185 applications were submitted, out of which 190 were by women applicants (16.03 per cent) and 57 of these were approved. Finally, regarding "Participation of farmers in food quality schemes", a total of 647 applications were received, out of which 138 were submitted by women and 114 of these applications were approved.

94. The "Zones of Education Priority" is a measure that was adopted in order to prevent and eliminate discrimination in disadvantaged areas. In addition, support (more teachers, financial resources) is provided to schools that are in need.

95. Health care is free to all women (and men) with low income. For rural women (asylum seekers, vulnerable groups included), Medical and Public Health of Cyprus offer in every age/stage the following services:

96. Infancy: During infancy free vaccines to all children, girls and boys are offered. Also once a week children in rural areas have the opportunity to get weighed/ measured. Mothers are taught how to breastfeed their infants.

97. Girls at puberty:

(a) At the age of 12 years school health services offer lecture series designed to inform girls about puberty issues (menstrual cycle, secondary sexual characteristics, etc.) Programmes to prevent smoking (experiential learning, drama, puzzles) are also offered to all girls in that age group.

(b) At the age of 15, lectures on topics related to reproductive issues-contraception, and information on HIV / AIDS, and sexually transmitted diseases play a major role in the girls' development and well being.

98. Women in childbearing years:

(a) In each rural health centre, a particular evening of the week, health visitors offer their services (family planning and maternity centres) for reproductive and maternity issues.

(b) At the local level local authorities, in a partnership with local non-governmental organizations and the personnel of the rural health centre, organize lectures on health education, nutrition, and healthy lifestyle. These lectures (especially designed for women)

include women's issues, such as pregnancy / menopause / female genital mutilation / postpartum depression etc.

(c) A number of municipalities / communities in partnership with NGOs, transfer women for free into mammography centers for breast cancer screening.

99. Women in the elderly/ disability groups, women aged over 63 years and limited ability to travel or /and have mobility problems, receive nursing care at home. The community cares about their diet, which is controlled from a clinical dietician / public doctor. The Community nursing homes offer free medical care, when needed.

100. In 17 out of the 29 health centres throughout Cyprus only female doctors and nurses and health visitors are employed. The relations between local authorities and the Ministry of Health are excellent and healthcare is adjusted according to the needs of rural residents and each sex separately.

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 of the list of issues

101. The Civil Registry Law was amended in 2007 in order to provide that children of internally displaced persons can acquire a certificate, which confirms that the applicant is a child of an internally displaced person, irrespective of the gender of that person.

102. Until 1/1/2012, children whose mother is an IDP were not entitled to Housing Schemes. After that date, the relevant legislation was modified in order to enable children whose mothers are IDP, to participate in the following Housing Schemes:

- (a) Construction of Housing Estates by the State
- (b) Self-help Housing Scheme on State land
- (c) Rent subsidy programme for displaced persons (applied only for college and university students)

103. The Government's decision aims to eliminate discrimination against women, but it had to be based on the capacity of the State from the financial point of view, to respond to the increased number of applicants entitled.

104. There is still one Housing Scheme, in which the children whose mother is an IDP cannot participate yet. The Ministry of Interior continues the dialogue with all the relevant parties, and when the financial circumstances of the Government allow, the Government will make the necessary adjustments to the relevant legislation for the expansion of the specific housing scheme to cover children whose mother is an IDP.

Marriage and family

Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 of the list of issues

105. The Family Mediation bill pending before Parliament appears to have been abandoned for various reasons that can be attributed to the non-willingness of the competent Parliamentary Committee to promote it and to the fact that the competent Government Department was not effectively supporting it. There is now a new effort by the Commissioner for Children's Rights, who has notified the Parliament that she will prepare a new bill in full compliance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other relevant international instruments. This is expected to be ready by the end of 2012 and the Commissioner will call upon the Government and the Parliament to endorse it.