

Women's rights

- at a glance



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About the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

The United Nations, the UN, has decided that there should be provisions about human rights. Human rights state that all people have equal value and that men and women have the same rights.

Human rights state that every person is born free and that discrimination against any individual is unacceptable. To be discriminated against is to be treated unfairly.

The countries that have committed to human rights must also ensure that women and men have equal rights in all aspects of life, including the economy, culture and politics.

Yet women often experience discrimination.

That is why the UN has also created a convention to end discrimination against women. It is called the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the CEDAW.

The CEDAW was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. The Faroese government accepted the CEDAW in 1983. This means that our government has decided to put an end to discrimination against girls and women.

Women's rights are human rights.

There are 30 articles in the CEDAW. Articles 1-16 outline the different things governments must do to end discrimination against girls and women, such as law-making.

Articles 17-22 set up the CEDAW Committee, which monitors whether governments are doing enough to end discrimination against girls and women.

Articles 23-30 outline how the United Nations and governments should work together administratively to make sure the rights of all girls and women are protected.

The countries that have said yes to the CEDAW have decided to do everything necessary to end discrimination against girls and women.

A few countries have not accepted the provisions in the CEDAW.

Many other countries have not accepted some of the provisions in the CEDAW.

A plan of action for the CEDAW was agreed in Beijing in 1995. It outlines what needs to be done for the provisions in the CEDAW to become a reality.

CEDAW

Articles 1-16

What is discrimination?

Discrimination against women is any distinction, exclusion, or restriction, made on the basis of sex, with the purpose or effect of impairing the enjoyment by women, on an equal footing with men, of political, economic, social, cultural, or civil human rights.

Political measures to be taken

States shall adopt laws and regulations, implement policies and change practices to eliminate discrimination against women.

Equal rights

Women are fundamentally equal to men in all aspects of life. States shall take measures to ensure that women can enjoy basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Temporary special measures

Positive action or temporary special measures (e.g. quotas or women-only services) should and can be used to accelerate women's equality.

Stereotyped Roles

The Convention recognises the influence of culture and tradition in limiting women's enjoyment of rights.

States shall take all appropriate measures to modify social and cultural patterns of behaviour based on ideas of inferiority or superiority or on stereotyped gender roles.

Family education must include the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing of children.

Human trafficking and prostitution

States shall take all measures, including legislation, to stop all forms of trafficking in women and exploitation of women for prostitution.

Article 7

Public and political life

Women shall have the right to vote and stand for election, to hold public office and to participate in civil society on an equal basis with men.

Participation at international level

Women should be able to represent their country internationally and work with international organisations on an equal basis with men.

Citizenship

Women shall have the same rights as men to acquire, change or retain their nationality and that of their children.

Equal rights in education

Women have equal rights to education, including vocational training and guidance, continuing education, sports and scholarships. The content of school curricula shall prevent the repetition of negative stereotypes and sexual health education shall be available.

Employment

Women have the right to work, employment opportunities, equal pay, free choice of occupation, social security; and health protection. Discrimination on the grounds of marriage, pregnancy, childbirth and childcare shall be prohibited.

Healthcare and family planning

Women have equal rights to access healthcare, including sexual health, family planning services and prenatal and postnatal care.

Economic and social benefits

Women have equal rights to family benefits, financial credit and participation in recreational sporting and cultural activities.

Rural women

Rural women have the right to decent living conditions, participation in development planning; and access to education, healthcare, transport; and financial services.

Equality before the law

Women shall be treated equally before the law. Women shall have the right to enter into contracts, own property and choose where to live.

Marriage and family

Women have equal rights with men within marriage, including family planning, property ownership and employment.

About the Gender Equality Commission

The Gender Equality Commission is an independent body under the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The tasks of the Gender Equality Commission are specified in the Gender Equality Act of 1994, which aims to eliminate all gender-based discrimination.

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