

Government report and concluding observations

CEDAW Committee's last concluding observations – 55 in all

- Better access to courts
- Assess impact of legal aid changes & protect from informal community arbitration
- Ratify the Istanbul Convention
- Make forced marriage a crime
- A national action plan on trafficking
- Better mental health care in prison
- Address immigration and asylum problems
- Close the gender pay gap

UK report 2017

- Articles 1 Discrimination & gender equality
- Article 6 Exploitation of Women
- Article 7 Women's Representation/Voice
- Article 9 Nationality
- Article 10 Education
- Article 13 Social and Economic Benefits
- Violence against women & girls

Article 1 Discrimination & gender equality

Incorporate CEDAW in law

*UK does not agree that Equality Act should incorporate the Convention.
This would give women more rights than eg disabled /BAME groups.*

Strengthen gender in Public Sector Equality Duty

Government has not addressed this

- Support BME women into better paid jobs.
- *Jobcentre staff support BAME women to overcome barriers to work.*

Article 6 Exploitation of Women

- adopt a national framework to combat trafficking in women & girls; ensure that victims are identified, supported & protected.
- *The Modern Slavery Strategy 2014 sets out a comprehensive approach.*
- *Modern Slavery Act 2015 introduces max life sentence for perpetrators, support/protection for victims.*
- *In 2016, a new taskforce to accelerate progress*
- *£33.5m fund to prevent slavery. Govt gave £8.5m to police response, ratified ILO Protocol to Forced Labour Convention.*

Article 7 Women's Representation

- The UK's new, modernized approach to engaging with women's organizations has a negative impact on women's ability to be involved in implementing CEDAW

Annual national NGO consultation event by GEO.

Scottish Government funds Engender and Scottish Women's Convention.

Welsh Government funds Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales £120k per year 'so voices of women & girls are heard by decision makers in Wales'.

Scottish Govt committed to establish Advisory Council for Women & Girls

Article 9 Nationality

- Provide access to justice and health care to all women with insecure immigration status, including asylum seekers; have gender sensitive training and extend concession under 'no recourse to public funds' to all women subject to gender-based violence.
- *UK has asylum specific gender action plan and gender sensitive training. Updating asylum policy guidance.*
- *Migrants must not be a cost to taxpayers. Not appropriate to have blanket destitution policy. Scottish Govt wants to extend the Destitution Domestic Violence Concession*

Article 10 Education

- eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls in educational institutions
- *In England, statutory guidance sets out what all school staff should know and do to safeguard children.*
- *All school staff should receive training at induction and be regularly updated.*

Article 13 Social and Economic Benefits

Reduce the impact of austerity cuts on women & services to women, esp older/ disabled.

Spending reviews must measure/ balance impact of austerity on women's rights

Government considered the impact policy measures on women throughout the 2015 Spending Review. Govt departments take careful account of the implications for women when developing policies.

Violence against women & girls

Prevent the potential exploitation of Universal Credit by an abusive male spouse.

- *Under UC, couples in the same household make a joint claim for benefit.*
- *UC is paid as a single monthly payment and includes housing costs.*
- *It is for the family to decide how to manage their finances in a way that best meets the needs of the family.*
- *UK Government has put safeguards in place to protect against abuse, eg to split the UC payment between a couple.*
- *Scottish Govt recognises that payment of UC to households, not individuals, is likely to perpetuate asymmetrical power relations between couples, and put women at greater risk of financial abuse.*

Violence against women & girls

- increase protection of women, incl BME against all forms of violence
- *UK Government's Ending violence against women and girls 2016-2020 strategy*
- *A new National Statement of Expectations sets out a clear blueprint for local action on VAWG.*
- *£100 m between now and 2020 to deliver a secure future for rape support centres, refuges and female genital mutilation and Forced Marriage Units.*

Violence against Women & Girls

- Ensure access to courts/tribunals, esp victims of VAWG; assess impact of legal aid changes; protect women from informal community arbitration
- *Govt considering the case for a review of legal aid reforms.*
- *All rules, practices and bodies –including alternative dispute resolution- must comply with UK law and ECHR*
- *Pressured/coerced parties can refer to court*
- *Custody & welfare of children can **only** be decided by courts*
- *Muslim Marriage Working Group established to protect women with a non-legally valid religious marriage.*