



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

Distr.: General  
12 December 2022  
English  
Original: Russian  
English, French, Russian and  
Spanish only

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

**Seventh periodic report submitted by Tajikistan under  
article 18 of the Convention, due in 2022\***

[Date received: 8 November 2022]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



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## I. Introduction

1. The present report is the seventh periodic report of the Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
2. The report was prepared in accordance with the general guidelines on the form and content of periodic reports, and covers the period 2019–2022. The report includes replies to the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the sixth periodic report of Tajikistan (CEDAW/C/TJK/6), adopted by the Committee at its 1643rd and 1644th meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.1643 and CEDAW/C/SR.1644) on 31 October 2018. The Committee’s list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/TJK/Q/6 and the responses of Tajikistan are contained in CEDAW/C/TJK/Q/6/Add.1.
3. During the preparation of the report, the working group held extensive consultations with representatives of State authorities, law enforcement agencies and civil society institutions.
4. Work is under way to develop gender statistics. According to the World Bank index, which is based on economic decisions made by women throughout their working lives, the legislation of Tajikistan received a high score of 81.88, compared to a global average of 74.71.
5. In accordance with article 17 of the Constitution of Tajikistan, men and women have equal rights. Moreover, in accordance with article 35 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to work, to choose an occupation or type of work, to labour protection and to social protection against unemployment. Restrictions of any kind in employment relations are prohibited. Equal pay must be accorded for equal work. No one may be subjected to forced labour, except in cases provided for by law. The Labour Code of Tajikistan prohibits discrimination in labour relations (article 7). All citizens have equal opportunities in the area of labour relations. Any distinction, exclusion or preference, or denial of employment on grounds of gender, resulting in violation of equality of opportunity in the area of employment, is prohibited. Distinctions in the labour sphere based on the special requirements of certain types of work or the State’s special concern for persons requiring enhanced social protection (women, minors, persons with disabilities) do not constitute discrimination. Persons who consider that they have been subjected to discrimination in employment may institute legal proceedings. The Labour Code establishes additional guarantees for women in respect of hiring pregnant women and women with children, requiring women to work only during working hours and limiting the assignment of women and persons with family responsibilities to night work, overtime work, work on weekends or holidays, and official travel.
6. Women’s status is determined by the scope of their civil rights. Under current legislation, women and men have equal legal personality, in other words the ability to own, use and dispose of property, to conclude contracts and to exercise other civil rights. The legal personality of both women and men is enshrined in the Civil Code, and may be restricted only by law and under court order. Women are accorded equal rights with men in respect of travel and the freedom to choose their place of residence and domicile.
7. Article 19 of the Civil Code provides that citizens may travel freely in the territory of Tajikistan, choose a place of residence and freely travel outside the Republic and return to it. The Civil Code also accords women the right to compensation for harm caused by unlawful actions; they are therefore entitled to

apply to the courts for compensation for property damage and reparation of moral damage.

8. The Criminal Code (article 143, part 1) provides for criminal responsibility for violating the equal rights of citizens, including on grounds of gender, which is punishable by a fine of between 200 and 500 units of calculation or by up to two years' imprisonment.

9. In June 2022, amendments were made to the Criminal Code that provide for harsher punishment for sexual abuse of minors.

10. The Civil Service Act provides for additional rules governing the employment relationship with civil servants and in no way diminishes the standards set by the Labour Code.

## **II. Information on the implementation of the concluding observations**

### **A. Visibility of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations**

#### **Paragraph 8 of the concluding observations**

11. The Government has made great strides in eliminating gender stereotypes and ensuring genuine equal rights between men and women in all spheres. On 8 May 2019, the Government Commission on ensuring compliance with international human rights obligations adopted a second national plan of action for the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the sixth periodic report of Tajikistan (hereinafter — the national plan of action), which was successfully implemented during the reporting period.

12. The inter-agency Commission is considering withdrawing the declaration concerning the Committee's competence under articles 8 and 9 of the Optional Protocol.

13. In accordance with the national plan of action, during the period 2019–2022 the Committee on Women and the Family under the Government of Tajikistan organized 12 conferences, 220 round tables and 190 meetings for civil servants and law enforcement agencies at which it circulated the text of the Convention and the concluding recommendations. It is also conducting broad public outreach activities in accessible form – videos, booklets and information materials about women's rights in general.

14. Courses have been held to enhance the skills and capacity of personnel in ministries and agencies on issues relating to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality.

15. Information on the international human rights obligations of Tajikistan, including reports and national implementation plans of the Committee on Women and the Family, is available on the website of the Government Commission on ensuring compliance with international human rights obligations (<http://khit.tj>).

16. In order to disseminate information about the international obligations of Tajikistan to comply with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the website of the Committee on Women and the Family has been updated (<https://www.comwom.tj>).

17. The website of the Statistics Agency under the Office of the President contains a database on gender statistics (compendium on men and women, 2021, and analysis of statistical data on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), which is updated annually. Monthly data are also posted on the number of women entrepreneurs entered in the gender database of the Statistics Agency (<https://www.stat.tj/en/gender-database>). Statistics Agency specialists participate regularly in international and regional workshops and training sessions on gender statistics.

## **B. Definition of discrimination against women and legislative framework**

### **Paragraph 12 of the concluding observations**

18. The legislation of Tajikistan completely prohibits all forms of discrimination, including discrimination against women. Article 17 of the Constitution stipulates that the State guarantees the rights and freedoms of every person, regardless of ethnicity, race, gender, language, faith, political beliefs, education, or social or property status.

19. An act on State guarantees of equal rights for men and women and equal opportunities in the exercise of such rights is in effect in Tajikistan. The act regulates action to uphold the constitutional guarantees of equal rights of men and women in the social, political, cultural and any other sphere, and aims to prevent discrimination on grounds of gender and establish State guarantees of equal opportunities for persons of either gender.

20. Anti-discrimination provisions are included in virtually all sectoral laws and regulations. In order to prevent discrimination, article 143 of the Criminal Code establishes liability for the deliberate direct or indirect violation or restriction of rights and freedoms or the establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, language, social origin, personal, property or occupational status, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs, or membership of political parties or public associations, where such violations or restrictions damage the rights and legal interests of citizens.

21. Paragraph 31 of the national plan of action to implement the recommendations of the States members of the Human Rights Council, under the second universal periodic review for the period 2017–2020, approved by Presidential decree of 7 June 2017, provided for consideration of the issue of formulating a separate law on combating discrimination in a comprehensive manner and upgrading individual laws in 2018–2019.

22. On 19 July 2022, Act No. 1890 on equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination was adopted by the Government of Tajikistan. The Act defines the organizational and legal basis for the exercise of equal rights and opportunities for all persons in the Republic of Tajikistan and establishes a legal system for prevention and effective protection against all forms of discrimination:

- Under article 3, the Act applies to all government agencies, self-governing bodies of villages and settlements, officials, and individuals and legal entities, regardless of their organizational and legal form and sphere of activity.
- Under article 4, everyone in Tajikistan is equal before the law and the courts and is entitled to effective protection against all forms of discrimination.
- Any person or group of persons who believes that they have been discriminated against has the right to apply to the court and other public authorities for protection of their rights, and is also entitled to receive just and adequate reparation or satisfaction for any damage suffered as a result of discrimination.

- The State guarantees equal and effective legal protection against discrimination and takes measures to promote policies and programmes aimed at ensuring equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination.
- Article 5 addresses discrimination in direct and indirect form. Direct discrimination is any treatment (action or inaction) or creation of conditions such that a person, in exercising the rights established by the legislation of Tajikistan, is or may be put at a disadvantage compared to other persons in similar conditions, on any of the grounds stipulated in article 1 (1) of the Act. Indirect discrimination is neutral in form but entails disproportionate consequences, provisions, grounds or practices which put or may put a person at a disadvantage compared with other persons in similar conditions, on any of the grounds stipulated in article 1 (1) of the Act.

23. The State official responsible for ensuring equal rights and preventing all forms of discrimination (article 13) is the Commissioner for Human Rights, who conducts anti-discrimination reviews of laws, regulations and draft legislation.

24. The Commissioner for Human Rights publishes a special annual report on the status of respect for the right to equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination in Tajikistan (article 14).

25. Government agencies, urban and rural authorities, and public associations will cooperate in the elimination of all forms of discrimination (articles 16–18 of the Act) by carrying out more educational activities to eliminate discrimination.

26. In 2021, the Committee on Women and the Family, together with national gender experts and with the support of the office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), as part of the joint Spotlight Initiative of the European Union and UN-Women, conducted a public consultation, review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the current plan of action of the State programme for prevention of domestic violence in Tajikistan for 2014–2023. The strengths of the State programme were noted:

- A significant number of activities aimed at changing attitudes, not only of society but also of public officials, about the problem of domestic violence.
- Educational activities at both the national and local levels, and in all government agencies, including the judiciary.
- There is also a particular focus on cooperation between different government structures, as well as between civil society, international organizations, and government agencies.
- Steps are being taken to harmonize record-keeping on incidents of violence against women and girls by crisis centres and non-governmental organizations to ensure the collection of high quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data and indicators under the Spotlight Initiative facilitated by UN-Women. The related capacity of 10 non-governmental organizations has been strengthened.
- The number of police inspectors for the prevention of domestic violence is being increased.
- The number of protection orders being issued is increasing.
- Various means are being used to inform the population about the Act (house-to-house method, information campaigns and publications in the form of brochures, flyers and manuals).
- Societal attitudes about domestic violence are changing (this can be seen from the number of requests for assistance made to the relevant agencies and the number of girls who have graduated from high school).

- The clergy are among those disseminating information on combating domestic violence and the importance of educating children and youth in a spirit of mutual respect.
- Ever greater numbers of girls are participating in sports (indicating a decrease in gender stereotypes).
- The number of rooms for medical and social rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence has increased.
- Crisis centres run by the Committee on Women and the Family and non-governmental organizations are in operation.
- A crisis centre for women with disabilities has been established in Khatlon by a non-governmental organization.
- Greater numbers of requests for assistance are being made to the relevant agencies by family members affected by domestic violence.
- There are grants from the President of Tajikistan and grants from the Chair of the Sughd regional Khukumat for women entrepreneurs from various strata of the population. The number of grants and their amounts are increasing every year.

27. The following weaknesses were noted:

- There is no regular funding for the State programme in ministries and departments, which complicates implementation of the goal of the State programme.
- Coordination among stakeholders in the prevention of domestic violence is more effective at the regional level than at the national level.
- A unified database on crimes involving domestic violence has not yet been created.

28. To assist the Committee on Women and the Family in strengthening the capacity of civil servants and law enforcement personnel, the civil service agency in cooperation with development partners UN-Women, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the non-governmental organizations Gender and Development and the Family Planning Association of Tajikistan conducted more than 80 workshops, training sessions and advanced training courses in 2019–2022 for a total of 4,000 participants on international and national mechanisms to enhance knowledge about women's rights and gender equality.

29. In order to improve the knowledge and skills of civil servants on issues of gender equality, prevent domestic violence, increase the participation of women in public administration and the civil service, and promote the active participation of women in elections, the Academy of Public Administration has developed and, taking into account the positions and functional duties of trainees, has added the following subjects to civil service capacity-building programmes and other training courses for civil servants:

- National and international human rights protection standards
- Improving citizens' legal knowledge
- Prevention of domestic violence
- Prevention of all types of violence against women, including in military conflicts
- Increasing knowledge of family life

- Promoting women's role in governance
- Gender policy in the civil service
- National policy for gender equality
- Gender theory
- Gender theory: definition and fundamental concepts
- Gender issues in management
- Preventing violence and developing gender relations
- Gender communication for public servants in the context of domestic violence
- Gender stereotyping in present-day society
- The role of women in the social and political life of society
- The role of women in safeguarding national values
- Combating trafficking in persons
- Law enforcement activities to combat trafficking in persons: issues to be addressed and practical problems
- Guarantees and benefits for women in labour relations
- Legal regulation of family relations in public administration
- School for successful women
- Election law and regulations in Tajikistan
- Women and elections
- The image of the woman executive
- Contemporary public administration
- The new State management
- Preventing extremism and terrorism among women and young people
- Gender-sensitive budgeting

Table 1

**Number of retraining and professional development courses for civil servants in 2018–2022**

(Academy of Public Administration under the President of Tajikistan jointly with the Civil Service Agency under the President of Tajikistan)

Year	Academy-based courses			Off-site courses			Total number of course attendees		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
2018	789	217	1 006	391	66	457	1 180	283	1 463
2019	774	137	911	545	307	852	1 319	444	1 763
2020	740	327	1 067	341	94	435	1 221	421	1 642
2021	982	287	1 269	416	155	571	1 398	442	1 840
2022 (24 Sept.)	537	254	791	321	99	420	858	358	1 216
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>3 822</b>	<b>1 222</b>	<b>5 044</b>	<b>2 014</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>2 735</b>	<b>5 976</b>	<b>1 948</b>	<b>7 924</b>



30. With the assistance of UN-Women, a gender analysis of the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science was conducted and the piloting of gender-sensitive budgeting began with two pilots in the Ministry. At the same time, more than 150 employees of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Committee on Women and the Family, and parliament were trained in the fundamentals of gender-sensitive budgeting.
31. The Committee on Women and the Family, in cooperation with the non-governmental organization Gender and Development and with the support of UNFPA, had national experts conduct training workshops on gender policy in the national development strategy of Tajikistan to 2030 for 70 staff members from the Office of the Procurator General and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Supreme Court judges.
32. Sixty-two procurators strengthened their skills in investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of domestic violence without gender bias through train-the-trainer courses organized by the Programme Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Dushanbe, in cooperation with the Office of the Procurator General in Dushanbe and in Sughd and Khatlon provinces.
33. A training course was organized by the Union of Lawyers of Tajikistan in cooperation with the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, in which 25 members of the Union improved their knowledge of how to provide the necessary legal assistance. In the training course, participants improved their skills in the areas of protecting human rights and the right to liberty, domestic violence, international standards and the national legislative mechanism.
34. As part of the implementation of the legislative mechanism in Tajikistan, the Committee on Religion and the Regularization of Traditions, Festivals and Celebrations, which reports to the Government of Tajikistan, in cooperation with international and non-governmental organizations, organized a series of seminars and workshops on involving religious leaders in the implementation of State programmes on gender equality and the prevention of domestic violence. These events were held in the period 2019–2022 in the cities and districts of Sughd and Khatlon provinces and in Dushanbe, where the issues of strengthening and promoting the role of women in public life, the development of the institution of the family in society and the prevention of domestic violence were discussed. More than 750 imam-khatibs of collective mosques and imams of mosques participated in these seminars and workshops, which helped strengthen the knowledge and experience of religious leaders on issues of gender equality and prevention of domestic violence.
35. The Committee on Women and the Family, ministries and departments, and local State executive bodies are carrying out extensive work on various activities to raise awareness about gender policy, gender issues, prevention of gender-based violence, increasing parental responsibility for child rearing and education, the importance of marriage registration and other relevant issues.
36. The Committee on Women and the Family has approved a communication strategy on prevention of family violence. A set of awareness-raising materials has been produced by the Committee, including public service announcements, billboards, brochures, booklets and a variety of other handouts.
37. In February 2022, a two-day workshop was held in Dushanbe for members of parliament and political parties and for judges on gender mainstreaming in politics and legislation, as well as best practices in reviewing legislation for gender sensitivity.

38. From 2019 to the first half of 2022, the centre for training of judges under the Supreme Court of Tajikistan has provided ongoing training for judges on prevention of domestic violence and assistance to victims of violence, the State programme for prevention of domestic violence in Tajikistan for 2014–2023, the national strategy for the promotion of women in Tajikistan for 2015–2020 and the national strategy for the promotion of women’s role in Tajikistan for 2021–2030. In 2019 these training workshops were attended by 176 judges and 58 trainee judges and court officials. With the support of the international organization GOPA, 72 judges and 77 court officials were trained on the topic of legal and psychosocial aspects of domestic violence-related offences and crimes. In 2020, 2021 and the first half of 2022, 396 judges and 109 trainee judges and court officials took part in training activities.

39. In September–October 2022, with technical and financial support from a United Nations project, training sessions were held on the topic of gender issues in judicial matters and were attended by 48 judges (22 women and 26 men).

40. During the reporting period, judges and court officials made 370 appearances on television and radio, and 93 articles were published in newspapers and magazines. Judges and court officials held explanatory meetings on this topic with the general public and in companies, organizations and educational institutions. There were 826 workshops and conferences organized by government agencies and international organizations.

41. In the cities and districts of Tajikistan, the Ministry of Justice and its local offices held eight professional development courses, 23 consultation workshops, four round tables and 215 meetings on legal advocacy. There were 78 interviews and appearances in the media, including on radio and various television channels. Participants at these educational and academic events discussed the topics of domestic violence as a basis for dissolution of marriage, gender issues in the family and prevention of domestic violence.

42. In 2021 the Legal Aid Centre, a State institution, with the support of the United Nations joint Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan, held a training workshop on the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

- A total of 160 health care providers upgraded their knowledge based on the national protocol on high-quality essential services for victims of rape and sexual and gender-based violence and an adapted United Nations package on essential services.
- A total of 270 religious leaders expanded their knowledge through a comprehensive training module for high-ranking religious leaders and a simplified training module for rural religious leaders of community mosques to incorporate tools for ending domestic violence into their faith community work.
- A total of 424 representatives (246 men and 178 women) from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the judiciary and the Committee on Women and the Family strengthened their knowledge and skills to collaborate on transformative programmes to promote gender equality and non-discrimination, and respond to gender-based violence through inter-agency coordination and the application of international standards in addressing sexual and gender-based violence.
- A total of 600 educators increased their knowledge of policies and techniques for a positive education free of violence and discrimination.

- A total of 46 members of the media, including bloggers, gained better understanding of gender sensitivity, the survivor-centred approach and the use of gender-sensitive language.

43. As part of the Spotlight Initiative, a strategy has also been developed for a cross-cutting gender approach to promoting women's access to leadership positions in public institutions responsible for preventing violence against women and girls for the period to 2030, which has been submitted to government authorities for consideration.

44. The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, with the participation of employees from the central and regional offices, held a series of departmental sessions on the gender policy of the Government of Tajikistan: situation, problems and prospects, delivered by a lecturer from the Committee on Women and the Family.

## C. Access to justice

### Paragraph 14 of the concluding observations

45. A judicial and legal reform programme for 2019–2021 was adopted by decree No. 1242 of 19 April 2019 of President Emomali Rahmon.

46. To ensure transparency and access to judicial information, an Act on access to information on the activity of the courts was adopted on 25 June 2021. The Act provides for access to information by the following means, among others:

- Participation of citizens and representatives of organizations in open court sessions.
- Publication in the media of information about the activities of the courts.
- Posting of information about court activities on court websites and in courthouses.
- Providing information from the archives about the activities of the courts.
- Providing users with information on request.

47. In 2022, article 348 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and article 199 of the Code of Civil Procedure of Tajikistan were amended and supplemented with respect to posting court judgments and decisions that have entered into force, with the consent of the participants in the trials.

48. There are websites for 64 courts in Tajikistan, 83.1% of the total number of courts.

49. In the period from 2020 to the first half of 2022, the courts of Tajikistan heard 1,036 criminal cases in which convictions were handed down against 961 individuals for crimes of domestic violence; 290 of these cases were heard in mobile court sessions. In order to prevent and eliminate the causes and conditions conducive to the commitment of offences, during this period the courts issued 586 special court rulings which were transmitted to businesses, officials and the relevant organizations and institutions for consideration and appropriate action.

50. In the period 2021–2022, the courts of Tajikistan heard 2,583 administrative cases and issued rulings against 2,349 individuals for administrative offences of domestic violence. Of this total, 529 cases were heard in mobile court sessions and ancillary orders were issued in 626 cases.

51. During the reporting period, not a single complaint under article 143 of the Criminal Code concerning violations of equality of citizens was received by the Office of the Procurator General of Tajikistan.
52. The Ministry of Justice operates a free legal aid hotline (3040), through which free legal advice is provided on various legal issues, including domestic violence, abuse and other issues. In 2021, 8,596 women received legal assistance. In 2022, legal assistance was provided to 4,265 women, 52 of whom were seeking advice on issues of violence.
53. By Government decision No. 425 of 2 July 2015, a policy framework on the provision of free legal aid in the Republic of Tajikistan was adopted. In order to implement the framework, a State institution, the Legal Aid Centre, was established under the Ministry of Justice by Government decision No. 704 of 28 November 2015. The Centre's main goal is the formation and development of a State system of accessible legal aid for the people of Tajikistan. The work of the Legal Aid Centre is based on the Constitution of Tajikistan and the Legal Aid Act, and is conducted in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Advocacy and Legal Practice Act and other laws. There are 37 lawyers working in 35 legal aid centres. In order to raise public awareness about prevention of domestic violence, monthly outreach legal meetings on the subjects of prevention of domestic violence and family relations are held by State lawyers, primarily for women. A Manual for Lawyers of the State Legal Aid Centre was prepared to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic violence.
54. Since 2020, the Legal Aid Centre has been gradually transitioning to State financing: in 2020, the State provided 20 per cent and donors provided 80 per cent; in 2021, State funding covered 40 per cent and funding from donor organizations covered 60 per cent; and in 2022, the State will fund 60 per cent and donor organizations will fund 40 per cent. The Legal Aid Centre is expected to receive 100 percent of its funding from the State budget in 2024.
55. State legal aid centres provide primary and secondary legal aid.
56. Primary legal assistance is available to everyone, takes the form of legal advice from government lawyers in various areas of the law and includes preparing applications, appeals, lawsuits and other documents and providing necessary information on legal issues. Primary legal aid is provided free of charge to all citizens who seek assistance from legal centres. The law does not distinguish between criteria of need and categories of recipient. All types of legal matters qualify as primary legal aid. The plan is to provide free legal aid nationwide by 2025. The Legal Aid Centre has an electronic database in which it keeps statistics on requests for assistance disaggregated by gender.
57. Secondary legal aid is provided for criminal cases, cases of administrative offences and civil cases. Secondary legal assistance is provided by lawyers who are recorded in the State register of lawyers as well as State lawyers who participate as counsel only for administrative offences and civil cases. Secondary legal aid is provided only to certain categories of persons, including suspects, accused persons, defendants or convicted persons. Secondary legal aid is currently provided for criminal cases and is being piloted in two provinces – Khatlon and Sughd. The provisions of the Legal Aid Act on providing secondary legal aid for administrative offences and civil cases will take effect on 1 January 2025.
58. In order to streamline the provision of legal aid to the population, Act. No. 1694 (Legal Aid Act) was adopted on 4 July 2020. Amendments and additions were made to the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Advocacy and Legal Practice Act to harmonize this legislation and bring it in line with the requirements of the Legal Aid Act.

59. In order to provide practical assistance, a network of 110 resource and advisory centres operates under the Committee on Women and the Family. They provide, among other things, (primary) legal assistance on a wide range of issues.

60. In 2017, the profession of paralegals (public assistants), who receive specialized training and education, was incorporated into the State system of legal aid for the general public. These assistants provide the public with legal information. Since 2017, paralegals have assisted 56,855 citizens (32,610 women and 24,225 men, including 1,598 persons with disabilities).

61. In order to facilitate dialogue between those engaged in making referrals in cases of violence against women and girls, the Committee on Women and the Family has taken into account the Committee's recommendations on the need to provide different options for support and services to victims of violence, and to integrate existing services so as to take coordinated action. With the assistance of UN-Women, national consultants have developed a referral and cooperation system for key stakeholders in eight target districts under the Spotlight Initiative and a project on empowering stateless families to improve migration outcomes in Khatlon province, and have integrated and provided pathways (measures) for the stakeholders and services involved, including in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The system incorporates State and non-State partners and more than 10 trained non-governmental organizations, and varies from district to district.

62. In 2022, a checklist was published for non-governmental organizations and forensic medical examiners and doctors on providing services to women and girls with disabilities and documenting cases of violence under the standards of the Istanbul Protocol. More than 20 non-governmental organizations and 20 staff members of forensic medical services built their capacity to work with women with disabilities through targeted training. Counselling and legal support was provided to 390 women in six target districts.

Table 2

**Statistical information on the provision of primary legal aid to the people of Tajikistan by offices of the Legal Aid Centre**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Domestic violence</i>	
2019					76
	9 768	3 786	5 982	Women – 67	Men – 9
2020					64
	9 096	3 570	5 526	Women – 56	Men – 8
2021					54
	9 466	3 396	6 070	Women – 49	Men – 5
First half of 2022					41
	3 924	1 318	2 606	Women – 40	Men – 1
					235
<b>Total</b>	<b>32 254</b>	<b>12 070</b>	<b>20 184</b>	<b>Women – 212</b>	<b>Men – 23</b>

## **D. National machinery for the advancement of women**

### **Paragraph 16 of the concluding observations**

63. The Government has undertaken structural and financial measures to strengthen the capacity of the main institutional mechanism for the advancement of women and to coordinate the implementation of the gender policy of the Committee on Women and the Family. Human and financial resources have been increased. On 26 February 2020, a government decision was adopted which added one post (Vice-Chair) to the central apparatus. The Committee's budget is increased every year: it was 1,138,543 somoni in 2019, 1,154,071 somoni in 2020, 1,317,720 somoni in 2021, and 1,460,400 somoni in 2022, which is 22 per cent more than in 2019. The number of full-time staff of departments, divisions and sections for women and the family in the regions, cities and districts of Tajikistan is from seven to three people (nationwide there are 273 people), and their work is funded from local budgets. The divisions and sections also operate district information and counselling centres, with overall staffing of over 200 nationwide.

64. The National Development Council reporting to the President of Tajikistan, which was established to ensure coordination among State agencies, the private sector and civil society on the implementation of the country's national development strategy for the period to 2030, medium-term development programmes and the Sustainable Development Goals, has a gender equality group whose purpose is to participate in discussions and develop gender-sensitive recommendations to adjust the goals, objectives and indicators contained in the national development strategy for the period to 2030 and the medium-term development programmes with the aim of achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5.

65. The Charogi Khidoyat State training centre for orphan girls has 39 staff members. The centre's budget was 1,760,024 somoni for 2019, 1,980,320 somoni for 2020 and 2,105,513 somoni for 2021, and for 2022 it is 2,105,513 somoni, which is 16.4 per cent more than for 2019.

66. During this period, the national strategy for promoting the role of women in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2011–2020 was implemented and the plan of action for the period 2015–2020 was implemented. The strategy is aimed at training experts on gender equality and addressing issues that can help in the development of national policies related to the status of gender equality, the exercise of women's rights, increasing the number of women at all levels of decision-making, ensuring equal rights for women to participate in the labour market, women's health and the prevention of violence against women.

67. A national strategy for promoting the role of women in Tajikistan for the period 2021–2030 and a plan of action for 2021–2025 for the implementation of the national strategy were adopted by Government decision No. 167 of 30 April 2021. An amount of 641,360 somoni was allocated from the State budget and 587,600 somoni was allocated by development partners for the implementation of the strategy. The adoption of this strategy was prompted by a number of issues related to improving the status of women in society, including the activation of their role, lack of public understanding of the need for gender equality and the implementation of the gender policy, stereotypes about the role and status of women in society, the imperfect legal framework, a lack of cooperation between State agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in protecting the rights and interests of women, and problems in the exercise of women's rights in the workplace, economy, culture and other areas. The strategy was developed taking into account the national development strategy of Tajikistan for the period to 2030 and the experience gained in the implementation of previous strategies to promote the role of women, and in accordance with the new

approach of the international community to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This strategy is a continuation of the reforms initiated with the implementation of the previous national strategy for promoting the role of women in Tajikistan for 2011–2020.

68. A State programme for the education, selection and placement of capable women and girls in leadership positions covering the period 2017–2022 and a plan of action for implementing the programme were approved in 2017. The programme was aimed at the implementation of Tajikistan’s international obligations to eliminate gender inequality in accordance with the principles and directions of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Sustainable Development Goals and other gender-related goals and targets. The amount of 486,000 somoni was allocated for the implementation of the programme.

69. In order to ensure the fulfilment of the instructions from the President, as set out in his message of 21 December 2021 to the Majlisi Oli (parliament) on the main directions of domestic and foreign policy of the Republic of Tajikistan, to implement the goals of the national development strategy for the period to 2030 while at the same time increasing the presence of gifted women and girls to make up 30 per cent of civil servants and 25 per cent of managerial staff, a State programme of education, selection and placement of capable women and girls in leadership positions for 2023–2030 and a plan of action for the implementation of the State programme of education, selection and placement of capable women and girls in leadership positions for 2023–2030 were developed and adopted by decision No. 204 of 27 April 2022. Funding from the State budget in the amount of 3,230,920 somoni was allocated for the implementation of this programme, which is 2,744,920 somoni (84 per cent) more than was allocated for the implementation of the previous programme.

70. In 2019, the national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolutions [1325 \(2000\)](#) and [2242 \(2015\)](#) and several other programmatic decisions in the field of maternal and child rights and reproductive health, among others, were adopted. In 2021–2022, joint monitoring of the plan was conducted and consultations are under way to develop a new plan of action.

71. In 2022, the country adopted an Act on equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination, which provides for an anti-discrimination expert review of draft laws and regulations. The Commissioner for Human Rights in Tajikistan presents his conclusions on the compliance of draft laws and regulations with the legislation on equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

## **E. National human rights institution**

### **Paragraph 18 of the concluding observations**

72. On 4 March 2019, President Emomali Rahmon signed a decree appointing Umed Bobozod, who previously served as advisor to the office of the presidential aide on legal issues, as the new Commissioner for Human Rights in Tajikistan.

73. As mentioned above (in paragraph 22) the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan, pursuant to the Act on equality and elimination of all forms of discrimination, is the State official with a mandate to ensure equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

74. In order to ensure that the activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights comply with the Paris Principles, a working group consisting of representatives of the Commissioner, the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs operates under

the authority of the Commissioner for Human Rights. In order to ensure that domestic legislation complies with the Paris Principles, the Act on the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan is constantly being improved. In particular, as a result of amendments to the Act in March 2016, the Commissioner for Human Rights was given the duty of encouraging the ratification of international human rights instruments or accession to them by Tajikistan, which corresponds to paragraph 3 (c) of the “Competence and responsibilities” section of the Paris Principles. The Commissioner’s powers to visit and inspect closed institutions have been expanded. The Commissioner may freely visit and inspect the activities of temporary detention facilities, pretrial detention centres, accommodation centres for foreign migrants or asylum seekers, institutions providing social, medical or psychological assistance, other places of detention and other military entities and institutions in Tajikistan. The amendments provided for the establishment of a coordinating and expert council under the authority of the Commissioner for Human Rights in order to coordinate the activities of public authorities and civil society entities in the protection of human rights and freedoms and to provide advisory assistance, which also complies with the Paris Principles.

75. In 2016 the post of Commissioner for Children’s Rights was also established; this individual serves as the deputy to the Commissioner for Human Rights. The Act on the Commissioner for Human Rights sets forth the responsibilities, activities, and financial and social protections of the Commissioner for Children’s Rights. Together with civil society organizations, the Commissioner for Children’s Rights conducts independent monitoring in public education institutions and in closed and semi-closed institutions for children.

76. The Commissioner for Human Rights has a mandate to promote respect for and protection of women’s rights and freedoms. To that end, under the objectives set by the Act on the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commissioner assists in restoring rights and freedoms of women that have been violated, enhancing the legislation of Tajikistan in the area of women’s rights, informing the public about the law in this area, cooperating with State agencies and civil society entities for the protection of the rights and freedoms of women, and developing and coordinating international cooperation in this area.

77. The number of staff members in the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights is constantly increasing. The staffing has risen from 25 public servants in 2018 to 31 in 2022 (not including 14 support staff). The Commissioner for Human Rights is assisted by representative offices and public reception facilities established in the country’s regions. The Commissioner has three offices located in the provincial capitals Bokhtar in Khatlon province, Khujand in Sughd province and Khorog in Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region. There are also public reception facilities in Kulyab (Khatlon province), Isfara (Sughd province) and Kabodiyen district (Khatlon province).

78. The funding for the activities of the Office of the Commissioner increases each year. The state budget allocated 7,288,750 somoni for the institution of the Commissioner from 2019 to 2022. Of this amount, 6,874,815 somoni was allocated to the central Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights. Funding for the representative offices of the Commissioner for Human Rights is provided from local budgets. For example, a grand total of 413,935 somoni was allocated from local budgets for the representative offices of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region and Sughd and Khatlon provinces. Grant funds in the amount of 1,229,323 somoni were allocated to support the activities of public reception facilities of the Commissioner for Human Rights.



79. During the reporting period, representatives of the Commissioner for Human Rights actively participated in more than 42 events (conferences, round tables and workshops) on the rights and freedoms of women, gender equality, prevention of domestic violence and prevention of early marriages, among other topics.

80. Legal awareness-raising among the general public about women's rights and freedoms, gender equality and prevention of domestic violence and early marriages is one of the main tasks of the Commissioner for Human Rights. From 2019 to 2022, the Commissioner organized 47 appearances on national radio and television and the publication of materials in the print media for the purpose of legal education of the public in this area. Specifically, there were 5 television appearances, 16 radio appearances, 19 publications in electronic media and 7 publications in print media.

81. In order to improve the activities of the Commissioner for Children's Rights in receiving and considering complaints from children, a procedure for consideration of children's complaints by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights was developed and approved by order No. 72 of 18 September 2020 of the Commissioner for Human Rights. With assistance from the Commissioner for Human Rights, this experience is being shared with other stakeholder entities.

82. The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights is currently considering the development of a confidential, gender-sensitive procedure for receiving and reviewing complaints from women and girls who have been subjected to violence.

83. The medium-term development programme of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021–2025 includes a set of measures to enhance the status of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Commissioner for Children's Rights in protecting the rights and legitimate interests of citizens.

84. Between 2019 and July 2022, the central Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights registered and reviewed 2,159 complaints from citizens, 995 of which were filed by women. The complaints mainly concerned housing rights, legal protection, the right to education, the right to work and favourable work conditions, among other issues. Also during this period, 40 women filed complaints on issues of domestic violence.

85. Between 2019 and 2022, the Commissioner for Human Rights conducted inspections of the activities of nine domestic violence prevention inspectors, specifically at Internal Affairs Office No. 2 in the Shohmansur district of Dushanbe, the internal affairs office in the city of Vakhdat, the internal affairs office in the city of Bokhtar, the internal affairs office in the city of Kulyab, the internal affairs office in the city of Khujand and the internal affairs offices in Vose and Rasht districts.

86. The Commissioner for Human Rights, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Committee on Women and the Family and local State executive bodies, inspected the activities of legal and social rehabilitation rooms for victims of domestic violence in the State-administered Municipal Maternity Clinic No. 2, the Central Hospital of Rasht district, the Shifobakhsh National Medical Centre, the Istiklol Medical Centre, the Central Hospital in Vose district, the Maternity Clinic in Khujand and the Regional Hospital in Bokhtar.

## **F. Civil society and non-governmental organizations**

### **Paragraph 20 of the concluding observations**

87. The Committee on Women and the Family actively collaborates with development partners and non-governmental organizations on the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign, Family Day and other activities.

During the preparation of the new medium-term development programme (2021–2025), the Committee on Women and the Family, together with partners, conducted a gender assessment of the medium-term development programme for 2016–2021 and produced a series of recommendations that have been incorporated into the new programme. In addition, a gender analysis was done of the draft of the new programme and the draft was discussed at a round table with the Committee’s partners in October 2020. Representatives of partner organizations and the non-governmental sector submitted proposals that are reflected in the final document of the medium-term development programme for 2021–2025.

88. Improving legislation on gender equality and the advancement of women’s rights is of paramount importance to Tajikistan. In accordance with paragraph 1 of the plan of action of the State programme to prevent domestic violence in Tajikistan for 2014–2023 and paragraph 6 of the national plan of action for the implementation of recommendations of the States members of the United Nations Human Rights Council under the universal periodic review (second period) for 2017–2020, approved by Presidential decree No. 901 of 7 June 2017, in order to improve legislation to strengthen gender policy and protect women’s rights, on instructions from the Head of the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan on 29 June 2017, a working group on improving laws and regulations, eliminating gender stereotypes, protecting the rights of women and preventing domestic violence was established. This group was subdivided into three subgroups:

- Subgroup 1: Issues related to the improvement of laws and regulations with the aim of eliminating gender stereotypes (under the Committee on Women and the Family, which reports to the Government of Tajikistan) in cooperation with the project on prevention of domestic violence.
- Subgroup 2: Issues related to the improvement of laws and regulations on the protection of women’s rights (under the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan) in cooperation with the rule of law and access to justice programme of UNDP).
- Subgroup 3: Issues related to the improvement of laws and regulations on prevention of domestic violence (under the Office of the Procurator General) in cooperation with the project on prevention of domestic violence.

89. All groups worked closely with civil society and non-governmental gender-focused organizations. At present, all recommendations of the working subgroups are being reviewed by the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan.

90. By order of the Executive Office of the President No. 32/10–197 of 18 November 2020 on the establishment of a working group to improve laws and regulations with the aim of eliminating gender stereotypes, protecting women’s rights and preventing violence, the Ministry of Justice was assigned to lead one of the subgroups, which includes several ministries, departments and non-governmental organizations. From 2020 to 2022, the working group developed and drafted legislation to amend a number of codes and laws. At the same time, an analysis was conducted of draft legislation on amendments to the Family Code, Labour Code and Health Code, amendments to the Act on prevention of domestic violence and amendments to the Act on State guarantees of equal rights for men and women and equal opportunities for exercising such rights. The bills have been sent to the Executive Office of the President for further discussion.

91. Pursuant to the Act on laws and regulations and a Government decision of 25 February 2017 on the establishment of and funding for an Internet portal with legal information for the Republic of Tajikistan, the Ministry of Justice launched an Internet portal with legal information. The legal information portal is an electronic database of laws and regulations that may affect businesses and is maintained

electronically. Draft legislation that requires approval by the public is posted on the portal for public discussion.

92. Draft legislation on amendments to the Public Associations Act and the Act on countering the legalization (laundering) of criminal, financing of terrorism and financing of weapons of mass destruction were discussed with the participation of representatives of civil society.

93. On 30 November 2021, the Ministry held a round table with representatives of civil society on the subject of how to implement legislation through the activities of civic associations.

94. The programme on rule of law and access to justice includes the regular organization of legal dialogues, a national forum on rule of law and access to justice, and meetings of the working group on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16, with the involvement of civil society.

95. Building the capacity of civil society organizations is an important component of the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan, and civil society representatives are key partners of the Initiative:

- A standing civil society advisory panel has been established comprising 10 representatives from diverse groups and regions with a broad range of knowledge and demonstrated experience in the areas of gender equality and ending violence against women and girls, which has promoted accountability and oversight of programme implementation and supported efforts under the programme to increase ongoing and meaningful civil society engagement by reaching out to those left behind.
- Twenty activists (18 women and 2 men) who are representatives of non-governmental organizations from different social backgrounds were selected as students of the first of its kind School of Gender Activists in Tajikistan, including women and men, young girls, HIV-positive persons and persons with disabilities.
- More than 40 civil society organizations from different regions came together to develop and implement Tajikistan's first-ever civil society strategy for transformative change on ending violence against women and girls and the plan of action for the strategy; this step was an innovation in the region and has earned attention as a best practice for all Spotlight Initiative countries.
- Six mini-projects of local non-governmental organizations were selected to support the implementation of some of the activities of this civil society strategy.
- A total of 140 representatives from civil society organizations working with women with disabilities, women living with HIV and women from low-income communities increased their knowledge of the project cycle, monitoring and evaluation, and fundraising.

96. Beginning in 2019, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has taken a social sector procurement approach to supporting survivors of violence. To date there has been experience of working with the civil society organizations Dilafruz in the cities of Kulyab and Bokhtar in Khatlon province, and Femida in Dushanbe, whose goals are the prevention of domestic violence and rehabilitation following domestic violence incidents. Their social services are provided under a government social sector contract.

97. In 2021, the civil society organization Femida was contacted by 19 victims of trafficking in persons, 28 victims of domestic violence and 38 vulnerable migrants.

All of them received social, psychological, medical and legal services and assistance based on their needs.

98. In May 2020, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection opened a national social service centre for victims of trafficking in persons and domestic violence. The centre operates a shelter that received 14 women with children in 2021, and in the first nine months of 2022 assisted 68 people, including in 56 cases of violence against women.

99. There are four crisis centres nationwide, with shelters and a hotline. One of the centres is State-run. In addition, there are 22 beds in maternity clinics that help provide accommodation to victims of violence against women. It should also be noted that there are another 10 crisis centres in operation in the country.

## **G. Temporary special measures**

### **Paragraph 22 of the concluding observations**

100. Promoting gender equality is a target indicator of the national development strategy to 2030 and a cross-cutting development priority in the medium-term programmes.

101. Tajikistan has extensive experience with the use of special temporary measures, such as “soft quotas” in party lists of parliamentary candidates, benefits in civil service admissions, presidential quotas for university applicants and presidential grants for women entrepreneurs. Following the 2020 parliamentary elections, women’s representation in the Majlis-i Namoyandagon Majlis-i Oli (lower house of parliament) increased from 19.0 per cent to 23.8 per cent and in the Majlis-i Milli (upper house of parliament) from 18.7 per cent to 25.8 per cent.

102. In the single nationwide constituency, 73 candidates were nominated through party lists, including 25 women, or 34.2 per cent, and in 41 single-mandate constituencies for the election of deputies to the Majlis-i Namoyandagon Majlis-i Oli, 204 candidates were nominated, of whom 28, or 13.7 per cent, were women. A total of 277 candidates for the Majlis-i Namoyandagon Majlis-i Oli were nominated, of whom 53, or 19.1 per cent, were women. Of the aforementioned number of nominated candidates, 241 registered at the registration stage for party lists and for single-mandate districts, of whom 48, or 19.9 per cent, were women. Of the 63 deputies elected from party lists and in single-mandate districts, 16 (25.4 per cent) are women.

103. During the 2021 and 2022 parliamentary elections, 27 candidates were registered in seven single-mandate districts to replace the retiring deputies, 8 (29.6 per cent) of whom were women. Of the seven elected deputies, two (28.6 per cent) are women.

104. In order to attract women to the civil service, a Presidential decree was adopted on 19 April 2017 amending and supplementing Presidential decree No. 647 of 10 March 2016. In accordance with paragraph 14, the regulations on the procedure for holding competitions to fill vacant administrative posts in the civil service include accommodations for women, and upon their initial appointment to the civil service they are given three additional points.

## H. Stereotypes and harmful practices

### Paragraph 24 of the concluding observations

105. At the initiative of the Committee on Women and the Family and with the support of the domestic violence prevention project, a book entitled “Ways to Prevent Domestic Violence” was published and 15,000 copies were distributed free of charge among religious leaders and various professionals.

106. For the period 2020–2021, an instruction manual for industry and religious leaders on preventing domestic violence and supporting victims of domestic violence was developed and 10,000 copies were distributed free of charge to religious leaders and industry professionals.

107. In the period 2019–2022, the Committee on Women and the Family, in cooperation with UNFPA and the Family Planning Association of Tajikistan, held workshops for imam-khatibs and spiritual leaders of collective mosques and teachers of the Islamic Institute of Tajikistan in Dushanbe and in Sughd and Khatlon provinces on the subject of involving religious leaders in implementing State programmes and strengthening families, in which important social and cultural issues were addressed.

108. The Committee on Women and the Family, together with the civil society organization Gender and Development and with financial support from UNFPA, has developed a guide for Committee staff to conduct awareness-raising work in jamoats and communities on eliminating stereotypes, ensuring equitable distribution of household responsibilities among family members, and achieving gender equality and equity.

109. In order to overcome stereotypical thinking about the role of women in society and women’s participation in decision-making, and in order to increase the number of women in leadership positions, under the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan, the coordinator of this initiative from the Government of Tajikistan prepared and received approval of a decision of the board of the Committee on Women and the Family on a strategy for the period to 2030 for the consideration and promotion of gender equality to facilitate increased access to leadership positions in public institutions for women experienced in the prevention of violence against women and girls.

110. In order to prevent discrimination against women in public educational institutions, a course on family education with 20 hours of instruction is being added to the curriculum at the primary vocational level. The course has units on family culture, domestic violence and discrimination against women.

111. Vocational schools in Tajikistan hold weekly training sessions on domestic culture, domestic violence, discrimination against women, suicide prevention for young women and girls, prostitution and its consequences, trafficking in persons, and HIV/AIDS and how to prevent it.

112. The issue of prevention of discrimination against women is included in the professional development programme for managers and instructors in primary vocational training institutions of the national centre for professional development and worker retraining in the labour, migration and employment systems.

113. Media capabilities, including social networks on the Internet, are widely used for information and outreach activities to raise awareness about the need for equal rights and opportunities for men and women, and to eliminate gender stereotypes with respect to the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society. The official website of the Committee on Women and the Family alone produced and posted 197 publications in 2019, 258 in 2020, 360 in 2021 and 313 in the first nine months of 2022 conveying the importance of equal rights and opportunities for men

and women. The Committee's Facebook page had 201 postings in 2019, 258 in 2020, 562 in 2021, and 456 in the first nine months of 2022.

114. In order to convey the importance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, staff of the Committee on Women and the Family, ministries and agencies produced and broadcast programmes and speeches on issues of women's rights, equitable distribution of domestic work and compulsory education for women on various national and local television channels, totalling 657 in 2019, 613 in 2020, 1,034 in 2021 and 987 in the first nine months of 2022.

## I. Gender-based violence against women

### Paragraph 26 of the concluding observations

115. In 2019, the courts of Tajikistan heard 121 criminal cases for the crime of polygamy (article 170 of the Criminal Code) with convictions in 102 cases. Between 2020 and the first half of 2022, the courts also heard 254 criminal cases involving this crime and handed down 222 guilty verdicts.

116. In addition, from 2019 to the first half of 2022, the courts of Tajikistan heard 2,314 criminal cases for the crime of malicious evasion of parental maintenance of children (article 177 of the Criminal Code) and handed down 1,994 convictions.

117. Amendments and additions to the Act on the prevention of domestic violence are currently being prepared. On 1 July 2022, the Government of Tajikistan adopted decision No. 311 on submitting the Government's conclusion on the draft legislation on amendments and additions to the Act on the prevention of domestic violence.

Table 3

### Statistical data on the number of complaints to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of applications and complaints received</i>	<i>Against men</i>	<i>Against women</i>	<i>Against juveniles</i>
2019	3 917	3 185	730	2
2020	4 316	3 543	773	0
2021	4 192	3 460	729	5
8 months in 2022	2 797	2 287	504	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 222</b>	<b>12 475</b>	<b>2 736</b>	<b>13</b>

Table 4

### Number of protective orders issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan

<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>8 months of 2022</i>
1 851	2 325	2 212	1 399

118. There are 17 inspectors in the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan: five inspectors in Dushanbe (one in the internal affairs office in Shokhmansur; two in Shohmansur; two in Sino; one in Firdavsi and two in Firdavsi), four inspectors in the Khatlon regional department of internal affairs (Bokhtar, Kulyab, Jayhun, Dusti), three inspectors in the Sughd regional department of internal affairs (Khujand, Isfara,

Penjikent), one inspector in the Rasht Valley district department, one inspector in the internal affairs office in the city of Khorog, one inspector in the internal affairs office in Rudaki district and one inspector in the internal affairs office in the city of Hisar.

119. In the first eight months of 2022, 49 criminal cases were initiated by local police inspectors and family violence prevention inspectors of districts and cities in Tajikistan, and 739 cases were referred to other agencies under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

120. Pursuant to articles 93 (1) and 93 (2) of the Code of Administrative Offences, 1,365 reports on administrative offences and 200 administrative reports on other articles were drawn up. A total of 4,840 meetings were held on fulfilling the requirements of the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act.

121. The question of the criminalization of domestic violence as a separate offence is also under consideration. In the draft criminal code of Tajikistan being developed by a working group created by Presidential decree No. AP-1209 of 30 April 2019, chapter 19 (Criminal offences against the family and juveniles) contains for the first time an article establishing criminal penalties for domestic violence. This is article 153, "Domestic violence", in which domestic violence means "An act committed by one family member against another family member, taking the form of battery or other violent acts involving minor injury to health, isolation, intimidation for the purpose of imposing one's will or exerting personal control over the victim, or financial deprivation, including deprivation of livelihood or neglect causing minor harm to the health of the victim". In the draft criminal code, this article consists of five parts and provides for penalties ranging from mandatory and correctional labour to 10 years in prison, depending on the nature of the offence.

122. Domestic legislation, including the Criminal Code, establishes criminal liability for certain forms of domestic violence: murder (article 104), incitement to suicide (article 109), grievous and medium bodily harm (articles 110 and 111), battery (article 116), torture (article 117), coercion of women to perform abortions (article 124), rape (article 138), sexual assault (article 139), coercion to perform sexual acts (article 140), sexual intercourse and other actions of a sexual nature with a juvenile under 16 years of age (article 141), indecent assault (article 142), sexual intercourse, other actions of a sexual nature or indecent assault with abuse of feelings and religious beliefs (article 142.1). A parent who involves his or her child in the commission of a crime or in the commission of an antisocial act, trafficking in persons or trafficking in minors may also be held criminally liable.

123. Pursuant to Government decree No. 186 of 24 May 2021, a joint programme under the United Nations-European Union Spotlight Initiative is being implemented in Tajikistan. Key activities have been implemented under the Initiative to help prevent violence against women and girls, including the following:

(a) A review of the principal pieces of legislation and development plans related to sexual and gender-based violence in key sectors to assess gaps in prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, analysis of legislation and policies related to sexual and gender-based violence in five sectors (justice, security, health, education and labour), and recommendations for amendments to laws and changes to district development programmes for prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence;

(b) In 2022, a checklist was developed for forensic medical examiners and doctors on providing assistance to women and girls with disabilities and documenting cases of violence under the standards of the Istanbul Protocol.

(c) Improved quality of services through training of government agencies, religious leaders, teachers, media and health care providers:

- A total of 160 health care providers upgraded their knowledge based on the national protocol on high-quality essential services for victims of rape and sexual and gender-based violence and an adapted United Nations package on essential services.
- A total of 270 religious leaders expanded their knowledge through a comprehensive training module for high-ranking religious leaders and a simplified training module for rural religious leaders of community mosques to incorporate tools for ending domestic violence into their faith community work.
- A total of 424 representatives (246 men and 178 women) from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the judiciary and the Committee on Women and the Family strengthened their knowledge and skills to collaborate on transformative programmes to promote gender equality and non-discrimination, and respond to gender-based violence through inter-agency coordination and the application of international standards in addressing sexual and gender-based violence.
- A total of 600 educators increased their knowledge of policies and techniques for a positive education free of violence and discrimination.
- A total of 46 members of the media (23 men and 23 women), including journalists and bloggers, gained better understanding of gender sensitivity, the survivor-centred approach and the use of gender-sensitive language.

(d) Expanded access to services by opening additional victim support rooms, organizing health fairs, and maintaining essential services:

- Ten new victim support rooms were launched in addition to the 12 rooms already in operation as a result of active advocacy for the importance of short-term shelters and timely medical services for women and girl survivors of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The newly created rooms provided special services to 26 women and girls who were survivors of violence.
- During the events, more than 1,800 women and girls of reproductive age received free professional services, including consultations on family planning and reproductive health.
- A total of 126 women and girls who have experienced violence (or who are at risk of violence) improved their knowledge and skills in starting and developing businesses based on the economic opportunities of the regions in which they live.
- Nine child survivors of sexual crimes (seven girls and two boys) received support in the form of legal representation during the investigation and court proceedings.

(e) Raising awareness about gender discrimination by means of outreach through a variety of media outlets:

- A total of 5,000 individuals were reached through social media with videos raising awareness about positive parenting practices with a focus on girls' development, education and mental health.

(f) Raising public awareness about changing gender norms in society:

- A total of 1,631 people (786 men and 845 women) in targeted regions, including 551 girls and 520 boys under age 17, were reached through local mobilization campaigns aimed at positively changing current social norms based on gender inequity and stereotypes, as well as attitudes and behaviour.



- A total of 31,817 local community members, teachers, children and parents (1,524 women, 930 men, 18,988 girls and 10,375 boys) were reached through awareness-raising about sexual and gender-based violence and violence against women and girls, how to prevent and respond to possible cases, and how and where to file complaints.
- Fourteen theatrical educational programs reached 1,400 people on issues related to sexual and gender-based violence, including street harassment and dating violence, early and forced marriage, public bullying, healthy behaviour, and sexual reproductive health and rights in an accessible and engaging way.
- As mandated by the Government of Tajikistan, implementation of the Initiative will continue until December 2023.

124. A national strategy for the development of statistics in Tajikistan for the period to 2030 was approved by Government decision No. 585 of 27 November 2019. The plan of action for the first phase of the strategy for 2019–2023, includes 16 activities for the development of gender statistics. In particular, there are plans to conduct a survey on the prevalence of gender-based violence against women and girls while ensuring that it covers rural women and women and girls belonging to other disadvantaged groups.

125. A working group was created by the Statistics Agency to harmonize indicators for the collection of administrative data on violence against women.

126. In the list in annex 1 to Government decision No. 600 of 2 December 2014 on the procedure for providing medical and sanitary services to citizens of Tajikistan in public health facilities, a new item was added on a category of citizens entitled to receive free medical services based on their social status as victims of domestic violence and victims of trafficking in persons.

## **J. Trafficking in persons and exploitation of prostitution**

### **Paragraph 28 of the concluding observations**

127. In the past 15 years, Tajikistan took numerous measures to combat trafficking in persons. Trafficking in persons was criminalized; several national plans of action to combat trafficking in persons were adopted and implemented; and a national inter-agency commission to combat trafficking in persons, as well as local commissions, were established. In 2019, a national plan to combat trafficking in persons for 2019–2021 was adopted that was developed with the involvement of and civil society representatives. By Government decision No. 342 of 2 July 2019, a list of crimes related to trafficking in persons was approved. There was active cooperation between the primary anti-trafficking entities and the civil sector.

128. In order to improve legislation on combating trafficking in persons, the Government approved a procedure for implementing a set of measures within the referral mechanism for victims of trafficking in persons, which clearly defines measures to provide protection and assistance to victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants, mechanisms for unconditional assistance to victims under supervision, the provision of special protection status throughout the criminal investigation, respect for anonymity, protection of personal data, and mechanisms for identifying victims of exploitation and referring them to the competent agencies implementing the aforementioned procedure, among other measures.

129. On 2 January 2019, amendments and additions to the Criminal Code came into force regarding crimes related to trafficking of persons and children. Articles 130 (1), 167, 335, 335 (1), 347, 351 and 352 of the Criminal Code were amended. Articles 130

(2) (Use of slave labour) and 132 (Recruitment of persons for exploitation) were removed from the Criminal Code.

130. On 2 January 2019, amendments were also made to the Act on combating human trafficking and providing assistance to victims. Article 21 of the Act regulating the procedure for granting the legal status of trafficked person and article 23 of the Act concerning the time frame for providing a set of social services to trafficked persons were amended.

131. The list of entities and organizations required to ensure respect for the rights and legitimate interests of children who are trafficked persons includes tourism development agencies, which must also identify children who may be victims of trafficking in persons.

132. Law enforcement in Tajikistan opened 14 cases of trafficking in persons involving 26 defendants in 2020, compared to 20 cases involving 35 defendants in 2019. The courts convicted all 26 individuals, a significant increase from the four convictions in 2019.

133. The Ministry of Internal Affairs continued to train cadets on trafficking in persons as part of its academy curriculum.

134. Law students at the State university participated in training on anti-trafficking laws and investigative techniques as part of a government-approved curriculum.

135. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is assisting Tajikistan in developing its legal framework and capacity to combat trafficking in persons.

136. The Government also cooperated with the international organization to train members of the judiciary on how to successfully investigate human trafficking cases in criminal courts.

137. In order to improve the collection of data on victims of crime disaggregated by sex, age, social status and other indicators, by order No. 37 of 3 September 2019 of the Director of the Statistics Agency, statistical report form No. 1 – Report on victims of crime – was developed and approved.

138. Tajikistan signed an agreement on joint law enforcement with the Commonwealth of Independent States.

139. To strengthen anti-trafficking efforts and work more effectively to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, the Programme Office in Tajikistan of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in partnership with the Government of Tajikistan, conducted a three-day workshop on data collection and reporting on trafficking in persons for justice system professionals with the Statistics Agency, the Office of the Procurator General, the Migration Service, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan.

140. In order to step up the identification of trafficked persons and provide them with appropriate services, a national plan to combat trafficking in persons in Tajikistan for the period 2022–2024 was approved on 26 February 2022.

141. At the initiative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the Communication Service under the Government of Tajikistan, a hotline to combat trafficking in persons (227–07-07) has been put into operation.

142. On 27 May 2020, the Government of Tajikistan decided (by decision No. 280) to create in Dushanbe a territorial social service centre for victims of trafficking, a State institution reporting to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

143. A network of civil society organizations known as Umed is in operation nationwide to prevent trafficking in persons and provide support to vulnerable

migrants and trafficked persons. The network cooperates with the IOM mission in Tajikistan, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, procurators, and the Labour and Employment Agency of Tajikistan, among others. The inter-agency commission to combat trafficking in persons also cooperates with this network.

144. A shelter for trafficking victims in Dushanbe is in operation under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Tajikistan. The shelter provides assistance with rehabilitation (medical, legal, psychological and social) to victims of trafficking, victims of domestic violence, abandoned wives of migrant workers and vulnerable migrants. Starting in 2017, the Ministry provided funding to the non-governmental organization Themis under a State contract to support a day-care centre to provide social services to victims of trafficking. In January 2021 the centre was transferred to the Ministry. The shelter, which has been in operation since 2006, was previously supported by funding from IOM. Over the past 12 years the shelter has assisted some 200 victims of trafficking.

145. Law enforcement officers receive training on combating trafficking in persons. A series of two-day training courses entitled “Introduction to Trafficking in Persons and its Forms” was held in Dushanbe in September–October 2019. The course was organized by the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe in partnership with the Centre for Combating Trafficking in Persons under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan. It was attended by around 30 participants. The training covered such topics as legislative and international frameworks, forms of trafficking in persons, protective measures available to law enforcement, identification of trafficked persons and support services.

## **K. Participation in public and political life**

### **Paragraph 32 of the concluding observations**

146. The representation of women in the parliament of Tajikistan over the past 25 years increased from 3 per cent in 1995 to 24 per cent in 2020. Two of the nine committees of the Majlis-i Namoyandagon are headed by women. One of the three deputy chairpersons of the Majlis-i Namoyandagon is a woman.

147. In the 2020 parliamentary elections, women’s representation in the Majlis-i Namoyandagon increased from 19 per cent to 24 per cent and in the Majlis-i Milli from 19 per cent to 26 per cent. The number of women in the Majlis of people’s deputies of the City of Dushanbe is 41.5 per cent, while in Khatlon province it is about 35 per cent, in Sughd province it is over 33 per cent, in the Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region it is over 34 per cent, and in cities and centrally administered districts it is around 30 per cent. At this rate of growth, it is expected that gender equality will be achieved in the parliament of Tajikistan by 2030.

148. In 2017, Tajikistan established the Alliance of Women Parliamentarians, which includes thirteen women parliamentarians, including the deputy speaker of the Majlis-i Namoyandagon.

149. As of 2022, the Supreme Court has 41 judges, 10 of whom are women (24 per cent). There are 78 female judges (21 per cent) and 296 male judges in the courts of general jurisdiction. Ten women are chairpersons of courts and 17 women are deputy chairpersons. There are 65 trainee judges, 22 of whom are women.

150. According to the Civil Service Agency, as of 1 January 2022, 24.1 per cent of the 18,701 civil servants were women. There are 3,081 civil servants in urban and rural governments, including 587 women (19.0 per cent).

151. The central office of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection employs 30 managers, 6 of whom (20 per cent) are women.

152. In 2022, the total staffing of medical personnel in facilities of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection is 81,126, of whom 54,666 (67 per cent) are women. Tajikistan has a total of 20,797 doctors, of whom 7,651 (37 per cent) are women. Of the total of 652 managers in health and social care, 235 (36 per cent) are women.

153. Of the 37 State lawyers at the legal aid centre of the Ministry of Justice, 11 (30 per cent) are women.

## **L. Nationality**

### **Paragraph 34 of the concluding observations**

154. In 2019, there were 233,323 births registered in civil registry offices and 57,433 registrations of births of children 1 year of age or older.

- In 2020, 239,946 births were registered and there were 48,719 registrations of births of children 1 year of age or older.
- In 2021, 218,206 births were registered and there were 53,015 registrations of births of children 1 year of age or older.
- In the first half of 2022, 111,537 births were registered, an increase of 6 per cent (in the first half of 2021 there were 104,737); there were 21,763 registrations of births of children 1 year of age or older, a decrease of 5 per cent (in the first half of 2021 there were 22,871).

155. The Civil Registry Authority of the Ministry of Justice has its own separate website: <http://rahsh-adliya.tj/>. In 2021, Tajikistan launched free services through a mobile registry office in rural areas where children are most vulnerable to the negative consequences of missing or late registration of births. Outreach services are carried out through a partnership between the Civil Registry Authority and UNDP, with financial support from the Swiss Cooperation Office in Tajikistan. The one-stop-shop system in civil registries reduces the time it takes to obtain a document, improves interaction between the system and service recipients, and reduces the risk of corruption.

156. The results of monitoring and evaluation of the UNDP project on support for reform of the civil registration system in Tajikistan, conducted by the research organization Zerkalo Analytics, indicated that adoption of supplement No. 1637 of 19 July 2019 in the Act on amendments and additions to the State Civil Registration Act concerning timely registration of births has increased the timely registration of children's births by 60 per cent. When a birth is registered in a timely manner, the birth certificate is provided free of charge.

## **M. Education**

### **Paragraph 36 of the concluding observations**

157. The current legislative framework in Tajikistan excludes gender discrimination in the sphere of education. Under article 16 of the Education Act, basic general education (nine grades) is compulsory for citizens of the Republic of Tajikistan. In 2020, a national strategy for the development of education to 2030 was adopted by Government decision No. 526 of 29 September.

158. By Government decision No. 548 of 29 August 2015, a plan of action for 2015–2020 was adopted for the national strategy for promoting the role of women in Tajikistan, which included specific measures to improve women’s education.

159. During that period the following positive results were achieved in that regard: In order to reach women, including young women over 18 years of age, the State’s extramural general secondary education establishment for young adults and adults, under the Ministry of Education and Science, has created the necessary conditions for extramural study, which is organized in three phases, every six months. The establishment’s supplies and equipment are also being upgraded every year.

160. In order to attract the population, including girls who have dropped out of school, to vocational training courses, special programmes of courses are being developed.

161. In cooperation with the National Training and Methodological Centre, a curriculum and four basic study plans were approved for the extramural establishment for the 2019/20 academic year, covering the first stage of general education and intended for the instruction of 12 students who had studied only as far as grade 2 and, for various reasons, had dropped out of school, and for the 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years, covering the second and third stages of general education (grades 5–11).

162. The Department of Preschool and Secondary Education has developed a draft procedure for planning, teaching and assessment in secondary distance-learning institutions, which is used as a training and methodological tool.

163. Over the past four years, 626 women and young women, including some from rural areas, were enrolled in an educational establishment. There are 51 low-income women and young women with physical disabilities enrolled in distance-learning institutions free of charge and 54 who pay 50 per cent of the tuition fees. The use of textbooks for this group of students is free of charge.

164. The activity of women and girls in secondary and higher vocational establishments and the Ministry of Education and Science has improved, and their numbers are increasing day by day. At present, there are 3,261 female teachers and professors in secondary vocational establishments and 4,572 in the country’s institutions of higher education.

165. The Ministry of Education and Science employs 31 women and girls, 26 of whom are civil servants; there are 624 individuals with doctoral degrees in science, 103 of whom are women; 3,279 doctoral candidates in the sciences, 911 of whom are women; four corresponding members of the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan; two permanent members of the National Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan; one full member of the Academy of Education of Tajikistan; one full member of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Tajikistan; two rectors; 33 provosts; 135 faculty deans; and 192 department heads.

166. The status of women in society is improving every year. There are 130 professors, 103 doctors of science and 911 doctoral candidates working in all scientific fields in Tajikistan.

167. In secondary vocational education establishments, 20 women work as principal heads and 150 women work as deputy heads.

168. At present, about 5,000 students, most of them girls, are enrolled in the country’s higher vocational educational establishments under the quota of the President of Tajikistan.

169. While women and girls made up 44 per cent of students in the 1991/92 school year, in the 2005/06 school year the proportion was 56 per cent, and in the 2021/22 school year it was 66.1 per cent.

170. Since the 1997/98 academic year, the Government has established a Presidential quota for girls from rural and remote areas, by virtue of which thousands of girls have graduated from higher vocational educational establishments and become teachers and directors in various fields of political and public life. Overall, from 1997 to 2022 a total of 13,388 girls who were graduates of general educational institutions enrolled in higher vocational educational establishments in Tajikistan.

171. Under the Ministry of Education and Science, the Sarvar women's educational centre, which has been operating since 2001, provides additional education for female students, including girls in the Presidential quota and talented girls in higher vocational education establishments, and trains them in leadership skills to develop female leaders. In the 2020–2022 academic year, 42 students graduated from this centre and received a special certificate from the institution. The list of graduates was submitted to the human resources section of the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan as a personnel resource.

172. The subject of family education is included in the curricula of general educational institutions. Accordingly, in 2015 the Ministry of Education and Science developed a textbook on family education for grade 10 and printed 130,000 copies. This textbook has been made available to general educational institutions. The textbook provides information about the concept of family, the regulation of family relationships and other features of family life, and helps prepare young people for independent married life.

173. Humanities textbooks for general education institutions contain separate sections on gender issues. The subject of gender relations is included in the sociology textbook (by N.A. Rozikhonzoda and F.M. Juraeva) for students in secondary vocational education, which was published by decision No. 9/7 of 29 June 2021 of the expert advisory panel of the Ministry of Education and Science.

174. In the 2021/22 academic year there are 2,696,727 students in preschool, general secondary, primary and secondary vocational, and higher vocational and postgraduate educational institutions in Tajikistan, of whom 1,262,726 are women and girls, broken down as follows:

- 152,435 students in preschool, 69,209 of whom are girls
- 2,195,619 students in general secondary education, 1,590,743 of whom are girls
- 20,879 students in primary and secondary vocational education, 4,820 of whom are girls
- 234,524 students in higher education, 86,868 of whom are young women

## **N. Employment**

### **Paragraph 38 of the concluding observations**

175. The new Equality and Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Act (of 19 July 2022) includes a provision on workplace harassment (article 6, part 3): “Workplace harassment is any form of non-physical persecution (harassment) in the workplace with repeated actions that have a degrading effect on the individual and are intended to deteriorate the employee's working conditions or professional status”.

176. The Government approved State employment promotion programmes of Tajikistan for the periods 2018–2019 and 2020–2022 in order to provide State social

benefits, promote employment and ensure the stability of the domestic labour market. During their implementation, in 2019, 142,221 citizens sought assistance from the Labour and Employment Agency; of these, 106,542 were registered as job seekers and 60,045 were officially declared unemployed. Overall, 76,374 persons found work, 6,634 of them through employment quotas, 3,981 as a result of preferential loans and 7,846 at employment fairs. The average starting wage at the beginning of 2022 was 1,373.98 somoni. More than one million jobs were created.

177. In the first eight months of 2022, 47,920 women applied to labour and employment agencies, of whom 34,845 were registered as job seekers and 20,097 had official status as unemployed. During this period, 23,808 unemployed women, which is 49.1 per cent of the total number of unemployed (49,468), were provided with permanent jobs with the help of labour and employment agencies.

178. Currently, a draft of the State employment promotion programme for 2023–2025 has been prepared. The main objectives of the programme are:

- Promotion of employment, formation of an inclusive education system, and employment of women, young people and persons with disabilities to reduce their vulnerability and increase their competitiveness in the labour market.
- Assistance in providing 78,300 women with permanent jobs through available vacancies.
- Enrolling 27,700 women in vocational training, professional development and retraining in professions that meet the requirements of the labour market and the development of folk crafts.
- Supporting the initiatives of 6,300 women in promoting entrepreneurial activities and the development of folk crafts.
- Engaging 7,800 women in paid community work.
- Providing social support for 4,400 women by allocating and paying benefits during unemployment.
- Providing career counselling to 23,300 women.
- Implementing informational activities and legal education for women.

179. As a result of the realization of the programme indicators, a total of 147,800 women were engaged in various types of employment in 2020–2022. In the first eight months of the current year, 4,706 citizens in need of special social protection were provided with jobs under quotas, representing 58.8 per cent of the programme's annual plan and 13.6 per cent more than in the same period of last year. Of those employed through jobs (quotas), 2,418 (51.4 per cent) are women. An industry analysis shows that these jobs have been filled by 139 persons with disabilities, 101 juvenile orphans, 573 persons demobilized from the armed forces, 198 persons released from penal institutions and compulsory treatment facilities, 1,126 single parents and persons raising children with disabilities, 880 parents with more than five minor children, 106 persons under the age of 18 who are under the care of the family due to the death of the breadwinner, 170 citizens of pre-pension age (within two years of retirement), and 1,413 persons under the age of 18 and young persons who found employment after graduation through State employment agencies.

180. During this period, 1,771 female applicants were hired for paid community work, including maintaining historical monuments, holy sites and cemeteries, clearing canals, and cleaning markets, streets, sidewalks, farms, warehouses and settlements, representing (4,392) 40.3 per cent of all working women.

181. In the first eight months of 2022, labour and employment agencies provided financial assistance in the amount of 7,232,811 somoni to 2,045 unemployed citizens for entrepreneurial activity. Through labour and employment agencies, 898 unemployed citizens received 3,464,516 somoni for production activities, 634 persons received 2,044,690 somoni for commercial activities, and 513 unemployed citizens received 1,323,604 somoni in financial assistance to promote the provision of services to the population. During this period, support was provided for entrepreneurship initiatives of women and young people: 1,170 women received 4,137,168 somoni and 767 young people received 2,719,537 somoni as financial assistance. To support and revive various types of folk crafts, 401 unemployed citizens were given financial assistance in the amount of 1,379,165 somoni.

182. An analysis of the areas of entrepreneurial activity of unemployed citizens currently engaged in the development of folk crafts shows that they are mainly engaged in tailoring of clothing and national costumes, making of textiles, carving and production of wooden items, pottery-making, jewellery-making, baking bread and pastries, cooking national dishes and doing Chakan embroidery.

183. In the first eight months of 2022, 8,786 girls and women homemakers were enrolled through labour and employment agencies in the study of folk crafts in educational institutions of the ministry and other training establishments operating in Tajikistan.

184. Under the State programme to promote employment of the population, in the first eight months of the current year 4,706 citizens in need of special social protection were provided with employment by local administrative bodies of the State (through quotas), amounting to 58.8 per cent of the programme's annual plan, which is 13.6 per cent more than in the same period of last year. Of those employed through jobs placements (quotas), 2,418 (51.4 per cent) are women.

## O. Health

### Paragraph 40 of the concluding observations

185. As a result of measures taken, the number of medical facilities in Tajikistan increased from 3,738 in 2015 to 4,369 in 2020. In 2019 alone, 154 health and social care facilities were commissioned nationwide. With the involvement of foreign capital and specialists, a number of international medical institutions are in operation.

186. Over the past five years, life expectancy, an indicator of the socioeconomic well-being of the population of Tajikistan and the effectiveness of health care, has risen from 73.6 to 75 years, and there was a 1.2-fold and 2.2-fold drop in the rates of maternal mortality and infant mortality of children under 5, respectively.

187. From 2015 to 2019, the maternal mortality rate decreased from 33.0 to 24.1 deaths per 100,000 live births.

188. Under-five mortality decreased from 20.6 to 17.9 per 1,000 live births, mainly due to a decrease in infant mortality from 16.5 to 14.3 per 1,000 live births.

189. The health of women and children in Tajikistan is improving, according to a recent demographic and health survey of Tajikistan conducted in 2017. The 2017 demographic and health survey is the second such survey conducted in Tajikistan since 2012. The survey results indicate improved child survival and maternal health. At the same time, fertility and family planning remained stable.

190. The incidence of tuberculosis decreased from 60.4 cases per 100,000 persons in 2015 to 56.0 cases in 2019 and 32.8 cases in the first nine months of 2020.



191. Legislation and policy documents are being adopted in the health sector:

- In 2017, Tajikistan adopted the Health Code, which consolidated a number of separate laws dealing with various aspects of health-related issues, including reproductive health and prevention of drug abuse, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS.
- A national communication programme on the first 1,000 days of a child's life was adopted for 2020–2024. The programme aims to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on health and on food security and nutrition), and to reduce all indicators of malnutrition and undernutrition in Tajikistan.
- A health protection strategy for Tajikistan for the period to 2030 was adopted by Government decision No. 414 of 30 September 2021.
- A programme for training of medical personnel for the period to 2030 was approved by Government decision No. 702 of 31 December 2020.
- A development programme for State medical institutions for 2021–2025 was approved by Government decision No. 461 of 26 October 2021.
- The procedure for providing medical care to women during pregnancy and childbirth and after childbirth in public health care facilities was approved by Government decision No. 545 of 30 December 2021.
- A national immunization programme for Tajikistan for 2021–2025 was adopted by Government decision No. 51 of 27 November 2021.

### **Countering HIV/AIDS**

192. In Tajikistan, as in all Eastern European and Central Asian countries, cases of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) have continued to increase in recent years. The number of reported HIV infections is increasing annually: 1,146 in 2015, 1,320 in 2019, and 890 in the first nine months of 2020. As of 2021, the total number of officially registered HIV cases in the country was 11,986, of which 7,698 (64.1 per cent) were men and 4,288 (35.8 per cent) were women. According to estimates, there may be 13,000 persons living with HIV, so the actual recorded number of people living with HIV (8,756) is 67.4 per cent of the estimated number of people living with HIV in Tajikistan.

193. The number of new cases is estimated to have increased by 20 per cent, while the number of HIV-related deaths decreased by 5 per cent.

194. Of the total number of persons with HIV registered, 3,230 (26.9 per cent) have died from various causes. A total of 7,678 individuals (87.7 per cent) are in follow-up care and 7,055 individuals (80.6 per cent) are on appropriate antiretroviral therapy.

195. By order of the minister, a standard for social and medical services for people living with HIV was approved under the title “Classification and standards of social services for persons infected with human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency disease (HIV/AIDS)”.

196. There are 68 AIDS centres in Tajikistan: 1 national centre, 1 regional centre, 8 city centres and 58 district centres.

197. According to a sentinel surveillance study, the HIV epidemic in the country is at a concentrated stage (the prevalence of HIV among people who inject drugs is 11.9 per cent and among all those surveyed is less than 0.12 per cent).

198. Tajikistan is adopting legislation and strategies on the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS:

- A national programme to counter the HIV epidemic in Tajikistan for the period 2017–2020 was approved by Government decision No. 89 of 25 February 2017.
- A follow-on national programme to counter the HIV epidemic in Tajikistan for the period 2021–2025 was approved by Government decision No. 50 of 21 February 2021.
- By Government decision No. 566 of 30 December 2021, a national programme on promoting healthy living in Tajikistan, with a separate paragraph on HIV infection, was adopted for 2022–2026.

199. The Health Code of Tajikistan emphasizes the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of HIV infection (articles 163, 165 and 166).

200. Under article 163 of the Health Code, the parents or legal representatives of children born to HIV-infected mothers receive breast-milk substitutes from birth to the time they are given a definitive diagnosis of HIV in order to further reduce the risk of HIV transmission.

201. The Criminal Code of Tajikistan stipulates criminal liability (article 125) for infecting a person with HIV.

202. In July 2019, a heavier administrative penalty was provided for in the form of a fine for evading mandatory medical examination and preventive treatment for HIV infection and other infectious diseases in disregard of a warning issued by health authorities (article 119 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Tajikistan).

203. In July 2020, amendments and additions were made to article 207 of the Criminal Code, according to which a violation of health and epidemiological rules, including causing infection with HIV, committed in the case of the emergence and spread of a disease dangerous to humans or the implementation of restrictive quarantine measures, is punishable by a term of five to ten years in prison.

204. By order of the minister, a standard for social and medical services for people living with HIV was approved under the title “Classification and standards of social services for persons infected with human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency disease (HIV/AIDS)”.

205. Measures have been approved and implemented to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, based on a clinical protocol for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, by order No. 152 of 9 March 2017 of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. Activities in this area were further improved in 2021 by a working group that produced an updated clinical protocol on strengthening measures for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Tajikistan, as developed and commissioned by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection on 30 September 2021 under order No. 876. Implementation of this protocol began in 2022 in all cities and regions of the country.

206. In 2021, coordination meetings among reproductive health facilities, family medicine clinics, and centres for HIV prevention and control were held in four districts of Tajikistan to discuss issues of prevention and elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Various issues were discussed at these meetings, including consideration of current problems in conducting outreach to pregnant women diagnosed with HIV, providing care for HIV-infected children, providing artificial nutrition to children born to HIV-positive mothers and other important related issues.

207. During the 12 months of 2021, in order to provide high-quality health services at health centres in Khatlon province and centrally administered districts, 12 workshops were conducted for health care professionals on the topics of preventing

mother-to-child transmission of HIV and follow-up of children living with HIV. More than 240 family doctors, paediatricians, midwives, obstetricians-gynaecologists, neonatologists, infectious disease specialists and nurses attended these training workshops. After the training sessions in these regions, specialists conducted follow-up checks on the application in the workplace of the skills learned. The implementation of laws and regulations on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV was also reviewed and the monitoring team offered practical and methodological assistance in order to further improve the services.

208. The civil society organization SPIN-Plus has been contracted by the State to provide social services to people infected with HIV and living in precarious conditions. In 2022, the organization provided social services to 36 women infected with HIV/AIDS.

209. In order to promote healthy lifestyles among young people, women, migrant workers and other population groups, the National Centre for HIV Prevention and Control, the Committee for Young People and Sport (which reports to the Government of Tajikistan), the National Centre for Healthy Lifestyles and the National Reproductive Health Centre agreed on joint plans. The implementation of the joint plans includes regular measures to prevent HIV infections and other sexually transmitted diseases. As a result of these activities, in 2021 more than 800,000 people in Tajikistan, including students, health care providers, migrant workers and their families, injecting drug users, sex workers, pregnant women and married persons were informed about HIV infection, how it spreads and how to prevent it.

### **Reproductive health and access to reproductive rights**

210. National, regional and municipal reproductive health centres in Tajikistan provide counselling services to the general public. Contraceptives are distributed free of charge. Medical evaluation of pregnant women is conducted at the State centre for medical genetics.

211. On 30 May 2017, the Health Code of the Republic of Tajikistan was passed, which repealed the Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights Act. Chapter 13 of the Code covers reproductive health and reproductive rights.

212. Tajikistan has adopted a number of laws, regulations and policy papers in the field of reproductive health:

- The procedure for providing medical counselling on reproductive health to minors and young people, including members of at-risk groups, was approved by Government decision No. 748 of 28 November 2015.
- On 25 February 2017, a programme of State guarantees for the provision of medical and sanitary care in pilot districts in Tajikistan for 2017–2019, including services for free counselling on reproductive health and family planning and anonymous counselling on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, was approved by Government decision.
- In 2019, a State reproductive health programme for 2019–2022 was approved by Government decision No. 326 of 22 June 2019.

213. Under a grant agreement between the Government of Japan and UNFPA aimed at strengthening the health care system in Tajikistan, medical equipment and core reproductive health items were donated to the national research institute of obstetric gynaecology and paediatrics of Tajikistan.

214. As part of the implementation of the plan for the previous programme on sexual and reproductive health and maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health under the national health strategy of Tajikistan for the period 2016–2020, the Tajik Family

Planning Association, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the Committee on Women and the Family and with financial support from UNFPA, conducted a series of activities to raise awareness among professionals and the general public:

- A working group was formed to review the curriculum of the obstetrics department in the college of medicine.
- A textbook on family planning for health care providers and medical school faculty was translated into Tajik.
- An emergency preparedness plan on reproductive health was developed.
- Information materials on family planning were developed and disseminated.
- Health fairs were organized in remote jamoats in Khatlon and Sughd provinces and the Rasht valley.

215. The Committee on Women and the Family conducts joint workshops with the participation of specialists from the National Centre for Healthy Lifestyles and the National Reproductive Health Centre under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

## **P. Rural women**

### **Paragraph 42 of the concluding observations**

216. In order to support women in rural areas, develop their entrepreneurial activities and improve their quality of life, the ongoing gender policy of the Government of Tajikistan also promotes women's activities in the public sphere. The market economy stimulates private initiative among women. The emergence and increase in the number of women entrepreneurs is leading to the formation of economically independent women's groups. There is growing interest in new forms of activity, such as private enterprise, individual creativity and the public sector.

217. A steadily developing system of female entrepreneurship has been established. By Government Decision No. 5 of 28 January 2021 on grants from the President of Tajikistan to support and develop women's entrepreneurship for the period 2021–2025, the policy of government support for women's entrepreneurship to the year 2025 was continued with the allocation of 80 grants in the amount of 2,000,000 somoni, including:

- 20 grants of 40,000 somoni
- 20 grants of 30,000 somoni
- 20 grants of 20,000 somoni
- 20 grants of 10,000 somoni

218. In 2022, pursuant to Government decision No. 131 of 28 March 2022 on amendments to decision No. 5 of 28 January 2021, the 80 Presidential grants to support and develop women's entrepreneurial activities for the period 2021–2025 were increased from 2,000,000 somoni to 2,500,000 somoni, including:

- 20 grants of 40,000 somoni
- 20 grants of 35,000 somoni
- 20 grants of 30,000 somoni
- 20 grants of 20,000 somoni

219. The leaders of Sughd and Khatlon provinces and a number of cities and districts, following the initiative of the President of Tajikistan, are now also allocating small grants totalling 800,000 somoni for the development of women's entrepreneurship.
220. There is a good legal and institutional framework and favourable opportunities for development of the entrepreneurial activities of women entrepreneurs.
221. The construction of facilities such as preschools, health centres, and production and service facilities by women entrepreneurs has gained enormous importance.
222. One significant measure is the full tax exemption granted to legal entities engaged in processing cocoons and producing silk, satin and other hand-woven goods, as well as the exemption of mulberry land from the unified land tax for 10 years. This measure supports industries in which mainly women entrepreneurs are employed.
223. The tax exemption granted, effective 30 November 2019, to women entrepreneurs during maternity leave and to artisans working from home, most of whom are women, is another area of State support for women entrepreneurs.
224. On 16 March 2022, the issue of improving women's entrepreneurship was considered at the 22nd meeting of the consultative council on improving the investment climate, which reports to the President of Tajikistan.
225. An interdepartmental working group is currently cooperating with development partners to prepare a draft programme for the development of women's entrepreneurship in Tajikistan to 2030.
226. With international cooperation, a major goal for the coming years is to increase the volume and sectoral diversification of trade and economic cooperation through the joint implementation of projects in such high-tech areas as information and telecommunications and partnerships in the development of the fuel and energy industry, the engineering and agricultural sector and the national transport network, and the implementation of joint projects in the free economic zones of Tajikistan.
227. The Committee on Women and the Family, together with civil society organizations and development partners, has implemented a number of projects to support rural women:
- In cooperation with the civil society organization Khurshed, as part of a project on supporting rural women in promoting entrepreneurship and trade development, workshops and training on enhancing entrepreneurial skills and launching business start-ups were held in districts of the Rasht region and were attended by more than 300 women and girls.
  - As part of a project on generating income, a series of training courses on business education for rural women was launched with the international humanitarian organization Good Neighbors in order to help the most vulnerable segments of the population. The project provided interest-free loans totalling 3,900,000 somoni to 390 rural women to develop their small business skills.
  - In cooperation with the civil society organization Gender and Development and with the participation of the State Committee on Land Management and Geodesy and the Tax Committee, in 2022 the Committee on Women and the Family launched a study on "Women's economic rights and opportunities in Tajikistan: barriers and prospects". The purpose of the study is to identify barriers to gender equality in the economy and to develop recommendations to broaden economic opportunities for women.
228. In cooperation with UN-Women, an analysis was done and proposals were made for mainstreaming gender in the strategy for the development of a green economy in Tajikistan.

229. Since July 2018, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in collaboration with the local khukumat of Khatlon province, has implemented a project to invest in startups and emerging agribusinesses, providing Tajik entrepreneurs with the resources they need to better manage their businesses. In addition, USAID has focused on identifying and addressing gender inequalities in the business sector in order to promote sustainable economic results. To date, USAID has helped provide more than \$1.5 million in private capital to agribusinesses in the dairy and horticulture industries, and has assisted approximately 18,000 entrepreneurs, 40 per cent of whom are women with businesses of varying sizes.

230. In 2022 this project on agribusiness competitiveness in Tajikistan produced a book of photographs under the title “Pioneers: 15 Fearless Women”, which recognized women entrepreneurs from Khatlon province for their outstanding efforts to improve agribusiness and stimulate sustainable economic growth in Tajikistan. The book features 15 women leaders who own and manage businesses across the agribusiness sector in Khatlon province. These entrepreneurs are bold leaders who engage in the production, sale and export of products in the traditionally male-dominated agribusiness sector. The book tells the story of their commitment to their businesses and showcases female role models who inspire other women to take advantage of the new economic opportunities available in the growing agribusiness sector in Tajikistan. By highlighting their work on addressing gender inequality in the private sector, the publication has helped inspire other women to act as role models in promoting a change towards inclusive development in Tajikistan.

## **Q. Disadvantaged groups of women**

### **Paragraph 44 of the concluding observations**

#### *Migrant workers and their family members*

231. The Government undertakes certain measures in the area of labour migration that are being implemented in accordance with the Migration Act and the national development strategy for the period to 2030. This national strategy provides that these measures will be primarily aimed at streamlining labour migration processes by optimizing the benefits of organized labour migration and improving social and legal support for migrant workers in Tajikistan and abroad.

232. The national development strategy of Tajikistan to 2030 considers external labour migration under the strategic development goal of expanding productive employment. In particular, the national development strategy includes a plan to diversify external labour migration, with a gender-sensitive approach, and to strengthen State regulation of the process for returning migrant workers.

233. The medium-term development programme for 2016–2020 also aimed to reduce the country’s dependence on remittances from migrant workers.

234. Most labour migration from Tajikistan involves men. The areas of employment in which migrants from Tajikistan are in demand in Russia and Kazakhstan are construction (59 per cent), commerce and services (17 per cent), manufacturing (5 per cent), and transport and communications (5 per cent).

235. There has been an increase in migration by women, which accounts for about 15 per cent of the total. Women work more often in commercial and services jobs, for cleaning services and as domestic workers.

236. The Government has also begun to pay attention to the development of gender-sensitive approaches to migrant labour issues. Research in Tajikistan on the status of respect for the rights of female migrant workers in their countries of origin and

destination has helped to produce more reliable data on the challenges of female migrant labour. The research has demonstrated that female migrant labour has grown in Tajikistan in recent years. In that connection, a number of donor organizations working with the Government and relevant State agencies have set up a labour migration programme that has components on improving legislation in the area of labour migration to take account of gender specificities and providing a wider range of services for migrant workers and their family members, with due regard for gender at all stages of the migration cycle.

237. The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, in cooperation with an interdepartmental working group of representatives from relevant ministries and departments and international and civil society organizations, has developed a draft law on migration. The bill is aimed at strengthening the legal and regulatory framework governing labour migration, ensuring the effective and targeted use of labour within and outside the country, strengthening the protection of State interests, upholding the rights and freedoms of labour migrants, preventing illegal labour migration, protecting the domestic labour market and reducing the impact of the social tensions to which labour migration gives rise. After receiving final approval from the ministries and competent departments, a new version of the bill was submitted to the Government for consideration in accordance with established procedure. At present, the Government of Tajikistan has returned this bill for revision and it is under consideration by specialists and experts.

238. On instructions from the Government of Tajikistan, an inter-agency working group was created to develop a draft national migration strategy for the period to 2040 in order to effectively implement the State policy of Tajikistan on migration and ensure State management of migration processes as well as social and legal protection of migrants and their families, institutional development, and the effective use of migration in the socioeconomic and innovative development of the country. The draft strategy and corresponding plan of action were prepared on the basis of proposals from the relevant ministries and departments and have now been sent to the appropriate ministries and departments for final approval. A gender analysis of the strategy was conducted in conjunction with UN-Women and related proposals were made.

239. On instructions from the Government of Tajikistan, a working group was created to prepare a draft decision to establish a fund to protect the rights of and provide support for migrant workers and their families, with the aim of financing the costs of providing legal and social protection as well as financial assistance to citizens who are subjected to violence, forced labour and discrimination, or violation of labour and other rights, or who are caught in a difficult financial situation and left without documents or means of livelihood while working abroad.

240. In view of the fact that the main destination country for migrant workers is Russia, Tajikistan and Russia signed an Agreement on Pensions in 2021, and in April 2022 the Agreement was ratified by Tajikistan.

241. In addition to the bilateral Agreement, there are also provisions in the legislation of Tajikistan regulating the procedure for receiving pensions. Article 82 of the Act on pensions for citizens of Tajikistan states that pensions for citizens who worked outside the country are calculated on the basis of wages (income) on which social insurance contributions were paid. Article 63 of the Act states that the pensionable service of migrant workers includes their activities outside the country, provided that they make social insurance contributions on the income from such activities.

242. The Tax Code of Tajikistan states that migrant workers are entitled to apply in writing to the tax authority at their place of residence and voluntarily become payers of social tax, which they then pay in the amount and manner prescribed by law. The

procedure for calculating the pensions of citizens who worked outside Tajikistan must be established by the Government of Tajikistan. The legislation therefore stipulates guarantees and procedures for migrants to receive pensions, and this issue has also begun to be regulated by agreements between States.

243. For this category of citizen, the State programme to promote employment for the period 2020–2022 provides for job creation, mediation in the labour market, professional development and social support, as well as the development of individual entrepreneurship. The programme also provides for the expansion of awareness-raising among unemployed migrant workers on matters of employment promotion.

244. Under the Act on the promotion of employment, returned migrant workers receive consultancy services and financial assistance to start a business. In the section on financial assistance, the Act provides for funding to be provided for unemployed citizens who are registered with labour and employment agencies to organize and engage in entrepreneurial activities, on the condition that the funds will be repaid. The legislation also provides for the following types of consulting services: legal advice; psychological support; tips on how to organize entrepreneurship; familiarization with laws and regulations on the organization of entrepreneurial activity; and information on other entities that deal with the development of entrepreneurship. The legislation also sets out in detail the conditions for receiving such services.

245. In order to minimize the risks of dependence on a single destination country, the Government is taking appropriate measures to diversify labour migration. To that end, in order to further cooperation in the area of labour and vocational education, a decision was adopted on 13 September 2021 on a draft memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Cooperation, Labour and Social Welfare of the Islamic Republic of Iran on cooperation in the area of labour and vocational education.

#### *Poverty reduction*

246. The implementation of economic and social reforms, strategic documents and various sectoral programmes to ensure economic and social stability in the country have enabled high rates of economic development. In the period 2000–2020, the average annual increase in gross domestic product was 7.5 per cent, which helped to reduce poverty from 83 per cent in 1999 to 26.3 per cent in 2020.

247. According to data from the Statistics Agency under the Office of the President, social security expenditures in Tajikistan amounted to more than 4.1 billion somoni, with social insurance and the pension system accounting for approximately 80 per cent of expenditures.

248. The social protection system in Tajikistan consists mainly of programmes to promote employment and provide targeted social assistance, social services, State social guarantees, social insurance, pensions and other benefits.

249. Women covered by State social insurance and engaged in formal employment are paid maternity benefits, lump sum childbirth benefits and monthly child care benefits during maternity leave. One-time childbirth allowances and monthly child care allowances may be paid to the mother or father of the child or their substitutes. The lump-sum childbirth allowance is paid once in the amount of three times the unit of calculation (192 somoni; one unit of calculation is 64 somoni), and at the rate of two units of calculation (128 somoni) on the birth of the second child and one unit of calculation (64 somoni) on the birth of the third child and subsequent children.

250. On 1 January 2011, Tajikistan introduced a new system of social assistance for poor families through the allocation and payment of targeted social benefits using



special indicators to assess individuals' and families' needs for social assistance. On 24 February 2017, the Targeted Social Assistance Act was adopted. Targeted social assistance is the provision of monetary or material assistance to low-income citizens and families. Measures for social support to low-income families and needy segments of the population are implemented by the State agency for social protection of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, together with local executive bodies of administrative authority. Low-income citizens (families) whose minimum income is below the means test threshold are eligible for targeted social assistance. A number of indicators are taken into account to determine the level of well-being of poor citizens (families), including family composition, social status and education level of the head of the household; number of minors and family members with disabilities; income of low-income citizens (families) in terms of money or goods; property of low-income citizens (families); and condition of housing. When allocating targeted social benefits taking into account the assessed standard of living, priority is given to families in which two or more members have disabilities and single parents raising a child with a disability. The procedure for allocation, financing and payment of targeted social benefits to low-income families and citizens was approved by Government decision No. 271 of 14 May 2020. Under this procedure, the amount of the targeted social benefit per family (citizen) for 2022 is 512 somoni per year, which is paid in quarterly payments of 128 somoni. Since 1 July 2020, a pilot mechanism for the allocation and payment of targeted social benefits has been implemented in all 68 cities and districts of Tajikistan. More than 15 per cent of households receive these benefits.

251. By Government decision No. 27 of 14 May 2020 on launching of the mechanism for allocation and payment of social benefits in the Republic of Tajikistan, low-income families in all cities and districts of Tajikistan are allocated and paid compensation for the use of electricity. In addition, as part of the implementation of this decision, there are plans to pay compensation for electricity use to women heads of family who are in difficult living situations in rural areas.

#### *Women with disabilities*

252. There were 149,709 persons with disabilities registered in Tajikistan in 2020. In 2021 there were 157,933 persons with disabilities, of whom 50,200 (32 per cent) were women. There were 31,801 children with disabilities (20 per cent of the total number of persons with disabilities), 13,038 (41 per cent) of whom were girls. In 2022 there are 158,423 persons with disabilities, of whom 50,604 (32 per cent) are women. There are 31,913 children with disabilities (20 per cent), of whom 13,148 (41 per cent) are girls.

253. Article 39 of the Constitution guarantees everyone social security in old age, in case of illness, disability, loss of ability to work or loss of a breadwinner, and in other cases determined by law. Guarantees of protection, upbringing and education for orphans and children with disabilities are enshrined in the Constitution of Tajikistan (article 34). The Act on equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination includes a prohibition against discrimination on the basis of disability and health status.

254. Tajikistan has an Act on social protection for persons with disabilities of 29 December 2010, which defines the legal, economic and organizational basis for the social protection of persons with disabilities and equal opportunities for livelihoods and integration into society.

255. The Labour Code of 2016 contains a separate chapter – chapter 24 – with special provisions regulating the labour of persons with disabilities and setting forth labour benefits and guarantees for persons with disabilities (hiring, termination of

employment contract, extended work leave and reduced working hours, among others) and guarantees for women and other persons with family responsibilities who have a disabled child under 18 years of age. Everyone is guaranteed equal pay for equal work.

256. Chapter 25 of the Health Code covers the provision of medical and social assistance to persons suffering from mental disorders. By law, only the court can certify that a person suffering from mental disorders is legally incompetent, on the basis of and according to the procedure established by the legislation of Tajikistan.

257. The Urban Building Code of 2012 (articles 4 and 64) requires that the needs of persons with disabilities be taken into account in the construction of housing and other facilities.

258. In order to provide social support to vulnerable segments of society, financial support for them is gradually being increased as well. By a Government decision of 1 September 2020, there was a 50 per cent increase in the pensions of persons with disabilities under 18 years of age and the pensions of persons with disabilities who are not working and who require care and have been allocated a social pension under the Act on the provision of pensions to citizens of Tajikistan. This measure improved the social situation of almost 30,000 pensioners.

259. In order to improve the social conditions of the country's pensioners, the minimum and maximum retirement pensions have been increased by 15 per cent since 1 September 2020.

260. With the aim of continuing to take further measures of this kind, since 1 September 2021 there has been a 20 per cent increase in pensions awarded to persons with disabilities from childhood on the basis of the Act on the provision of pensions to citizens of Tajikistan and the Act on insurance and State pensions.

261. Effective 1 July 2022, the current amount of pensions for orphans and individuals left without a guardian was increased by 25 per cent of the minimum retirement pension.

262. Pensions for persons with disabilities are guaranteed under the Act on insurance and State pensions. In 2020, amendments and additions were made to the Act on insurance and State pensions to provide that the length of service in allocating an insurance pension includes time spent caring for a child with a disability under 18 years of age who needs nursing care.

263. Government decision No. 58 of 26 February 2022 approved the procedure for providing assistance to citizens of Tajikistan in obtaining medical and prosthetic-orthopaedic care in other countries. Such assistance may be provided from the State budget to beneficiaries on the list of groups in Tajikistan who are entitled to receive free medical services based on their social status and medical conditions, upon presentation of documents confirming their entitlement.

264. Government decision No. 60 of 26 February 2022 approved the procedure for providing medicines free of charge to persons with or exposed to tuberculosis under outpatient care for the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis.

265. In 2016, a national rehabilitation programme for persons with disabilities for the period 2017–2020 was approved, facilitating the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

266. In 2021, a State programme on accessibility was adopted for the period 2021–2025 with the aim of ensuring full access to social and transport safety facilities for persons with disabilities.

267. In the State programme to promote employment for the period 2020–2022, persons with disabilities are listed as a vulnerable category of the population.

268. At State-run special vocational schools for persons with disabilities of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, persons with disabilities have the opportunity to receive basic vocational education in various specializations.

269. In June 2022, the United Nations-European Union Spotlight Initiative conducted a three-day course in six pilot districts of Tajikistan for staff of community-based organizations that provide services to women and girls with disabilities, to train them in handling cases of violence and responding to gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities.

270. In July 2022, the Spotlight Initiative conducted a three-day training course for 22 physicians with different specializations (forensic medical experts and obstetricians-gynaecologists) on improving the quality of, access to and use of gender-based violence response services for women and girls with disabilities in six pilot districts.

#### *Women prisoners and former inmates*

271. The legal policy framework of Tajikistan for the period 2018–2028 contains items on the organization of an effective system for enforcement of criminal punishment and genuine social rehabilitation of persons released from prison.

272. A strategy for reform of the penal system of Tajikistan for the period to 2030 was approved by Government decision No. 385 of 25 June 2020. The objectives of the strategy are to raise the effectiveness of penal institutions and entities to a level that meets international standards; reduce recidivism by increasing the effectiveness of social and psychological work in prisons and developing a system of post-penitentiary assistance for released individuals; ensure humane conditions of detention for pretrial detainees and inmates serving their sentences in detention, and conduct educational, training and labour activities related to the employment of convicts serving their sentences without detention, and enhance guarantees of their rights and legitimate interests.

273. The Ministry of Justice has a working group to develop draft legislation on probation. Alternatives to incarceration offer an effective solution to global challenges, including prison overcrowding and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

274. On instructions from the Government, the Ministry of Justice is developing a programme for the period to 2030 on vocational training and job placement for inmates of the penal system and persons released from prison.

275. Since 2013, a working and monitoring group that reports to the Commissioner for Human Rights has been monitoring places of detention and penal institutions. The monitoring group includes representatives of the Commissioner for Human Rights and civic organizations, namely, members of the civil society organization Coalition against Torture.

276. Since 2014, the monitoring group has conducted 93 checks of closed and semi-closed institutions, in particular, three checks of penal institutions where women serve their sentences.

277. Under the work plan of the Commissioner for Human Rights, the activities of the women's correctional facility are also inspected annually. The monitoring focuses on ensuring respect for the rights of women offenders in accordance with the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders. In the course of these monitoring activities, awareness-raising

sessions are held for female inmates and staff of institutions to explain the rights of women serving sentences and international and national standards for the treatment of female offenders.

278. Based on the results of the monitoring, relevant recommendations are made to improve the conditions of women serving sentences.

279. Since 2018, the Commissioner for Children's Rights has been conducting similar monitoring of institutions for children.

280. An amnesty was announced in Tajikistan in 2019 that applied to some 9,800 persons in penitentiaries. In September 2021, in honour of the thirtieth anniversary of State independence of Tajikistan, another Amnesty Act was adopted that applied to almost 16,000 persons, including about 11,000 prisoners.

281. Over a five-year period (2015–2019), 670 women served their sentences in correctional facilities of the Department of Corrections of the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan. During the same period, 323 of them were released pursuant to the Amnesty Act.

282. Former inmates receive assistance by being registered as unemployed and receiving an unemployment benefit of 600 somoni per month (the minimum wage in Tajikistan) for three months. Former inmates may receive free vocational education in State-run adult education centres. They can take vocational courses in several specializations and receive an official certificate upon completing the course.

283. As part of a project on improving access to social, economic and cultural rights for convicts and ex-convicts in Tajikistan, funded by the European Union and implemented in close cooperation with the Department of Corrections of the Ministry of Justice, educational activities were organized 2020–2022 that reached over 600 prisoners in penal institutions in the city of Nurek and the district of Yavan, and assistance was provided to 1,100 ex-convicts who faced difficulties in re-establishing their social and economic lives following their release from prison. In January 2021, 10 women at correctional institution 3/8 in Nurek successfully completed the pastry chef course and received State certificates. The vocational courses were organized as part of the project on improving access to social, economic and cultural rights for convicts and ex-convicts administered by the civil society organization Jakhon in close cooperation with the State centre for adult education, which provides teachers for vocational courses.

284. Some female ex-convicts receive Presidential grants and start their own businesses, for which they then hire other female ex-convicts.

#### *Protecting women's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic*

285. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the national headquarters for strengthening anti-epidemic measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Tajikistan, headed by the Prime Minister, was established by Presidential decree on 18 March 2020.

286. The Act on the State budget of Tajikistan for 2020 was amended and financing of the health sector was increased by 1.6 billion somoni (the approved budget for the sector was 1.8 billion somoni) for a total of 3.4 billion somoni. The Ministry of Health and Social Protection received additional funding from other sources, including 13.4 million somoni from the Government contingency fund, 12.4 million somoni from the Presidential reserve fund, 18.7 million somoni from the funding allocated to combat COVID-19 and 9.5 million somoni from the centralized financial assistance account.

287. No quarantine was ordered in Tajikistan to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection in the country. People were advised to wear masks, practice social distancing and follow sanitary and epidemiological rules, movement by land and air transport was restricted, and weddings and events involving large gatherings of people were temporarily restricted. Temporary vacations were declared in schools starting on 25 April 2020.

288. In June 2020, Presidential decree No. 1544 on preventing the impact of COVID-19 on the socioeconomic spheres of Tajikistan was issued. Tax vacations and tax incentives were provided for business entities and vulnerable groups. A plan of action was adopted by the Government of Tajikistan to mitigate the impact of potential risks of a COVID-19 pandemic on the national economy.

289. In 2020, penalties were added to the Criminal Code for intentionally spreading infectious diseases, and amendments and additions to the Code of Administrative Offences punish the failure to maintain social distance or to wear a mask in public places.

290. Information about the disease, precautions, social distancing and wearing masks, among other topics, was shared with the general public through the mass media, the official website of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection [www.moh.tj](http://www.moh.tj) and an associated website [www.covid.tj](http://www.covid.tj), the website of the National Centre for Healthy Lifestyles [www.zoj.tj](http://www.zoj.tj) and the hotlines 311 and 511.

291. Socioeconomic and psychological factors and crowding of people in tight quarters due to self-isolation increased the risk of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data and statistics from crisis centres show an increase in domestic violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic.

292. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to raise awareness among women, prevent violence and protect their rights, extensive outreach and information work with women and families was carried out in Tajikistan in cooperation with United Nations agencies. The Committee on Women and the Family, together with other ministries and departments, conducted a series of events with different segments of society to prevent domestic violence during the pandemic, and public service videos on preventing COVID-19 as well as domestic violence were prepared and shown. Booklets, brochures and other material on these issues were prepared and published.

293. The Committee on Women and the Family operates a hotline, 1313, at the Resource Centre for Gender Equality and Prevention of Domestic Violence, in cooperation with the civil society organization Eurasia Foundation. During the exigent circumstances of the pandemic, the hotline switched to 24/7 mode.

294. In 2019, 1,591 people contacted the hotline, 86 per cent of whom were women. In 2020, 1,913 people used the hotline, 90 per cent of whom were women. In 2021, the hotline was in operation for only three months (owing to the completion of the project). During those three months, 390 people used the hotline, 85 per cent of whom were women. The hotline reopened in 2022 in cooperation with UNDP as part of the Spotlight Initiative. In the first nine months of 2022, 1,098 people used the hotline, 88 per cent of whom were women.

295. To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income and marginalized people, the President of Tajikistan ordered the allocation of funds to provide social assistance both from the State budget and from donor investments and grant funds from the World Bank.

296. The Committee on Women and the Family and UN-Women, through the Spotlight Initiative, have invested in using existing structures, such as the Red

Crescent Society of Tajikistan and its work with volunteers in emergency and COVID-19 pandemic settings, to strengthen work with victims of sexual and gender-based violence and encourage help-seeking. This was done by building the basic capacity of 120 Red Crescent Society volunteers to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. A total of 120 Red Crescent volunteers reached 596,000 people through outreach events and in-home counselling on COVID-19 prevention and where to find support in case of violence.

## **R. Marriage and family**

### **Paragraph 46 of the concluding observations**

297. According to official statistics from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan, under articles 168 and 169 of the Criminal Code it is a criminal offence to give underage girls in marriage. In 2019, 25 citizens were prosecuted for this offence; in 2020, 23 cases were prosecuted; in 2021, 27 cases were prosecuted; and in the first half of 2022, 12 cases were prosecuted. With respect to concluding a prenuptial agreement with a person under the age of marriage, 23 cases were recorded in 2017, 13 cases in 2018, 13 cases in 2019, 22 cases in 2020 and 18 cases in 2021, and in the first half of 2022 there were 13 cases.

298. A policy paper on family development in Tajikistan was adopted that sets out the State policy for strengthening the foundations of the family as an important social institution and a fundamental pillar of society.

299. The State Civil Registration Act provides for State registration of marriages in order to protect the property rights and personal non-property rights of citizens.

300. Under the Family Code of Tajikistan, a marriage is recognized only when it is concluded at a State civil registry office. A marriage performed in a religious ceremony has no legal effect.

301. The Committee on Women and the Family and other relevant agencies are conducting extensive education on the negative effects of early marriage on the health and well-being of women and girls, the official registration of marriages and the prevention of bigamy and polygamy. The departments and branches of the State civil registry offices in the cities and districts of Tajikistan, together with the relevant local executive authorities, regularly organize events to raise public awareness. The provisions of the Family Code and the State Civil Registration Act aimed at protecting the property rights and personal non-property rights of women and children are explained at these events.

302. In 2021, State civil registry offices registered 38,326 paternity claims, of which 37,435 were made on the basis of a joint application by a father and mother who were not married at the time of their child's birth, 726 on the basis of a court order and 105 on the basis of an application by a father who was not married to the mother at the time of the child's birth.

303. One of the documents required for the registration of marriages, in accordance with article 35 of the State Civil Registration Act and article 15 of the Family Code, is a document certifying that the persons entering into marriage have undergone a compulsory medical check-up. Practice shows that the results from medical examinations indicate cases where persons entering into marriage have infectious diseases, as well as HIV and AIDS, which allows the parties to be informed in advance about each other's health status.

304. Civil registration offices in cities and districts and marriage centres in Dushanbe and Khujand conduct ongoing explanatory work with the general public, especially

newlyweds, and organize meetings and other events on various topics, including family knowledge, family of the year, spouse of the year, model family, and preventing marriages between blood relatives and their consequences. Events are held annually on the eve of International Day of the Family (May 15) in all cities and regions, on the direct initiative of civil registration entities.

305. In order to raise the awareness of young people about family life, family culture was added as a core subject for the tenth grade in educational institutions and the culture of family relationships and housekeeping was added as an additional subject.

## **S. Ratification of other treaties**

### **Paragraph 50 of the concluding observations**

306. In order to promote the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Tajikistan, the following activities were carried out:

- On 22 March 2018, President Emomali Rahmon signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- In 2020, a national plan of action (road map) for ratification and implementation of the Convention was approved.
- On 27 February 2020, the Government approved a national plan of action to prepare Tajikistan for the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- In order to prepare Tajikistan for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a State programme on accessibility for 2021–2025 and a related plan of action were approved by the Government on 27 February 2021.