

Gender Equality in Armenia: Challenges and Progress in Labor and Reproductive Rights



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Situation in Armenia

Issue 1: Gender Equality Strategy is on Hold

The previous Gender Equality strategy covered the period from 2019 to 2023 and.

As of February 2025, the state has not adopted a new needs-based GE strategy draft was developed with significant input from civil society organizations.



RECOMMENDATION

Issue 1: Gender Equality Strategy is on Hold

We recommend the Armenian Government to:

- Immediately adapt and implement Gender Equality Strategy for 2024–2028.***

Situation in Armenia

Issue 2: Labor rights

During previous cycle, Luxembourg and Germany recommended that Armenia define and penalize sexual harassment, and the state accepted these recommendations.

In 2023 **amendment to the Labor Code** were adopted, defining and banning sexual harassment at workplace. While this was a step forward, gaps in enforcement and implementation persist.

The **Labor Code fails to fully incorporate the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.** Additionally, **no government body is designated to enforce gender equality in employment**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue 2: Labor rights

We recommend the state to:

- 1. Amend the Labor Code** to establish mandatory requirements for large employers to implement sexual harassment prevention policies
- 2. Designate a state body** responsible for addressing workplace discrimination and harassment and ensure access to legal redress and compensation for victims of workplace harassment.
- 3. Guarantee the principle of equal pay for work of equal value** by implementing a state-led job evaluation mechanism.

Situation in Armenia

Issue 3: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

During its third UPR cycle, Armenia accepted **Iceland's recommendation** to introduce comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools

However, implementation has been hindered by cultural resistance and lack of political will. The existing "Healthy Lifestyle" course includes some sexual health topics but follows an abstinence-only framework, limiting its effectiveness.

Armenia also accepted **Estonia's recommendation**, to ensure well-funded and accessible reproductive services

But in reality childbirth promotion policies only exist and funding disparities persist.

Access to abortion care is still problematic. Rural women face additional barriers, including limited medical facilities for abortion access and mandatory three-day waiting period which means they must travel to the abortion facilities twice or even more.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue 3: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

We recommend the state to:

1. Amend abortion regulations to remove the three-day mandatory waiting period and mandatory counseling and align abortion care services with the WHO standards.
2. Introduce state budget line for modern contraceptives, ensuring full availability within the upcoming two years.
3. Ensure evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education nationwide.



THANK YOU!

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