

STATEMENT
UPR Pre-session on Hungary
2021

Delivered by NANE Women's Rights Association, PATENT (People Opposing Patriarchy) Association and Hungarian Women's Lobby

This statement is made on behalf of NANE Women's Rights Association, PATENT Association and the Hungarian Women's Lobby. It covers three areas: (1) promoting women's rights; (2) violence against women; and (3) sexual and reproductive health and rights.

1) Promoting women's rights

In the last UPR cycle Hungary got several recommendations, but failed to fully implement them.

An Action Plan was adopted "to strengthen women's role in the family and in society", but it does not cover key policy fields, such as equality education or violence.

No improvement has been made on the low rate of women in Parliament; while sexist hate speech is present, even at the highest political level.

We therefore recommend that Hungary:

- adopt a national strategy that covers all policy fields of women's rights;
- ensure that the family-centred approach does not restrict the realisation of women's rights;
- improve women's political participation by targeted measures, and
- step up against sexist and misogynistic hate speech.

2) Violence against women

Despite UPR recommendations, Hungary has not ratified the Istanbul Convention. The state openly refuses it, while the response to violence is lagging behind in prevention, victim protection, prosecution and policies alike. This results in a high rate of femicides. Disregarding history of abuse in child custody and visitation decisions also led to the murder of children in the past years. Certain forms of violence - such as sexual violence - are not or insufficiently addressed by policies and services. Victim-blaming among first line professionals is frequent.

We recommend that the state:

- ratify the Istanbul Convention without delay, and introduce all necessary measures for prevention, protection and prosecution of violence, through a respective action plan;
- improve the response of professionals through adequate trainings and protocols; and

- adopt measures for the forms of violence against women that have not been duly addressed.

3) Sexual and reproductive health and rights

At the intersection of violence and reproductive rights, birthing violence is still rampant: hospitals perform medical interventions without the mother's consent or even against her explicit will. Women and girls in prostitution experience violence and violation of their sexual and reproductive rights on a daily basis, both in this country and other, destination countries of trafficking.

We recommend that the state

- improve care services for victims and accountability mechanisms for their access to justice.

Hungary is among the few EU countries that still require a prescription for emergency contraception. In practice, women report increasingly complicated access to prescriptions and hardships to pay the pill's high price.

We recommend to

- provide the emergency contraception over the counter, or at least through a readily available prescription; and
- lower and/or subsidize its price.

Only surgical abortion is available in the country. The abortion pill - that the WHO declared safe and acceptable - is still not allowed. Furthermore, abortion is conditional to two compulsory counselling sessions. The first aims by law to dissuade women from terminating their pregnancy. In practice often misinformation is provided, women are humiliated and face manipulation.

We recommend that the state

- grant access to medical abortion; and
- abolish compulsory counselling, or altering it with scientifically correct and objective information to support women's informed decision.

Thank you very much for your attention.