

Issue Analysis

- Women's rights - Sessions 1-8

Women's rights have been a prominent issue in the first eight sessions of the UPR: out of all 3540 advanced questions, **451** related to the topic, and out of 12384 recommendations, **2081** pointed to the need of enhancing the status of women (almost 17% of the total). Among the states who posed more questions, the **Netherlands** and the **United Kingdom** stand out as the first, with 73 and 69 questions respectively. The top recommending states on women rights are **Slovenia** (99 recommendations), **Canada** (98 recommendations) and **Norway** (84 recommendations).

Top 5 States posing advance written questions on this issue

1. **Netherlands**: 73 questions
2. **United Kingdom**: 69 questions
3. **Argentina**: 61 questions
4. **Denmark**: 45 questions
5. **Sweden**: 38 questions

Top 5 States making recommendations on this issue

1. **Slovenia**: 99 recommendations
2. **Canada**: 98 recommendations
3. **Norway**: 84 recommendations
4. **Netherlands**: 74 recommendations
5. **Mexico**: 70 recommendations

An analysis of the recommendations will show that states are for the most part more inclined to suggest general actions regarding women's rights (**984 recommendations fall into the category "general action"**). Recommendations falling in the categories "specific action" and "continuing action" followed, 536 and 382 respectively. Lastly we find 156 recommendations under the category "considering action" and 22 under "minimal action". Recommendations generally range from very broad statements like "*Continue with appropriate measures to eradicate discrimination and violence against women*"¹ to more specific ones as "*Accompany the policy of setting up provincial committees with sensitization campaigns against gender-*

¹ Recommendation made by New Zealand to Pakistan

based violence and discrimination to better prevent the voluntary recruitment of children in armed groups”².

Recommendations by category of action

Category of Action	No. Recommendations	Top recommending countries
General action	984	Slovenia: 57
		Canada/Norway: 48
Specific action	536	Spain: 33
		Slovenia: 32
Continuing action	382	Algeria: 29
		Bangladesh: 14
Considering action	156	Brazil: 21
		Malaysia: 16
Minimal action	22	Algeria: 4
		Bangladesh: 2

Questions and recommendations on women’s rights focused on a number of issues, out of which we will concentrate on **violence against women, discrimination, international instruments and treaty bodies**.

Advanced questions – by topic

1. **Violence:** 224 questions
2. **Discrimination:** 81 questions
3. **Treaty Bodies:** 57 questions
4. **International Instruments:** 26 questions

Recommendations – by topic

1. **Violence:** 730 recommendations
2. **Discrimination:** 284 recommendations
3. **International Instruments:** 165 recommendations
4. **Treaty Bodies:** 30 recommendations

Violence against women

The issue of violence against women was by far the most prominent one on recommendations made by countries on women’s rights, **representing 730 of all 2081 recommendations**. It was also extensively brought up in advanced questions, being the subject of 224 questions.

Within violence, the issue that received the more attention was **domestic violence, with 224 recommendations addressing the issue**. Domestic violence was followed by Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and rape, with 108 and 50 recommendations respectively. The issue of sexual violence in a more general sense was also relevant, with 49 recommendations addressing it.

² Recommendation made by Spain to Democratic Republic of Congo

The **Netherlands** were the country to ask more **questions** regarding violence against women in the UPR process, 43 out of 224 questions. The **United Kingdom** comes next with 34 questions, followed by Argentina with 26.

Advanced questions – violence against women

1. Netherlands: 43 questions
2. United Kingdom: 34 questions
3. Argentina: 26 questions
4. Sweden: 25 questions
5. Denmark: 23 questions

The countries that made the most **recommendations tackling violence against women** were the **Netherlands** and **Canada**, with 38 and 36 recommendations, respectively. They were followed by Slovenia, with 35 recommendations and Norway, with 32. Examples of recommendations include *“Reinforce policies to tackle domestic and sexual violence against women and girls in accordance with international human rights standards”* and *“Enact legislation on domestic violence as a matter of priority and increase access to justice for victims of such violations”*.

Violence against women – Top recommending states

1. Netherlands: 38 recommendations
2. Canada: 36 recommendations
3. Slovenia: 35 recommendations
4. Norway: 32 recommendations
5. France: 30 recommendations

Discrimination

Discrimination against women was also extensively brought up by questions and recommendations on women’s rights. In total, **81 questions and 284 recommendations were made on the subject**. The states who asked more question about discrimination were Argentina, with 12 questions and Czech Republic with 11. Mexico and United Kingdom were the top recommending states on discrimination against women, with 20 and 16 recommendations, respectively. Some recommendations mentioned *“repealing the discriminatory practices in the inheritance laws”* and gave incentive to *“efforts to promote gender equality, equal treatment and non-discrimination”*, among other issues.

Advanced questions – Discrimination against women

1. Argentina: 12 questions
2. Czech Republic: 11 questions
3. Germany: 10 questions

4. Denmark: 8 questions
5. United Kingdom: 8 questions

Discrimination against women – Top recommending states

1. Mexico: 20 recommendations
2. United Kingdom: 16 recommendations
3. Czech Republic: 15 recommendations
4. Brazil: 14 recommendations
5. France: 14 recommendations

On the topic of discrimination against women, it is worth highlighting the issues of **discrimination on the labor market**, which was approached by 20 recommendations, and **discrimination of migrant women**, with 14 recommendations.

International Instruments

Another prevalent topic on the issue of women's rights, **international instruments were the subject of 165 recommendations and 26 advanced questions**. Most of the questions and recommendations are aimed at encouraging states to ratify important Conventions like CEDAW, removing reservations that may impair women's rights and incorporating provisions from international instruments fully in domestic law. In fact, **89 of 165 recommendations asked SuR to consider ratification of international instruments**, and 34 asked for the removal of existing reservations. Recommendations were in the lines of *"ratifying the Optional Protocol to CEDAW and the Optional Protocols to CRC"* and *"Continue to incorporate CEDAW principles into its domestic legislation"*. Brazil and Spain were the top recommending countries on the issue of international instruments, with 19 and 15 recommendations; the Netherlands were the country to ask more questions on the issue, 7 of them, followed by Norway with 5.

Advanced questions – International Instruments

1. Netherlands: 7 questions
2. Norway: 5 questions
3. Denmark: 4 questions
4. Sweden: 4 questions
5. United Kingdom: 4 questions

International Instruments – Top recommending states

1. Brazil: 19 recommendations
2. Spain: 15 recommendations
3. Slovenia: 13 recommendations
4. Canada: 11 recommendations
5. Argentina: 10 recommendations

Treaty Bodies

Although not as prominently as the other issues presented, recommendations and questions regarding treaty bodies also featured in a significant way. There were in total **57 questions and 30 recommendations**, mostly advising countries to implement recommendations issued by treaty bodies, particularly the Committee for Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Examples of relevant recommendations included *“Continue to implement the recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and on a regular basis submit the relevant reports for its consideration”* and *“Prioritize action on the recommendations of different treaty bodies”*, among others. Argentina was the country that asked more questions on issue, 19, followed by Germany with 7. Though no country stands out as the sole major recommending, it was Mexico that issued the most recommendations on the subject, four of them.

Advanced questions – Treaty Bodies

1. Argentina: 19 questions
2. Germany: 7 questions
3. Liechtenstein: 6 questions
4. Sweden: 9 questions

Treaty Bodies – Top recommending states

1. Mexico: 4 recommendations
2. Algeria: 2 recommendations
3. Israel: 2 recommendations
4. Portugal: 2 recommendations

UPR facts: Education for women and girls also featured significantly in the recommendations, though no questions were asked on the subject. In total, **68 recommendations on women’s rights approached the need for enhancing education among women and girls.** Algeria was the country that most issued recommendations on education, 12 of them. Following Algeria, it is Egypt, Norway and Portugal, with three recommendations each. Enhancing political participation of women in all spheres, as well in other sectors of society, ending sexual trafficking and general inequality between men and women were also some of the other topics related to women’s rights that were intensely discussed during the UPR process