

OAFLMUN'26

STUDY GUIDE

UNWOMEN

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1. Letters

1.1. Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Participants of OAFLMUN'26,

It is my pleasure to announce OAFLMUN'26. First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has given their utmost effort in organising this conference. As the Secretary-General of this conference, I am truly delighted and honoured to welcome you all. Our conference will be held at Özkent Akbilek Science High School from April 24th to April 26th.

Allow me to briefly introduce myself. My name is Ecrin İrem Gültop, and I am currently an 11th-grade student at Özkent Akbilek Science High School. I have been participating in Model United Nations conferences since December 2022. Throughout these experiences, I have witnessed genuine friendships, effective crisis management, proper approaches to diplomacy, and, undoubtedly, true leadership. Now, it is my turn to help a new generation of participants experience these remarkable opportunities.

The 2026 edition of OAFLMUN will host the following committees: NATO, HCC, UNWOMEN, JCC, UNSC, UNICEF, UNODC, and DISEC. I look forward to welcoming you all to an unforgettable conference experience where diplomacy, leadership, and collaboration will truly come to life.

Yours sincerely,

Ecrin İrem Gültop

Secretary-General of OAFLMUN'26

1.2. Letter from the Under Secretary-General

My name is Uygur ERGENÇ, and I am a 11th-grade student at Jale Tezer Science High School.

I believe that MUN events are a truly wonderful activity, both for academic development and for fun. Now, regarding the worksheet. As most of you know this study guide contains very detailed information, the main thing you need to do and what I expect from you is to gain an understanding of Women Rights and current issues, and thoroughly research the challenges facing your own country.

The most important section of the study guide is the questions to be answered on page 38. Please do not hesitate to spend 1–2 hours on the study guide and help us have some productive couple of sessions..

If you have any questions or are unsure about the committee's procedures or content, please do not hesitate to reach out. I am here to assist you. Please do not forget to send me your position papers via any platform.

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1.3. Letter from the Academic Assistant

Distinguished Delegates,

I am honoured to serve as an academic assistant in this year's OAFLMUN for the UN Women Committee. My name is Utku Bakkaloğlu, and I am really excited to welcome you to our committee.

This will be my first time serving as an Academic Assistant in a MUN conference, which I am really looking forward to. While preparing this study guide with my Under-Secretary-General and friend Uygur Ergenç, I have learned a lot of things about the women's participation in the workforce and the journey that women fought for their rights throughout history. In this study guide, you will find very detailed information about the agenda item, including previous international actions, historical chronology, and even stances of the countries that you represent.

Lastly, if you have any questions regarding the rules of procedure or anything about our study guide in general, please feel free to contact me at my email, utkubakkaloglu@gmail.com.

Respectfully,

Utku Bakkaloğlu

2. Terminology and Key Words

Glass Ceiling:

An unacknowledged barrier to advancement in a profession, especially affecting women and members of minorities.

Gender Equality:

Gender equality means that women and men have the same rights, responsibilities, and opportunities. In the workplace, it means equal pay, equal chances for promotion, and fair treatment.

Gender Pay Gap:

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women. Globally, women earn about 20% less than men.

Labour Force Participation:

Labour force participation refers to the percentage of people who are working or actively looking for work. Women's participation is lower than men's in most countries.

Unpaid Care Work:

Unpaid care work includes activities like childcare, cooking, and cleaning. Women do most of this work, which limits their time for paid jobs.

Maternity Leave:

Maternity leave is time off work given to mothers after childbirth. It is important but can sometimes affect career growth.

Informal Employment:

Informal employment refers to jobs without legal protection, contracts, or social security. Many women work in this sector.

Gender Based Violence:

Gender-based violence includes harmful actions directed at women because of their gender. It can happen in workplaces.

Sustainable Development:

Sustainable development means improving living conditions without harming future generations. Gender equality is a key part of it.

3. Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women is a specialised United Nations agency tasked with advocating for the equal rights, delivering programmes, policies, and standards that uphold women's rights. (Wikipedia contributors, 2026)

In the year 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 63/311, aiming to consolidate the UN's splintered approach to women's rights, due to the work being split into four various offices before, which were the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), causing overlap of mandates and overextension of the organization's resources. Thus, Resolution 63/311 proposed merging four offices into one entity (UNGA Resolution 63/311, 2009).

After the adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 63/311, the Secretary-General of the time, Ban Ki-moon, released report A/64/588, entitled Comprehensive Proposal for the Composite Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Secretary-General decided in his report that, instead of entirely abolishing other organs of the UN system assigned to advocating gender equality and women's empowerment, the new agency's goal should be to enhance the focus and impact of activities related to gender equality within the United Nations system. (United Nations Digital Library, 2010)

Negotiations among UN member states, groups promoting women's rights, and civil society resulted in the unanimous adoption of resolution 62/289 by the United Nations General Assembly on 2 July 2010. Hence, UN Women was created by the consolidation of the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INTRAW), Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and

Advancement of Women (OSAGI), and UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (UNGA Resolution 64/289, 2010).

In the founding of the new specialised agency, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stated that he was “grateful to Member States for having taken this major step forward for the world's women and girls. UN Women will significantly boost UN efforts to promote gender equality, expand opportunity, and tackle discrimination around the globe.” (Wikipedia contributors, 2026)

3.1. Structure and Membership

According to Resolution 64/289, the UN Women entity shall be headed by an Under-Secretary-General, appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with member states for a term of four years. The entity is administered by a multi-layered intergovernmental governance body designated for providing normative and operational policy guidance. Since UN Women is a specialised agency within the UN System, it directly reports to the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), similar to other UN entities. UNGA, ECOSOC, and CSW are also a part of the structure for setting the guiding principles and operational policy guidance, in addition to the UN Women’s executive board. (UNGA Resolution 64/289, 2010)

The UN Women’s executive board comprises 41 members, elected by the Economic and Social Council for a term of three years. The members are distributed as follows:

Ten seats for the Group of African States

Ten seats for the Group of Asian States

Four seats for the Group of Eastern European States

Six seats for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States

Five seats for the Group of Western European and Other States

Six seats for contributing countries. Six of these seats are allocated for the selected countries from the top ten largest providers of voluntary core contributions to UN Women. The two remaining seats are assigned for two developing countries that are not members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for the Economic Co-operation and Development (DAC/OECD), also selected by developing countries not a party in the Development Assistance Committee. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2026)

UN Women’s required resources are allocated from its regular budget, which the UN General Assembly approves. In contrast, the budget for operational processes and other relevant

activities at all levels is acquired from voluntary contributions approved by the UN Women executive board. (UNGA Resolution 64/289, 2010)

Work is not just about money. Yes, people need income to survive, but work is also about something bigger than that it gives people a sense of who they are, a place in society, a reason to get up in the morning. When you have a job, you have independence. You can make your own decisions, support yourself, and participate in public and social life in ways that unemployed people often cannot. This might sound obvious, but it becomes a lot more complicated when you realise that access to all of this has never been equal. For most of human history, and still today in many parts of the world, a person's gender has had an enormous influence on whether they get to experience any of this at all.

Women work. They have always worked. But the kind of work women have traditionally done raising children, caring for elderly relatives, managing the home has almost never been counted as "real" work in economic terms. It does not show up in GDP figures. It does not come with a salary, a pension, or legal protections. And because it is invisible in these ways, the women who do it are also, in a sense, made invisible. They depend on others financially, they have less power in their households and communities, and they are far more vulnerable when things go wrong when a relationship ends, when a family member becomes ill, or when an economic crisis hits. The agenda item this committee is gathered to discuss sits right at the centre of all of this. Supporting and promoting women's participation in the working life is not a narrow technical topic. It is connected to almost every other major challenge the international community is currently trying to address poverty, inequality, climate, education, health, governance. You genuinely cannot make serious progress on any of those things while leaving half the world's population locked out of meaningful economic participation. That is not an exaggeration. It is just math.

3.2. Mandate

UN Women's mandate and functions come from the merged mandates and functions of the Division for the Advancement of Women, International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and UN Development Fund for Women. UN Women is responsible for leading, coordinating, and promoting the liability of the UN's effort for gender equality and empowerment of women. As stated in the Secretary-General's report A/64/588, UN Women's ambition is to boost the performance of the other bodies related to gender equality and women's empowerment, such as UNICEF, UNDP, and UNFPA. UN Women does not replace these aforementioned bodies, which will resume their agenda for equal rights for everybody, in accordance with their field. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2026)

In compliance with the resolution 64/289, UN Women’s work is within the UN Charter, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in conjunction with its 12 critical focus areas and the result of the UN General Assembly’s 23rd special session. In addition, UN Women’s work also includes other UN instruments, standards, and resolutions addressing gender equality, empowerment, and advancement of women. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2026)

3.3. Scope

As the leading United Nations Agency for promoting gender equality, UN Women shifts laws, institutions, social norms, and services to close the gender gap and build an equal world. UN Women is authorised to support the intergovernmental bodies for laying the groundwork for policies, universal criteria, and norms. UN Women enables members to hold the UN accountable for its pledge on equal rights. (UN Women, n.d.)

UN Women's other main areas of work and goals are: Leadership and Women’s participation in politics, economic enhancement, women’s involvement in governance and national planning, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (specifically goal number five, which is the “Gender Equality”), freedom from violence, peace, security, and humanitarian action. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2026)

3.4. History of Women in Work Life

3.4.1. Pre-Industrial Era

Before the Industrial Revolution, the approach to “work” differed from that of today. Labour in early history took place within the family economy, where the house and the workplace were a single unit. This shows that the idea of women staying at home while men worked is not entirely true and is considered a “modern myth”. Women have worked in agricultural tasks, food processing, and producing textiles for family use and local trade since ancient times. However, we have to consider that these acts were an integral part of daily life; it was viewed just as a domestic duty to be able to sustain one’s life. (Burnette, 2008)

Regardless, laws and social norms at the time set strict boundaries, narrowing the freedom of working women. Married women had no legal identity detached from their husbands, not having the right to own property or collect their own wages in Western societies, and participation of women in worklife in the pre-industrial revolution was viewed out of necessity. (Goldin 1990)

3.4.2. Industrial Revolution

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the conversion to factory-based production led to the first large-scale separation between home and the workplace. In these times, the textile manufacturing shifted to power looms in mills instead of handlooms in cottages, and women and children have become the fundamental workforce. Since women could be given significantly less money than men, factory holders usually preferred women; in addition, women were seen as easier to manage. (Humphries, 2010)

The Industrial Revolution era also experienced the rise of the “male breadwinner” idea because of work moving out of the private sphere to the public sphere. Therefore, married women who worked in workplaces encountered societal disapproval, as they were recognised as a sign of their husbands not being able to provide for their family. This social stigma caused young unmarried women to work in torturous conditions in factories to help their families, while married women were forced to do childcare and housework. (Goldin, 1990)

3.4.3. 19th Century

The 19th century was a stage for turning points for women’s participation in the workforce because of the rising tension between the cruel realities of the working class and rising middle-class ideals. Social norms claimed that women’s “place” was at home, where they provided for their family morally and emotionally. Although this was impossible for millions of working women around the world, who resumed their work in domestic service, the textile industry, and agriculture due to financial needs. The 19th century was also the era in which women started entering so-called “feminised” jobs such as teaching and nursing, which were considered to be extensions of their caretaker roles instead of professional careers. (Brunette, 2008)

In this period of time, there were the first introductions of protective labour laws, for example, the Mines Act of 1842 and various Factory Acts. These laws aimed to protect women and children from terrible conditions and long hours of work, but they caused economic side effects. These kinds of laws and regulations excluded women from high-paying industrial roles like mining and reinforced the “male breadwinner” model. (Humphries, 2010)

3.4.4. 20th Century

The 20th century may be regarded as the bloodiest century of human history, with over 100 million deaths directly caused by world wars and other mass atrocities driven by war, crises, totalitarianism and genocide, with over 120 million additional deaths as a result of democide. However, the 20th century also brought the most radical shifts in participation of women in work life, again caused largely by the two World Wars. Millions of men left for the front lines, and women had to move into jobs which were recognised as “traditionally male roles in factories, heavy and war industry, and logistics. Even though most of the women were forced back into the

domestic sphere after the end of the wars, this experience became evidence that women were capable of doing work that was seen as “men’s work”, essentially shaking social norms. The middle of this century also endured a huge transformation to the service economy, creating new roles in administration and other fields where women filled in record numbers. (Goldin, 1990)

The time period between the 1960s and the 1980s was marked by the Second Wave of Feminism and victories for workplace equality. Landmark legislations like the Equal Pay Act of the US and similar laws around the world have been intended to fix the structural pay gap since the Industrial Revolution. By the end of the 20th Century, women were completing from universities at higher rates than men in many regions and being employed in high-status fields of work such as law, engineering and medicine.

4. Country Stances

Australia

The Commonwealth of Australia’s current policy for Women’s participation in the workforce is mainly concentrated on “National Strategy to Achieve Gender Equality.” Australia has put forward crucial reforms in 2024 for making childcare more ergonomic, believing it is a necessary framework for women’s involvement in work life. ILO reports that 1.3% of women works in Agriculture field, 8.2% in Industry, while the other 90.5% works in the Service sector. According to the Gender Inequality Index, Australia ranks 19th globally. (UNDP Human Development Report, 2022)

Belgium

The Kingdom of Belgium is a steadfast defender of the European Union’s “Pay Transparency Directive”. The government asserts the “dual-earner” model, backed by social safety nets and parental leave. In Belgium, the participation rate of women in the labour force is estimated at 49.8% for 2025; in addition, women outnumber men in the public administration and healthcare sectors. According to the ILO, 0.7% of women are employed in Agriculture, 8.9% in Industry, and 90.4% in the Service sector. Belgium ranks 10th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP Human Development Report, 2022)

Brazil

The Federative Republic of Brazil’s diplomatic stance is mainly fixed on the intersection of racial and gender equality in the workplace. Brazil has implemented social programs such as “Bolsa Familia” in their homeland, empowering women as the primary heads of households. Brazil is also committed to enhancing the participation of women in the STEM field for modernization of its industrial base. ILO estimates that 7.1% of women participate in Agriculture, 10.5% in Industry and 82.4% in Services. Brazil is in 87th place in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP Human Development Report, 2022)

Canada

Canada's stance on this agenda is guided by the "Feminist International Assistance Policy" that prioritises the elimination of barriers to women's participation in the economy. Canada focuses on assisting women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Canada is one of the leader is supporting workplace safety for women, specifically addressing harassment and violence. 1.2% of working women in Canada are in Agriculture, 8.1% in Industry, and 90.7% in Services. Canada is the 18th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

China (People's Republic of)

The People's Republic of China is executing state-led initiatives to ensure "equal pay for equal work" and has historically seen a high participation rate of women in the workforce. China works on protecting women's employment rights during and after pregnancy. China also promote "Belt and Road" cooperation to create more job opportunities for women in developing countries. ILO reports that 22.1% of working women are in Agriculture, 22.5% in Industry and 55.4% in Services. China ranks 42nd in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo concentrates on the transition of women from agriculture to other formal sectors against continuous regional instability. Congo supports peace and security as a session for women to safely participate in trade and work. Congo stresses the requirement for international assistance to increase women's literacy and vocational training. ILO states 67.4% of total women in the workforce are in Agriculture, 4.5% in Industry and 28.1% in Services. Congo ranks 154th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Denmark

The Kingdom of Denmark is one of the representatives of the Nordic model, where a high participation rate of women in the labour force is supported by universal welfare and gender-neutral parental leave. Denmark supports the elimination of gender-segregated labour markets. Denmark is one of the countries to lead discussing in guaranteeing digital transitions do not leave working women behind. According to the ILO, 1.0% of the total women workforce is in Agriculture, 8.2% Industry, and 90.8% Services. Denmark is the first country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Finland

The Republic of Finland is one of the advocates for education as the main source for shattering gender stereotypes in the work sector. Finland is considered to be one of the world leaders in promoting pay transparency and implementing legislation to audit gender pay gaps in large private companies. Finland is in support of international initiatives for empowering women's leadership in climate-change-linked sectors and green jobs. 1.8% of women are in the agriculture sector, 8.5% in the industry sector and 90.8% in Services. Finland is the 8th nation in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

France

The French Republic is seen as one of the champions for “feminist diplomacy” and utilises the “Pénicaud Index” to enforce professional equality within private companies. France advocates mandatory quotas for women in executive positions. France supports the cause against sexism and sexual violence in the workplace. France also promotes “equal value” of work to ensure traditionally female-dominated sectors receive fair compensation. In France, according to research done by the ILO, 1.5% of women are working in Agriculture, 9.1% in Industry, and 89.4% in Services. France ranks 24th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Gabon

The Gabonese Republic aim to harmonise its national laws with international gender standards. Gabon prioritises reducing legal discrimination that prevents women from accessing credit and property. Gabon also calls for international cooperation to enhance vocational training for young women. According to the ILO, 26.5% of the working women population is employed in Agriculture, 6.4% in Industry, 67.1% in Services. Gabon ranks 132nd in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany focuses on bridging the “part-time trap” that limits women's career progression and pension savings. The Government of Germany introduced several pieces of legislation to increase the number of women on corporate boards. Germany provides significant funding for the “Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiatives” (We-Fi). Germany supports the expansion of all-day schooling and childcare facilities. 0.9% of women participate in Agriculture, 12.5% in Industry, 86.8% in Services. Germany ranks 18th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Ghana

The Republic of Ghana works to dismantle cultural barriers that are currently preventing women from owning land. Ghana often supports the “Affirmative Action Bill”, whose goal is to increase the number of women in decision-making roles. Ghana also calls for international collaboration for digital literacy programs to help women access global markets. 28.8% of the total women workforce is employed in Agriculture, 14.2% in Industry, 57.0% in Services, as reported by the ILO. Ghana is the 130th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Guinea

The Republic of Guinea prioritises its work on trying to lower the very high rates of early marriage and education dropout, which are the main obstacles to women's participation in work life. Guinea also seeks international support for technical assistance to help formalise women's business initiatives. Guinea's 60.8% of women working population is in Agriculture, 6.1% in Industry and 33.1% in Services, according to the ILO. Guinea ranks 152nd in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Guyana

The Co-operative Republic of Guyana is utilising its expanding oil and gas economy as an opportunity to create new technical training for women. Guyana advocates for policies that protect women's rights in labour and also encourages women's entrepreneurship. According to the ILO, 10.9% of working women in Guyana are employed in Agriculture, 14.1% in Industry and 75% in Services. Guyana ranks 108th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Italy

The Italian Republic experiences lower participation of women in the workforce in comparison with other European Union members. Italy advocates for precautions to be taken to fight “mandatory resignations” linked to pregnancy. Italy also supports EU initiatives for gender-neutral hiring processes and investment in the “Silver Economy”. 2.1% of women in the workforce are involved with Agriculture, 11.6% in Industry, and 86.3% in Services stated by ILO . Italy is the 13th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Japan

The State of Japan's national policy mainly focuses on defining women's participation as a fundamental pillar of economic growth against its shrinking workforce. Japan has also concentrated on expanding daycare capacity and encouraging gender-neutral paternal leave, even though cultural transformation remains slow. Japan also supports women's leadership in STEM at

the diplomatic level. ILO states 2.4% of working women are employed in Agriculture, 12.2% in Industry, and 85.4% in Services. Japan is the 17th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Liechtenstein

Liechtenstein highlights the importance of a family-friendly work sphere within its highly specialised financial and industrial economy. Liechtenstein advocates for international standards to protect the rights of women cross-border commuters. 0.4% of women in Liechtenstein work in Agriculture, 3.75 in Industry and 63.9% in Services according to ILO reports. Liechtenstein is not included in the Gender Inequality Index; however, it ranks 17th in the Human Development Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Luxembourg

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is mainly concentrated on eliminating the gender pay gap, which is among the lowest, thanks to its strict transparency laws. Luxembourg also encourages diversification of the workforce, encouraging women to enter the financial and technological sectors. At the diplomatic stage, Luxembourg is a considerable donor to gender-responsive development projects. According to the ILO, 0.5% of women are involved with Agriculture, 6.2% in Industry, 93.3% in Services. Luxembourg is the 7th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Morocco

The Kingdom of Morocco focuses on the development of women-led cooperatives and recently reformed its Family Code to provide women with greater legal autonomy. Morocco is also working further to enhance women's participation in the workforce. Morocco emphasises the role of rural electrification in freeing up time for women to pursue economic activities. In Morocco 34.1% of the total women workforce is in Agriculture, 18.5% in Industry, 47.4% in Services. Morocco ranks 95th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Myanmar

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar's diplomatic stance is complicated due to political instability back home; the historical focus remains on the garment industry as a major employer of women. Myanmar calls for the protection of women from exploitation and cruel working conditions. Myanmar also stresses the necessity of international support for women's small businesses during times of crises. 42.8% of women in Myanmar are working in Agriculture, 19.8% in Industry and 37.4 in Services. Myanmar ranks 115th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Netherlands

The Kingdom of the Netherlands has a high rate of female part-time work, and now the Netherlands is pushing for “economic independence” for women, aiming to break traditional gender roles. In the diplomatic stage, the Netherlands supports global supply chain transparency to ensure fair labour practices for women in developing countries. 1.2% of women in the Netherlands work in Agriculture, 6% in Industry, 92.8% in Services, according to data provided by the ILO. The Netherlands is the 5th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Norway

The Kingdom of Norway is considered to be the pioneer of gender quota, for example, introducing a requirement 40% of board members in public limited companies be women. Norway believes in gender equality as “smart economics” and shows it as the main reason for its high GDP per capita. Norway is a crucial supporter of UN Women’s core resources, particularly emphasising women’s economic leadership in the energy transition. 0.8% of working women in Norway are employed in Agriculture, 5.6% in Industry and 93.6% in Services. Norway is the 2nd country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Oman

The Sultanate of Oman’s main focus is its “Vision 2040” policy, which aims to increase women’s participation in the workforce, especially in the private sector. Oman also works on providing educational opportunities in engineering, medicine and business to prepare women. Oman supports international policies that allow women to balance their family life with their career. According to ILO 1.4% of women in the workforce are involved with agriculture, 7.5% with Industry, and 91.1% with Services. Oman ranks 64th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Palestine

The State of Palestine prioritises the economic resilience of women under occupation. Palestine supports the elimination of movement restrictions that prevent women from reaching workplaces and markets. Palestine calls for international solidarity to protect women labourers against the political and economic fragility. 9.8% of working women in Palestine are in Agriculture, 11% in Industry, 79.2% in Services, as stated by ILO data. Palestine ranks 133rd according to the latest UNDP estimates. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Poland

The Republic of Poland is one of the EU members which has one of the lowest gender pay gaps; however faces obstacles regarding the availability of institutional care for children. In the

diplomatic stage, Poland stresses the importance of the participation of women in the STEM field. 7.8% of the total women workforce in Poland is in Agriculture, 15.2% in Industry, 77% in Services. Poland ranks 33rd in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Portugal

The Portuguese Republic has achieved significant success in closing the gender gap in education and now prioritises this at the executive level. Portugal supports international efforts to combat the “feminisation of poverty”, specifically in old age, due to career interruptions. In Portugal, 2.0% of the total working women population is in Agriculture, 17.1% in Industry and 80.9% in Services, according to the ILO reports. Portugal is the 20th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation aims to increase women’s competitiveness in the labour market. Russia has recently reduced the list of “prohibited professions” for women. In the diplomatic stage, Russia emphasizes on necessity of protecting traditional family values along with economic participation. Russia also highlights women’s high representation in science, healthcare and education as its national strength. According to ILO data, 3.3% of working women are in Agriculture, 14% in Industry, 82.7% Services. Russia is the 44th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Singapore

Singapore believes that maintaining its status as the global financial hub, women’s participation is a necessity. Singapore provide grants to companies that adopt family-friendly practices and also focuses on upskilling and “SkillsFuture” programs to support women to continue to stay relevant in a fast-changing economy. ILO reports 0.1% of women in Singapore’s workforce is involved with Agriculture, 10.2% in Industry, 89.7% in Services. Singapore is the 6th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

South Korea

The Republic of Korea is currently concentrated on addressing the massive gender pay gap, the “career break” phenomenon, where Korean women leave the workforce after marriage. South Korea’s diplomatic stance is mainly focused on advocating for the use of technology to provide flexible working solutions. South Korea focuses on increasing the number of women in high-tech industries and public office. According to data provided by the ILO, 3.9% of women work in Agriculture, 13.5% in Industry, 82.6% in Services. South Korea is the 15th country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Spain

The Kingdom of Sweden is one of the global leaders in gender-neutral parental leave, providing equal non-transferable time for both parents. Spain has implemented laws aiming to push companies to share pay data to identify gender-based discrimination. ILO's data show that 2.0% of women are involved with Agriculture 2.0%, 10.3% in Industry, and 87.7% in Services. Spain ranks 7th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Sweden

The Kingdom of Sweden advocates for the highest standards possible of gender parity for global stability. Sweden's approach mainly concentrates on the "dual earner, dual-carer" idea, pushing for parental leave for both parents. Sweden highly supports binding international standards and the formalisation of the "care economy". ILO estimates that around 1.0% of women work in Agriculture, 7.1% in Industry, 91.9% in Services. Sweden is the third country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Switzerland

The Swiss Confederation focuses on improving the fundamental work for reconciling work and family life, which has always been a challenge historically for Switzerland. Switzerland also strengthened its Federal Act on Gender Equality to require pay equality analyses by employers. Switzerland advocates for more women to be involved in management and the promotion of female-led start-ups. According to the ILO, 2.3% of total women in the workforce work in Agriculture, 12.2% in Industry, 85.5% in Services. Switzerland is the third country in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Togo

Togo supports the enhancement of women in the informal trade sector and the promotion of women's entrepreneurship. Togo calls for international investment in vocational training for young women. Togo emphasises the role of regional trade agreements for providing new markets for female-led business initiatives. ILO approximates that 44.6% of women are involved with Agriculture, 11.5% in Industry and 43.9% in Services. Togo ranks 131 in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Tonga

Tonga stresses the women's role in the "Blue Economy" and natural resources management. The government of Tonga focuses on assisting women's small-scale tourism enterprises. Tonga emphasises the obstacles posed by climate change that affect women's livelihoods in the Pacific. Tonga calls for international support for digital connectivity to help women on remote islands access international markets. In Tonga, ILO reports 24.8% of women

work in Agriculture, 10.3% in Industry, and 64.9% in Services. Togo ranks 104 in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Turkmenistan

The Republic of Turkmenistan emphasises that its constitution guarantees equal rights. Turkmenistan focused on state-sponsored education and healthcare, seeing them as the fundamental pillars for women's workforce participation. Turkmenistan also works on the development of digital skills for women within the framework of national modernisation. ILO estimates %37.7 of the total women workforce participates in Agriculture, 22.5% in Industry, and 39.8% in Services. Turkmenistan is 40th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Türkiye

The Republic of Türkiye emphasises the legal framework of equality. Türkiye is concentrated on implementing national action plans to increase women's participation rates, especially the involvement of women in the defence and technology sectors. Türkiye also focuses on supporting incentives for women entrepreneurs and improvement of childcare services to reduce the "care burden". Türkiye advocates for international cooperation that respects national cultures while enhancing economic empowerment. In Türkiye, the 20.8% of women in the workforce are in Agriculture, 16.5% in Industry, and 62.7% in Services according to data by the ILO. In the Gender Inequality Index, Türkiye ranks 40th. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

Ukraine

Ukraine's main priority is the resilience and participation of women in wartime and the post-war economy due to its current status. Ukraine is working towards guaranteeing women have access to technical training in reconstruction-related fields. Ukraine supports the protection of rights for displaced women nationally and internationally. In accordance with their commitment to EU integration, they continue gender reforms specifically against the gender pay gap. 9.7% of women in the workforce are employed in Agriculture, 16.7% in Industry, and 73.6% in Services, as the ILO reports. Ukraine ranks 47th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates has risen as one of the leading countries in regional gender equality, implementing "Equal Pay for Equal Value" legislation. The government of the UAE is currently working on encouraging women's participation in technology sectors, renewable energy, and space programmes. The UAE Gender Balance Council aims to achieve the world's best practices in both public and private sectors. UAE supports women's leadership in global climate

action as seen in their hosting of COP28. ILO's latest reports show that 0.1% of women people is in Agriculture, 10% in Industry, and 89.9% in Services. According to the Gender Inequality Index, the UAE is 11th. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland stresses the importance of flexible working as a standard and assisting women in transition to "Green Jobs". The United Kingdom is considered to be a crucial advocate for 12 years of quality education for girls, believing that it is essential for economic participation. According to the ILO, 0.7% of women work in Agriculture, 6.3% in Industry, and 89.9% in Services United Kingdom ranks 32nd in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

United States of America

The United States of America's stance is mostly concentrated on the "National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality". Current participation of women in the workforce is approximately at 57%, with women making up nearly half of the total US workforce. Recent data show a record increase in women starting up new small businesses, especially in the service sector and digital sectors. As reported by the ILO, 0.8% of total women in the workforce are employed in Agriculture, while 8.3% in Industry and finally 90.9% in Services. The United States ranks 44th in the Gender Inequality Index. (UNDP, Human Development Report, 2022)

5. Introduction to the Agenda Item: Supporting and promoting women's participation in the working life

The causes of our agenda are generally connected with each other and prepares a system that starts a chain of aggression against women. That means a problem that does not seem connected to our agenda may affect it.

In many societies, traditional gender roles are still being defined what women and men are expected to do. Women are often expected to stay at home and take care of children and family members. Men are roled to work and create house income. That expectations limits women's freedom to choose their careers and life path.

For example, in some regions of the Middle East and South Asia, social pressure demoralize women for working outside of the home. Even when women are educated, they might not be allowed to use their proficiency in the labour market.

These norms are hard to change because they are supported by culture, religion, and long-standing traditions. As a result, even when states create equal laws, people can still restrict women's opportunities.

Education is one of the strongest factors affecting employment. Women who took education are more likely to find jobs and earn higher moneys.

However, in many developing countries, girls still face barriers to education. These include poverty, early marriage, and lack of schools in non-city areas. Families can choose to invest in boys' education instead of girls'.

Without education, girls cannot gain the skills needed for modern jobs. This leads to a chain cycle where women stay in low-paying or informal jobs.

Discrimination continues to limit women's opportunities. Women may face bias in hiring, promotion, and salaries. Globally, women still earn likely 20% less than men on average time. This shows that even when women work, they are not being paid equally.

In addition, women are often seen as less committed workers because of family responsibilities. This stereotype affects hiring decisions and career advancement mostly in cultural and religious families.

6. Current Status

6.1. Sustainable Development Goals

6.1.1. Goal 5

Gender Equality.

This one is directly connected to your study guide topic. It covers ending all forms of discrimination against women, eliminating gender-based violence, ensuring women's equal participation in leadership and economic life, and recognising unpaid care work. Progress here remains slow the World Economic Forum's 2025 report estimated it would take another 123 years to reach full global gender parity at the current pace.

6.1.2. Goal 8

Decent Work and Economic Growth. ,

This is about making economic growth work for actual people. Full employment, fair wages, safe working conditions, and ending modern slavery and child labour. It explicitly includes equal pay for equal work again, deeply linked to the women's workforce agenda.

6.2. International Frameworks and Agreements

CEDAW 1979:

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women mandates gender equality in employment. Highlight key articles (especially Article 11 on work). Virtually all countries have ratified it.

Beijing Platform for Action (1995):

Called for women's full participation in economic and public life, including targets for jobs, equal pay, childcare, etc.

ILO Conventions:

C100 (1951, Equal Remuneration) requires equal pay for work of equal value for men and women.

C111 (1958, Discrimination) prohibits gender discrimination in employment.

C156 (1981, Workers with Family Responsibilities) calls for family-friendly work measures.

C183 (2000, Maternity Protection) guarantees minimum maternity leave (14 weeks) and cash benefits.

C189 (2011, Domestic Workers) protects predominantly female domestic workers.

6.3. Role of the Private Sector

When we talk about gender equality in the workplace, conversations lean to focus on governments the laws they pass, what policies they implemented, what international agreements they signed. And yes, governments matter. But there is another actor that is shaping the daily working lives of most women on the planet more directly than any government policy does: their employer. The private sector businesses of all sizes, from small local companies to massive multinational corporations is where the majority of the world's labours actually spend their days. Which says us that if things are going to change in any real sense, the private sector has to be part of that change. Not as a side participant, not as someone who shows up after governments have done all the hard work.

The private sector is an important partner for reaching women's economic rights. Businesses create over 90 percent of jobs in developing countries and have a big impact on workplace culture, ethics and standards. UN Women works with the private sector through the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), which provides some framework for companies to remake and protect gender equality in the workplace, marketplace, and community.

Specific private sector initiatives include gender based procurement, where companies expand their supply chains to include more women-owned businesses. Some companies are also adopting family-friendly policies, such as flexible working hours and on-site childcare, to retain female talent. However, progress in the private sector remains uneven. While many companies have signed the WEPs,

The relationship between the private sector and gender equality is complicated, and it is worth being honest about that from the start. Businesses exist to make money. That is not a criticism it is just what they are. And this means that their relation with gender equality tends to be strongest when there is a direct business case for it, and weakest when equality requires short-term funds without obvious short-term returns. Understanding this dynamic is important for everyone trying to figure out how to actually move the private sector towards more gender-equal area, rather than just hoping that good intentions will be enough.

The Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) is the other important mechanism that helps women's cooperations in the global world. By providing grants and technical help, the FGE helps local organizations implement home-made solutions for gender equality, ensuring that the principle of "leaving no one behind" is operationalized at all levels.

6.4. Role of Governments

If the private sector is the place where nearly all women actually experience inequality on a daily life, governments are the actors with the most power to change the condition that produce that inequality in the first place. Laws, budgets, public institutions, enforcement mechanisms, education systems, social protection all of these are shaped primarily by government decisions. And all of them have a direct impact on anything women can participate in working life on equal terms with men. In that sense, whatever else this committee discusses, the role of governments has to sit at the centre of the conversation.

Here is something that comes up again and again in research on gender equality policies: the distance between a law existing and a law working is often enormous, and that distance is almost entirely determined by enforcement. Countries that invest seriously in labour inspection, that fund accessible legal processes for workers with discrimination claims, that impose meaningful penalties on employers who violate equal pay or anti-harassment laws these countries

tend to see the laws actually change behaviour. Countries that pass strong-sounding legislation and then allocate minimal resources to enforcing it tend to see very little change on the ground.

Enforcement is politically difficult for a few reasons. It costs money that governments often claim not to have. It creates friction with business communities that governments are usually reluctant to alienate. And the people who suffer most from weak enforcement low-income women workers, informal economy workers, migrant workers tend to have the least political power and the least ability to demand better. So the incentives all push in the direction of doing less enforcement than is actually needed. Some countries have tried to address this by shifting the enforcement burden away from individual workers and onto employers. Pay transparency laws are a good example of this logic.

Almost every country in the world now has some form of maternity leave policy. This is real progress compared to fifty years ago. But the existence of maternity leave on its own is not sufficient to promote gender equality in the labour market and in some cases, poorly designed maternity leave can actually make things worse. The problem is this: if only mothers take parental leave, and fathers return to work immediately after a child is born, employers develop a rational if discriminatory expectation that hiring a woman of childbearing age represents a greater disruption risk than hiring a man. This contributes to hiring discrimination, to the motherhood penalty in wages, and to the glass ceiling in promotion. It also reinforces the expectation within households that childcare is primarily the mother's responsibility, which has knock-on effects throughout a woman's career.

The proof on how to design parental leave better is actually fairly clear at this point. Policies that include well-paid, non-transferable paternity leave a portion that the father must use or lose, rather than being able to pass to the mother are significantly more effective at getting fathers to take time off and at distributing care responsibilities more equally. The Scandinavian countries pioneered this approach, and the results have been consistently positive. Take-up of paternity leave in countries with daddy quotas is dramatically higher than in countries where leave is theoretically available to fathers but not specifically reserved for them. Governments that are serious about gender equality in employment there fore need to think about parental leave not just as a welfare measure for new mothers, but as a tool for reshaping the division of care work between men and women which is ultimately one of the deepest roots of labour market inequality.

The Problem of “Political Will” After going through all of these areas legal frameworks, enforcement, care investment, parental leave, education, public employment a pattern emerges. In almost every case, the policy tools exist. The proof about what works is reasonably clear. The barriers are not primarily technical. They are political. Gender equality policies face resistance from multiple directionscontinuesly. Conservative social movements pushes back against policies they see as undermining traditional family structures. Business lobbies resist reforms that increase

costs. Finance executives spending that does not show up neatly in short-term economic statistics. And the women who would benefit most from stronger policies—those in informal employment, those in low-income households, those with the least time and resources for political engagement—are often the least able to organise and advocate effectively for their own interests. This is where international forums like this committee genuinely matter. Not because a UN resolution directly changes what a government does—it usually does not, at least not immediately. But because the process of negotiating and agreeing international standards creates political space for domestic advocates to make their case. When a government has signed a resolution calling for pay transparency legislation, civil society organisations in that country have a concrete commitment they can point to and hold the government accountable for. International pressure is not a substitute for domestic political change, but it can be a useful resource for the people trying to bring that change about.

7. Questions to be Addressed

- What are the causes of gender inequality between societies?
- Should UN cooperate with governments or private sector to ensure women any kind of women rights?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected women's workforce participation?
- Is there a direct way to promote women's participation in working life?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected women's workforce participation?
- What type of indicators can be used to measure women's participation in working life?
- How should UN cooperate with NGO's about women's participation in working life?
- What types of organizations can receive support from UNWOMEN?

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