



## **Albania's Compliance with the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)**

### **Suggested List of Issues Prior to Reporting**

#### **Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights**

a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1996

and

#### **Human Rights in Democracy Center (HRDC)**

**70th Pre-Sessional Working Group 07 March 2022 - 11 March 2022**

**Submitted 07 January 2022**

**The Human Rights in Democracy Centre (HRDC)** is a non-profit and non-religious organization whose mission is to work for the protection and promotion of fundamental human rights and freedoms in Albania and to raise the awareness of the Albanian society on the state of human rights, with a special focus on the most vulnerable groups in society, such as women / girls, minors, minorities, etc. One of the objectives of the HRDC is to prevent domestic violence and to provide support services for victims/survivors of domestic violence. The HRDC has continuously contributed to the capacity building of the institutions responsible for the implementation of legislation against domestic violence and gender-based violence. Since 2015, the Center has monitored the decisions of the Tirana Judicial District Court regarding issues related to the issuance of Immediate Protection Orders / Protection Orders.

The Centre monitors the implementation of laws in practice and undertakes initiatives to improve legislation in the field of human rights protection, with a special focus on gender equality, domestic violence and gender-based violence. During the reporting period, the HRDC has contributed to the amendment of Law no. 9669/2006 "On measures against domestic violence", bylaws for its implementation and Law no. 10221/2010 "On protection from discrimination," as well as provided suggestions regarding the drafting of Law no. 111/2017 "On legal aid guaranteed by the state" and Law no. 22/2018 "On Social Housing". Considering the adoption of bylaws important for the effective implementation of measures against domestic violence, the HRDC has recently given recommendations on amending the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 334/2011 regarding the functioning of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism, in order to adapt it to the latest amendments to the legislation against domestic violence and international standards adopted by Albania. HRDC has prepared this report with specific information on the implementation of some articles of the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, focused on this issues non-discrimination, rights of minorities and prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred (arts. 2, 20, 26 and 27), violence against women and children, including domestic violence (arts. 2,3, 6, 7, 24 and 26), prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and treatment of persons deprived of their liberty (arts. 7 and 10).

HRDC has contributed to the amendment of the Law Against Discrimination. The following recommendations were taken into consideration. The burden of proof is charged to the plaintiff party

who allegedly discriminated- shortening of deadline for providing information by the institution from 30 days to 10 days as proposed by the HRDC. Due to this amendment the Commissioner's decisions with the object discrimination in the media has to be published. Also the right of court representation by the Commissioner for individual cases is removed. These changes, pioneered by HRDC, contribute to the improvement of the situation of discriminated category and fulfill the recommendations of the Report of European Commission for Albania 2019 and 2020, and ECRI recommendation.

**The Advocates for Human Rights** (The Advocates) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. Established in 1983, The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publications

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The government of Albania violates the rights of minority groups. Roma / Egyptians experience discrimination in almost all areas including housing, employment, education, and services.
2. Marginalized groups such as Roma and Egyptian populations also face barriers to obtaining birth registration for their children and other important procedural documents.
3. Domestic violence remains a problem. Despite the provision of new legislation on domestic violence, there is a lack of support services or a limited number of services to address the needs of victims of domestic violence (emergency shelters, social housing programs, employment services, rehabilitation programs etc.) Police, prosecutors, health care institutions, and other systems actors lack adequate training to implement the new laws and protocols.
4. Roma and Egyptian children face barriers to accessing education. Dropout rates are high for girls compared to boys. Children with disabilities are at even greater risk of exclusion from basic education.

## II. Non-discrimination, rights of minorities, and prohibition of advocacy against national, racial or religious hatred (Concluding Observations, para. 12)

5. In its 2013 Concluding Observations, the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (“Committee”) expressed concern about continued discrimination against minority groups. The Committee noted in particular the lack of progress with regard to discrimination against Roma in housing and employment.<sup>1</sup>
6. The Republic of Albania adheres to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>2</sup> with Law no.7511, dated 08.08.1991 “On adhering of the Republic of Albania to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.”
7. In Albania, women and the Roma / Egyptian minority are the most vulnerable groups affected by discrimination. Amendments to law no. 10 221, date 4.2.2010 “for protection against discrimination” has placed race first in the list of causes of discrimination, then the law lists all the other causes of discrimination.
8. The social and economic challenges facing the Roma / Egyptian community are large: unemployment, poverty, school dropouts by children and their trafficking, lack of infrastructure and housing, and poor health conditions, among other issues. Most of this population in Albania lives below the poverty line. Discrimination, lack of regular income, and unemployment lead to low school attendance, poor health, debt, and poor housing or homelessness. Lifestyle and poverty affect children's education and access to services. Most families in this community also experience high rates of violence, disregard for the rights of women and children, divorce, alcohol abuse, challenges with financial management matters, early marriages and teenage pregnancies, and trafficking, among other issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, *Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Albania*, (18 December 2013), U.N. Doc. E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3. ¶12.

<sup>2</sup> Herein after referred to the CESCRC Covenant.

## **Housing**

9. Lack of housing remains a major problem. The situation is aggravated due to the destruction of housing by the earthquake of November 26, 2019. Applying for a rent bonus, one of the opportunities to receive subsidized rent payment, is difficult because Roma families do not have a rent contract in most cases. Roma and Egyptian people have expressed additional concern that it is very difficult to rent a house due to prejudices against them. Social housing is also difficult if not impossible to obtain. Criteria to be enrolled in this program effectively exclude Roma and Egyptian families because they are required to prove financial income. Providing proof is difficult for these communities because they work mainly in informal sectors, like waste collection. Most Roma/ Egyptian people do not work in the formal sector where they would be registered as employed; as a result, they cannot benefit from social housing.

## **Use of inappropriate terminology with regard to minorities**

10. The CPD also identified issues with the use of inappropriate discriminatory and prejudicial terminology in the labelling of certain areas inhabited by Roma or Egyptian minorities, or in the official documentation used by the electricity supply<sup>3</sup> service provider. Journalists and public figures such as MPs<sup>4</sup> have also used discriminatory language in audio visual or social media against Roma / Egyptian minorities.

## **Unemployment / poverty**

11. The Roma and Egyptian communities lack adequate employment due to lack of education and poverty. Many of these individuals rely on informal work, such as recycling waste or trading second-hand goods. People of these communities report differentiated and discriminatory treatment in state and private institutions, giving them no employment opportunities. The situation created due to COVID-19 aggravated difficulties for the Roma / Egyptian community as, during the quarantine period, they were not allowed to recycle waste or trade second-hand goods.
12. The Municipality of Tirana, through the implemented practice, has blocked the Roma and Egyptian community's means of transport of recyclable materials without respecting any legal procedure or providing any official document for suspending their activities. This practice is said to be impartial but in fact it has led to unfavourable conditions for this community in comparison to others.
13. During the first phase of the pandemic,<sup>5</sup> the Decision of the Council of the Ministers on financial support excluded families who provide income through informal work. This situation affected a large number of members from the Roma and Egyptian minorities, including women and girls of this community.<sup>6</sup> From a legal point of view, there have been positive developments in protection against discrimination in employment settings. The burden of proof is split and

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<sup>3</sup> CPD, decision No.166, dt.13.11.2019, solved through mediation

<sup>4</sup> CPD, decision no 181, dated on 5.12.2019

<sup>5</sup> CPD, decision no 133, dt.8.10.2020

<sup>6</sup> DCM no. 236, dated 19.03.2020 "Taking of measures to offer assistance in residence settings for categories in need in conditions of pandemic COVID-19".

extended to the administrative procedure to CPD<sup>7</sup> and the administrative and civil court proceedings.<sup>8</sup>

### **Services**

14. Roma and Egyptian people also face difficulties and obstacles in obtaining some services. They face barriers to electricity supply, because their economic situation makes it impossible to pay the fee to enter in a contract relation. This obligation is defined in the regulation approved by the Electricity Regulatory Entity (ERE).
15. Roma and Egyptian people also face barriers to accessing drinking water due to a lack of sewer infrastructure or lighting supply in areas where most of the inhabitants belong to the Roma or Egyptian minorities.<sup>9</sup>

### **Impossibility to transfer civil registration**

16. Transfer of civil status, in case of change of residence, requires a certificate of ownership or a lease agreement of the apartment the individual moved to. The HRDC notes that most Roma and Egyptians do not have these documents, as many of them live in improvised barracks or illegal premises. The inability to transfer civil status in the residential area imposes a number of other barriers and decreased access to the services provided in the administrative unit or the health centre of the area where they live.

### **Lack of access to apply online using the E-Albania portal**

17. Due to the situation created by COVID-19, the application for economic assistance or other services, such as registration as an unemployed jobseeker, obtaining an unemployment card, obtaining various certificates etc., could only be completed online. This change has created difficulties and inequality in the enjoyment of the right to economic assistance for members of the Roma / Egyptian Community. The technology requirements decreased their access to economic aid. The unemployment certificate is also a necessary document to benefit from a number of socio-economic support programs such as: receiving economic assistance, social housing programs, health cards, vocational courses, among other benefits. Failure to provide this document at the request of the individual (to use where required) places members of the Roma / Egyptian community in unfavourable situations, even though they are considered under special protection by the state.

### **III. Birth registration (Concluding Observations, para. 13)**

18. In its 2013 Concluding Observations, the Committee expressed concern about a lack of birth registration and personal identity documents for Roma and Egyptian children.<sup>10</sup> The Committee

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<sup>7</sup> Law no124/2020 "for some amendments and changes in Law 10221 "For protection from discrimination and Code of Administrative procedures approved through law No. 44/20151.

<sup>8</sup> Legal changes of Labour Code through law no.136/2015, dated on 5.12.2015

<sup>9</sup> CPD, decision no 33&34, dt.7/4/2020; Decision no 2871, dt.10/11/2020 of administrative court (first instance, Tirana

<sup>10</sup> Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, *Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Albania*, (18 December 2013), U.N. Doc. E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3. ¶13.

recommended Albania exempt marginalized families from paying fees associated with birth registration and other documents.<sup>11</sup>

### **Non registering children in the national Civil Registry**

19. Non-registration of children remains a major problem for the Roma / Egyptian community. In general, there are cases of children born outside Albania, whose families were deported to Albania without the possibility of obtaining any documents. Children who are unregistered do not have any rights under Albanian legislation. Because of the economic difficulties, families living far from the administrative centers where they are registered find it impossible to register their children in the civil registry.

### **Non-registration of children in kindergartens or schools**

20. Roma and Egyptian people are barred from child registration for reasons such as lack of documentation or lack of vacancies in relevant institutions. In several cases, women have been required to provide proof of employment in a time when members of the Roma / Egyptian community have faced significant barriers to gaining employment. Moreover, despite the fact that the Municipal Council decided children are excluded from kindergarten payments, it has been imposed nevertheless in some cases.

21. In 2019, the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) dealt with a complaint from J.H, a member of the Roma community. She could not enroll her child in a kindergarten because she could not afford the fee set by the Municipal Council. The CPD found substantial discrimination from the side of Tirana Municipality toward a child of the Roma community, based on ethnicity in the field of goods and services.

22. Communes/administrative units, by excluding Roma and Egyptian children from the categories of beneficiaries to be enrolled in kindergarten services, failed to make an exception for Roma and Egyptian children, although they were aware of the situation of these communities and was committed to their integration. Lack of information<sup>12</sup> and differentiated treatment leads to the inability to enrolling children in kindergarten. Moreover, this affects parents' ability to be employed and to provide monetary income to the household.

## **IV. Violence against women and children, including domestic violence (Concluding Observations, para. 23)**

23. In its 2013 Concluding Observations, the Committee expressed concern about low levels of convictions and investigations of domestic violence. The Committee recommended Albania establish adequate crisis centres for victims and train law enforcement on addressing cases of domestic violence.

24. Domestic violence is directly related to economic and social rights, and it imposes a severe financial and economic burden on victims, households, the public sector, private businesses, and society as a whole. Based on mounting evidence from studies conducted around the world, researchers have concluded that domestic violence significantly impedes economic growth and

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<sup>11</sup> Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, *Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Albania*, (18 December 2013), U.N. Doc. E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3. ¶13.

<sup>12</sup> CPD, decision no 29, dated on 4.03.2019.

development.<sup>13</sup> Domestic violence imposes significant indirect economic costs on victims, businesses, the public sector, and society as a whole. Reduced earnings and lower productivity are among the most prominent indirect costs of domestic violence. Studies have consistently shown that abused women earn substantially less than their non-abused peers. Domestic violence often causes victims to miss days of work due to injuries, mental health problems, and fear of the abuser locating the victim at her workplace. Research has also shown that domestic violence adversely affects women's participation in the paid labor force. Fear of continued violence from a controlling and abusive partner can prevent a woman from seeking paid employment outside the home.<sup>14</sup>

25. Amendments of 2018 and 2020 of Law no. 9669 "*On Measures against domestic violence*", as amended and the drafting of bylaws on its implementation (orders, instructions, protocols) was a very important step towards the protection and promotion of the rights of survivors of domestic violence. Amendments to this legislation have significantly improved the practice of handling cases by responsible structures with an emphasis on coordination of work between them in order to protect safety and support of victims / survivors of domestic violence.
26. Also, the approval of law no. 111/2017 "*On legal aid guaranteed by the state*" and law no. 22/2018 "*On social housing in the Republic of Albania*" and bylaws in its implementation have contributed to improving the situation of survivors from violence.
27. Nevertheless, much remains to be done in terms of recognizing and implementing these laws in practice.
28. The legislation in force has emphasized the multidisciplinary handling of cases through a coordinated referral mechanism where each of the responsible institutions assumes concrete responsibilities for handling cases.
29. In June 2021, the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 327/2021 "*On the Mechanism for coordination of work between responsible authorities for referring and proceeding cases of domestic violence as well as support and rehabilitate victims of violence*" was approved. This bylaw is adopted with the latest changes in the legislation against domestic violence, recommendations of the GREVIO Committee, as well as needs and gaps identified in practice.
30. The approval of "*Protocol for management of DV cases in local level,*" a document which outlines steps to be followed when treating and documenting domestic violence, is a significant step toward the development of levels of responsibility in treating and documenting domestic violence cases. This protocol becomes obligatory after its approval from the respective Steering Committee of CRM.
31. Addressing cases according to this protocol is in its first phases and requires the inclusion and commitment of each actor in order to treat the cases as effectively as possible. The multidisciplinary treatment of domestic violence cases is an important step toward improving the situation of the victims of domestic violence and serves to protect their integrity. The practice

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<sup>13</sup> Day, Tanis, Katherine McKenna, and Audra Bowlus, *The Economic Costs of Violence against Women: An Evaluation of the Literature* (London, Ontario: United Nations and the University of Western Ontario, 2005), 11 – 14; International Center for Research on Women, *Intimate Partner Violence: High Costs to Households and Communities* (Washington, D.C.: International Center for Research on Women, 2009), 1.

<sup>14</sup> The Advocates for Human Rights, *StopVAW, Community Costs of Domestic Violence*, July 19, 2011, available at [https://www.stopvaw.org/Community\\_Costs\\_of\\_Domestic\\_Violence](https://www.stopvaw.org/Community_Costs_of_Domestic_Violence) (citations omitted).

has shown that women / girls, who are victims of other forms of violence such as sexual violence, stalking, forced marriages, or forced abortion, need multidisciplinary services for their rehabilitation though such treatments depend mainly on Health and Police Structures.

32. Monitoring of the court decisions<sup>15</sup> issued by Tirana District Court, during 2020 shows that 940 lawsuits have been reviewed with the object of issuance of immediate protection orders/protection orders – out of this number, 53% of lawsuits are accepted in court. 312 legal issues related to penal acts of domestic violence were submitted to court.
33. Given the high number of cases and the fact that victims need coordinated support, their multidisciplinary treatment is a necessity. From the Centre's practice it is identified that the majority of the above-mentioned cases has not gone through multidisciplinary treatment. Generally, the following practice has occurred: the case has showed up to Police Station, police filled out a lawsuit seeking an immediate order of protection, and then the case has been submitted to the Court.
34. HRDC finds that it is difficult for a Local coordinator against domestic violence at the municipal level to manage cases and coordinate services at the same time, especially in large municipalities where the number of incidences of reports is higher. The reasons behind this fact are the vast number of the reported cases and the complexity of the treatment of separate cases. The lack of a local coordinator in some local units or the allocation of this responsibility to an employee of the unit who carries out other duties does not provide adequate or stable treatment of the cases. There is a need to establish the structure of responsible staff for domestic and gender-based violence in accordance with amendments to the Law "On measures against domestic violence" which provides that local government units and especially the local coordinator have new duties such as monitoring and executing courts' decisions regarding protection orders.<sup>16</sup>
35. Regarding the performance of the Coordinated Referral Mechanism, we have found that some of the responsible institutions are not an active part of this mechanism and have provided a poor contribution in addressing the needs of the cases handled.
36. During 2018 - 2019, HRDC conducted a series of trainings with police officers of the Police stations of Tirana and identified several problems. Police officers were not informed of their legal obligations (especially recent changes) and they did not know their proper role in coordinating the work with other responsible parties, particularly with the local coordinator. These legal obligations are provided for in the latest changes in the legislation against domestic violence, regarding case management (risk assessment, monitoring and executing of the PO/IPO). Despite legal changes,<sup>17</sup> such as modalities of mutual treatment of domestic violence, the law is still rarely implemented properly. As the first responders to domestic violence cases

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<sup>15</sup> HRDC is monitoring Tirana District court for period 2020-2021 on issues of granting of protection orders

<sup>16</sup> Law no. 47/2018 On some additions and amendments to the law no.9669 dated 18.12.2006 "On Measures against Domestic Violence", amended

<sup>17</sup> *Common guideline of Minister of Interior and minister of Health and Social Protection no.866 dated 20.12.2018 "For procedures and model of risk assessment for cases of DV - Common guideline of Minister of Interior and minister of Health and Social Protection no. 912 dated on 27.12.2018 "For procedures and model of Preliminary Measures of immediate Order, UPMM"*

(in 99% of reported cases), police must play a more active role not only referring the cases to RM but they should be an active part of joint treatment of cases.

37. Healthcare Institutions according to the Law have a number of duties when dealing with cases of domestic violence. In particular, the role and contribution of healthcare institutions should be increased. They should be an active part in solving problematics and supporting victims of domestic and gender-based violence.
38. We have also found that the Prosecutors' Office, which is a very important institution of RM, does not offer its contribution in the meetings of the Interdisciplinary Technical Team and did not have the proper commitment in terms of supporting victims with written evidence, such as The Forensic Examination Act, or other extracts of the file, which the victim can use as evidence in the court proceedings (protection order trial). According to the Law "On measures against domestic violence" the Prosecutors office has the right to request a protection order for adults and minors, but since 2006 there is no case when the Prosecutors' Office has filed a public lawsuit.
39. Another problem identified by HRDC relates to the low number of cases of violence supported by free legal services from the state. From the monitoring of the decisions of the Tirana Judicial District Court, for the last three years, a very low number of cases have been represented by a free state lawyer. Thus, it is necessary that the authority that manages the offices of free legal service provided by the State be an active part of the Referral Mechanism. In this way, it can support cases free of charge which is an important precondition for providing the victim with protection orders and support services.
40. HRDC appreciates the work being done by the Coordinated Referral Mechanism<sup>18</sup> in some municipalities of the country, especially in those municipalities where HRDC has given and continues to give its contribution. The HRDC enhances and encourages the advancement of the ongoing efforts done to strengthen these mechanisms.
41. Law no. 111/2017 ***"On free legal aid guaranteed from the state"*** changed the procedure for obtaining free legal aid. This procedure is initiated through a request for the provision of secondary legal aid by the person concerned personally or through the postal service at the court or the prosecuting authority that initiates the investigation. The request can be made before the beginning of a judicial process, at the beginning of a judicial process and / or at any stage of the judicial process, until the judicial investigation is declared closed, according to the rules provided in the procedural legislation. This procedure makes it difficult to access legal assistance, especially in cases of domestic violence where cases are tried in the short term.<sup>19</sup> For such cases of a specific nature, it would be appropriate to have a list of trained lawyers available to the Court, in order to comply with the legal time limits of the trial and to simplify the procedure. From the practice of HRDC we have identified that individuals lack information regarding the

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<sup>18</sup> HRDC is a member of the RM at the Municipality of Tirana since 2017, HRDC has assisted since 2012 and onwards the establishment and strengthening of the RM in the Municipality of Tropoja has given its contribution to the reactivation of the RM at the Municipality of Kamza in 2018, establishment and functioning of the RM at the Municipality of Vora since 2020, as well as since November 2020 is supporting the functioning of the RM at the Municipality of Kruja – and on 2021 started improve of MR in Kukes municipality

<sup>19</sup> The trial of cases with the object of issuing the immediate protection order is carried out within 48 hours from the registration of the claim for adults and within 24 hours for juveniles.

procedure to be followed to obtain legal aid especially for women and girls located in rural areas. Since cases of domestic violence are in contact with the police first, they should receive information about legal aid at this stage.

42. Law 111/2017, dated on 14.12.2017 "*On legal aid guaranteed by the state*" also provides the possibility of exemption from the payment of court fees according to a certain procedure, for the vulnerable groups in need. Exemption from payment of court fees and court costs is granted on the basis of a request that is drafted according to the request form approved by the Minister of Justice. This request can be submitted together with the request for secondary legal aid. From the case law of the HRDC, especially for cases of divorce by victims / survivors of domestic violence, we have noticed the first cases when court has accepted requests for waiving the fee of court tariffs. We have no information for other courts in Albania.

## **V. Education (Concluding Observations, para. 34)**

43. In its 2013 Concluding Observations, the Committee expressed concern about higher dropout rates for girls compared to boys as well as lack of progress toward keeping Roma children in school.<sup>20</sup> The Committee recommended Albania increase access to education for Roma children through “scholarships, provision of schoolbooks, and reimbursement of expenses for travel.”<sup>21</sup>
44. Although the principle of inclusive education is widely accepted as a philosophy in educational institutions, its implementation faces many obstacles. The inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities in basic education remains a challenge.<sup>22</sup> There has been an increase in the number of Roma and Egyptian children enrolled in pre-school and compulsory education. School dropout rates remain high, however, due to poverty and informal employment. There is also a high dropout rate for Roma and Egyptian girls after the completion of compulsory education and for Roma and Egyptian children in rural areas because the informal labour makes it difficult for parents to send their children to school.
45. Through partial basic education, known as the second chance, children are given the opportunity to complete compulsory education and then enroll in secondary education, especially vocational education. The implementation of inclusive education policies also requires the provision of quality education, including the level of qualification of educational staff, the creation of equal conditions and opportunities, and the elimination of exclusion of children belonging to Roma and Egyptian minorities in certain schools.
46. Despite the measures taken according to the legal framework aimed at promoting the education of children and young people of these communities, the situation requires intervention due to several factors such as economic difficulties, children being used as a labor force in families, or differentiated treatment in educational institutions, thus leading to children abandoning school.

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<sup>20</sup> Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, *Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Albania*, (18 December 2013), U.N. Doc. E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3. ¶34.

<sup>21</sup> Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, *Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Albania*, (18 December 2013), U.N. Doc. E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3. ¶34.

<sup>22</sup> CPD, Yearly report 2019, page 40

47. Girls or children with disabilities who also belong to other marginalized groups such as the Roma or Egyptian community are even more exposed to risk of experiencing harder discriminatory situations. To address the above issues, positive measures should be taken regarding:

- raising awareness in the education system,
- inclusion of concepts and actions against patterns of discriminatory behavior in the school curriculum,
- implementation of legal obligations on entire population education, especially women and girls, minorities and people with disabilities;
- ensuring the right to education in minority languages and in appropriate ways for people with disabilities.

## **VII. Suggested Questions for the Government of Albania**

- What concrete measures has Albania taken to minimize the discrimination among the Roma/Egyptian minorities?
- What steps has Albania taken to increase access to social housing for marginalized groups?
- What measures has Albania put in place to prevent discrimination against Roma and Egyptian people when they are accessing housing?
- What steps has Albania taken toward increasing the scope of proof of income to access housing and employment to include income from informal work?
- What measures, if any, has Albania put in place to increase access to employment opportunities for Roma and Egyptian communities?
- What steps has Albania taken to increase access to economic benefits and other services for marginalized groups such as Roma and Egyptian communities?
- What steps has Albania taken to remove obstacles to obtaining birth registration of children for the Roma population?
- What developments have been made in drafting the Framework Law which includes all forms of gender-based violence? When is it estimated to be approved?
- What steps has Albania taken toward increasing the number of staff in administrative units responsible for handling domestic violence cases?
- What training has the government of Albania provided to police officers, prosecutors, and health care workers on implementing domestic violence legislation and new protocols associated with the law?
- What measures has Albania taken to improve the institutional cooperation between all members of the Referral Mechanism and each involved institution?
- What, if any, awareness-raising campaigns has Albania conducted to increase access to and education about free legal aid provided by the Law "On legal aid guaranteed by the state."

- What steps has the government of Albania taken to increase access to education for Roma, Egyptian, and other minority populations? What steps has it taken to address high dropout rates for girls?