

Translated from Spanish.

Current situation of women in Uruguay

Progress since Beijing

Women make up 51.6 per cent of the population; they have a life expectancy increasing, with the result that in the 13 per cent of the population aged 65 and over the number of women aged 65 and over is twice that of men.

The literacy rate is 96.7 per cent for women and 95.3 per cent for men, and

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Women make up 42.3 per cent of the active population (45.5 per cent) of Uruguayan women enter with a high level of education (three secondary education) however only one of the gender wage gap and barriers to women's the private sector

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Various proposals for a quota system in

Patriarchal cultural factors continue society that is resistant to change, so that Unfortunately, it is in education at all levels gender perspective has been least successful

In Uruguay, as in the rest of the region Conference, with its Regional Programme of and the Caribbean, and the Fourth World Conference for Action, gave rise to a social movement country as a result both of women's mobilization

the Sixth Regional of the Women of Latin America on Women, with its Platform spread throughout the of Government action at the local and national levels.

the following positive developments took place in civil society of the Housewives and Consumer Protection League, which has 500 members in the capital city, drawn from all social strata and occupational groups, and is expanding through branches throughout the country. Its members continuously, through forums, interaction with other women's housewives, to defend their rights in the activities even Bill, and it has joined various national networks.

Establishment of the made up of over 700 women members increasing their output and also participating in the country's rural women's groups such as the the regeneration of agricultural

Association of Rural Women's Groups various groups which have succeeded in national visibility by, inter alia, rural exposition this year and from other uruguay Network of Rural Women's Groups and

Expansion throughout

in 1995 of the Uruguayan Women's Movement, with the participation of members of the political parties represented in parliament

Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001, the Network has begun to promote positive measures to create the necessary conditions for women's equitable participation and political representation in trade unions, political parties and other formal and informal areas of civil society, holding training workshops to empower future women candidates. Beneficiaries participate actively in the design and preparation of the inputs which they receive, focusing especially on the exercise of autonomy as one element of empowerment, particularly in the capital city, they study the bills being discussed in Parliament and have in turn submitted several bills to political parties. They also conducted an opinion poll on women's political participation.

4. Establishment in May 1996, upon completion of the activities of the Uruguay Initiative Group, of a National Committee to Follow-up the Beijing Commitments.

ee has coordinated its activities with various pre-existing organizations (NGOs), including local branches of the Women's Movement, and is working actively throughout Uruguay, by means of seminars and courses, to provide training with a gender perspective, to monitor and follow up the Government's commitments made in Cairo and Beijing through, inter alia, working committees with NGOs.

In addition to Government action, it is important to mention the existence of six committees, each of which includes representatives of civil society.

The Commission is responsible for proposals relating to, and follow-up of, the commitments made in 12 September 1995. The Commission has a Government secretariat with functions through the National Institute for the Family and the Environment, and is made up of representatives of the Ministries of the Economy, Labour and Social Security, Public Health, Housing, Regional Planning and the Environment, and Education and Culture; it also has 10 working committees made up of representatives of civil society.

The National Women's Rights Committee, established on 10 November 1996, which is headed by the Minister for Education and Culture and made up of representatives of the National Institute for the Family and the Environment, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the National Mothers' Institute (INAMC), legislators, feminists, etc. It is organizing a major national survey of Uruguayan women on their views on the situation of women's rights throughout the country, and is developing gender perspective modules for courses taught at

This Commission is a non-governmental organization. It organizes meetings, seminars and courses to promote the fulfilment of the Government's commitments. It also recommends

Government

With a view to establishing a new society:

1. The Commission has made in 1996 its counterparts in the Women and Social Security and Environmental Environments up of representatives

2. The Commission is chaired by the Minister of Education and Culture. It has representatives from the Social Security, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the National Mothers' Institute, lawyers and social workers, and women to accompany the Commission throughout the country. It

at

6. Interministerial Committee for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, established on 3 March 1996 and made up of the Minister of the Interior, who chairs it, the Minister for Education and Culture, the Minister for Public Health, the National Institute for the Family and Women, the National Crime Prevention Office, the (female) Chief of the Specialized Police Station for the Protection of Women, the women's health and domestic violence sections of the

national plan for the prevention, detection and handling of domestic violence and for the coordination of activities between the Government and civil society.

bill for the prevention and punishment of domestic violence, which is already before Parliament and which, if adopted without major amendments, will be the most up-to-date and comprehensive legislation of its kind in the region.

In addition, a National Crime Prevention Office was established in the Ministry of the Interior. It is headed by a woman and has a special section dealing with domestic violence, permitting coordinated action between the National Institute for the Family and Women and the national police. In addition, seven specialized police stations for the protection of women and two offices of women's affairs have been established in the country's interior and there are programmes for the prevention of domestic violence and for assisting victims of such violence.

In the legislative area, there have been three notable developments:

- 1. Domestic violence was criminalized in 1995;
- 2. The Convention of Belém do Pará was ratified and incorporated into domestic law on 5 January 1996;

Regulations for the enforcement of Act No. 889 on harassment and opportunity for women to report harassment have been in force since 2 June 1989 but was not being applied. It includes the offence of sexual harassment, a fact which gave rise to extensive national debate and media coverage of the provisions of the Act.

In early 1997, a women's health section was established in the planning to reaffirm women's full right to assistance to women more efficiently and to comprehensive health care.

Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a subprogramme on elective abortion based on research carried out by the reproductive health and on community action by physicians and nurses. In 1996, in cooperation with the sexual and reproductive health programme motherhood and fatherhood was implemented. An Honorary Advisory Committee of Sexual Action by physicians and nurses. A domestic violence programme has been in existence since 1996 and, lastly, in 1998, a committee of women and the family by the Pan American Health Organization.

including: Educational reforms are un

(a) Full-time operation of schools in the poorest areas of the capital city (12 in all);

(b) Lowering the age of admission to (compulsory) preschool to 4 years. This will be further lowered to 3 years in 1999.

These measures will result in children spending more time in a protected school environment (the school day will be extended to 8 hours) and will considerably improve their level of education. Mothers, particularly those working outside the home, will have their responsibilities lightened and they will have their children in a safe place with other children.

The centres will also benefit from the introduction of a policy of direct relations with NGOs in order to support their activities. The centres have signed agreements with some of them to provide training and seminars on equality of treatment and opportunity.

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