

Committee Guide

UN WOMEN



**Ensuring the Equal
Economic Participation of
Women**



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1. Personal Introduction

Christopher Schütte

Esteemed delegates of the UN Women,

I am excited to welcome you to the 2026 OLMUN UN Women! My name is Christopher Schütte, and I will be chairing this committee together with Emily. I am 18 years old and am currently writing my Abitur exams in my hometown of Wildeshausen. In my free time I play the violin and like to read.

My MUN experience goes back to 2024, when I first participated at OLMUN as a delegate for UNESCO. I enjoyed that so much that I participated as a delegate once more the year after in the same committee. These two experiences empowered me to decide I wanted to chair for myself, and I couldn't be more excited to chair for the first time this year.

I hope to see you and the solutions you have come up with for this year's topic in June!

Best regards,
Christopher Schütte

Emily Singer

Dear delegates of this year's UN Women,

My name is Emily Singer. I'm 19 years old and I will be one of your chairs in the UN Women. This year's OLMUN conference will mark my sixth conference overall and my second time chairing. My MUN-journey started about five years ago in my school's club and last year I had the honor of chairing OLMUN's WHA, which was an amazing experience and made me want to chair again this year.

Currently I'm in year 13, so when OLMUN starts I will (hopefully) have graduated and will start studying administration science. In my free time I enjoy reading, listening to true crime podcasts and baking.

I hope you are going to have a great time at OLMUN 2026 and I'm looking forward to meeting you all!

Yours,
Emily Singer

2. UN Women

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was established in 2010 with the goal of supporting the UN's efforts on gender equality. The committee has a main role in fighting gender issues around the world including violence against women and girls and economic inequality like unequal pay. By improving national institutions and ensuring that women's rights are incorporated into international frameworks and development plans, UN Women promotes the development and execution of gender-sensitive laws and policies. UN Women provides governments with expert knowledge and policy recommendations, while working on sustainable structural changes. This work happens in close collaboration with civil movements and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

An example of the committee's work on the problem of sexual harassment and violence is the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Program, where UN Women works together with communities and local authorities in order to make areas safer for women and girls. With programmes like this, the committee helps to strengthen inclusivity and equality around the world.

Women continue to face major challenges to full economic participation, even though there have been significant improvements and multiple programs for gender equality already exist. The ongoing gender pay gap and the unequal distribution of unpaid care and house work are one of the main problems. In addition to women holding more house and care work, they are overrepresented in low-wage jobs, leading to missing financial independence. Their general access to sustainable economic security and independence, and leadership roles is restricted by these inequalities.

This brings us to this year's topic: **Ensuring the Equal Economic Participation of Women.**

3. Information regarding the topic

Ensuring equal economic participation of women is not only a policy goal but something that can be observed in everyday life across all societies. It is reflected in who participates in the workforce, who has access to education and financial resources, and who is able to make independent economic decisions. Despite significant progress in recent decades, women continue to face structural barriers that limit their opportunities to fully participate in economic life. These inequalities are often rooted in long-standing social expectations, unequal distribution of unpaid care work, and persistent gaps in access to equal employment

conditions. Understanding these challenges is essential in order to address why economic equality has not yet been achieved in practice.

Ensuring the Equal Economic Participation is a key component of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 set out by the United Nations, specifically goals 5.4 (Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate), 5.5 (Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decisionmaking in political, economic and public life) and 5.A (Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws).

These goals lay out a framework that resolutions and solutions by the United Nations are based upon as well as give a standard of evaluation for effectiveness of certain policies.

Throughout the years there have been many angles of tackling the issues faced by women, with the first milestone arguably being the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women¹ introduced by General Assembly resolution 34/180. It sought to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of life, including political, social, and economic spheres, by legally obligating State Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure equality between men and women. As defined in Article 1, discrimination includes any distinction or restriction based on sex that impairs women's enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In regard to economic participation, the Convention addresses key aspects such as equal access to employment, education, and economic opportunities, particularly in Articles 10, 11, and 13. These provisions emphasize women's rights to work, equal pay, and participation in economic and social life. However, while CEDAW establishes a broad and comprehensive framework for equality, it does not provide detailed, concrete mechanisms for implementation, nor does it sufficiently address structural economic barriers such as unpaid care work or systemic inequalities in labor markets.

A further important milestone was the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. This document marked a shift from general legal equality to targeted policy action, explicitly identifying "Women and the Economy" as one of its critical areas of concern. It highlights issues such as the gender pay gap, limited access

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

to financial resources, and the unequal distribution of unpaid labor, calling on governments to implement structural reforms and actively promote women’s economic independence².

Building on these earlier frameworks, UN Women has in recent years focused more directly on practical implementation through initiatives such as the Women’s Economic Empowerment Strategy³. This strategy aims to increase women’s access to decent work, social protection, and financial services, while also addressing systemic barriers such as discriminatory laws and social norms. It reflects a broader shift within the United Nations from norm-setting to active policy support and measurable outcomes.

Particular focus, especially in recent resolutions by the General Assembly, was paid to earlier referenced SDG 5.4⁴ with growing recognition of unpaid care work as a key economic issue. As outlined in plans in accordance with this SDG, policies such as parental leave schemes and childcare support systems have been introduced in some countries, enabling more women to enter or remain in the workforce.

Produced by UN Women, the “Gender snapshot”⁵ is the world’s leading source of data on gender equality and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that can supplement your research on facts and figures to gain an acute understanding of the current situation of implementations of the goals. Drawing from more than 100 data sources, it tracks progress on gender equality across all 17 SDGs. With five years to go, and thirty since the Beijing Platform for Action, the report offers both a warning and a way forward. It also anchors the Beijing+30 Action Agenda, identifying six priority areas for accelerated delivery, including two with cost investment pathways on digital inclusion and freedom from poverty.

The Beijing +30 Action Agenda⁶ is the 30-year follow-up to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It is a UN-led review and commitment framework around 2025 that is meant to assess progress since the original Beijing Conference on Women (1995), identify where gender equality goals have not yet been achieved and to renew and strengthen commitments by UN Member States to accelerate implementation, here the perspectives on economic goals laid out by Actions 1 and especially 2 reinforce the UNs commitment to the core of this year’s topic.

Taken together, existing international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development

2 <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>
 3 <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/un-women-womens-economic-empowerment-strategy-en.pdf>
 4 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/80/152>
 5 <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2025>
 6 <https://www.unwomen.org/en/resources/gender-snapshot/theme>

Goals, CEDAW, and the Beijing Platform for Action provide a clear foundation for addressing economic inequality. However, their implementation remains uneven, and the gap between legal commitments and real-world outcomes continues to be significant. While progress can be seen in certain areas, such as increased access to education and formal employment, structural barriers still prevent full and equal participation of women in economic life. This makes it clear that the challenge is not the absence of solutions, but the need for their consistent and effective application at both national and international level.

4. Possible solution: What Works and What Does Not

When evaluating possible solutions to ensure the equal economic participation of women, it is essential to distinguish between normative commitments, implemented policies, and their actual effectiveness. While the United Nations system has produced extensive frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 5.4, 5.5, and 5.A), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), and UN Women’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Strategy, recent data shows that progress remains slow and structurally uneven in practice.

Drawing on instruments such as the Sustainable Development Goals, General Assembly resolutions (for example A/RES/74/128⁷ which defines the follow up action of the follow up to Beijing), and UN Women’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Strategy, several key areas of action have emerged. At the same time, these approaches reveal important limitations in implementation that remain central to the issue.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2025⁸ by the World Economic Forum, the gender gap in economic participation and opportunity remains one of the largest globally, with only about 60–61% of the gap closed. At the current pace, full gender parity across all sectors is still over a century away (approximately 123 years). This highlights a key issue: while policies exist, their implementation and structural impact are insufficient.

One of the most widely supported and effective approaches, also emphasized in UN Women strategies, is the expansion of care infrastructure. Policies such as accessible childcare, parental leave, and social protection systems outlined in the resolutions directly address SDG 5.4 by redistributing unpaid care work. However, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO)⁹, an estimated 708 million women worldwide are outside the labour force

7 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/74/128>
 8 https://reports.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2025.pdf
 9 <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/unpaid-care-work-prevents-708-million-women-participating-labour-market>

due to unpaid care responsibilities, making it the single largest constraint on women's labour market participation globally.

This directly limits the effectiveness of policies aimed at formal labour market inclusion, as women are structurally excluded before they can even benefit from equal employment opportunities. The same ILO analysis emphasizes that care responsibilities remain the main reason women are not entering or staying in the workforce, despite increasing global policy attention.

Another frequently proposed solution is legal reform to ensure equal economic rights, including access to land ownership, inheritance, and financial services (SDG 5.A). While many countries have formally adopted such laws, their effectiveness is often undermined by weak enforcement. A recent World Bank assessment¹⁰ found a significant gap between legal frameworks and real-world application, with enforcement mechanisms consistently lagging behind legislation. This means that even where rights exist on paper, women often still face barriers in accessing jobs, credit, or property.

Additionally, access to decent work and financial inclusion (SDG 5.5) has been a central pillar of UN Women's Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy. Expanding women's access to banking, credit, and entrepreneurship opportunities has proven effective in increasing economic independence and economic performance in general, particularly in developing economies¹¹. However, structural barriers, such as lack of education, digital access, or discriminatory norms, continue to limit the scalability of these measures.

Overall, the main challenge is not the absence of solutions, but rather their fragmented implementation and lack of structural depth. Effective policies tend to be those that combine multiple approaches: legal reform, social protection, labor market regulation, and cultural change. In contrast, isolated measures, such as single legal reforms without enforcement or workplace policies without social support systems, have shown limited success.

For delegates, this means that strong resolutions should not only propose new measures, but also address how these policies will be implemented, funded, and monitored. Bridging the gap between commitment and reality remains the central challenge in achieving equal economic participation for women.

More general figures on this topic can be found on the website of UN Women¹².

¹⁰ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/2d98382b-4cc6-43ba-b140-06ea4ca9a51e/content>

¹¹ <https://www.imf.org/-/media/files/publications/sdn/2018/sdn1806.pdf>

¹² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures#87144>

5. Research tips

In order to have fruitful and successful debates, everyone needs to know their assigned country's position on the topic and the topic in depth. To help you with your research we wrote this committee guide. It gives a general overview of the topic and on what one could focus on, but it does not replace thorough research.

Feel free to use links used in the committee guide, but please do not rely entirely upon them and try to find your own sources that are valuable for your countries point of view. Helpful are the ones on the official UN-website¹³ and country's official websites, but also articles of any kind can be beneficial resources, when made sure that they are reliable sources. In order to do that, compare your findings with other websites and do not totally rely on one single source.

It is important to remind yourself that during OLMUN you are a delegate of your assigned delegation. You do not have to act completely within your country's position since it is sometimes necessary to recognize that diplomatic compromises are possible and necessary with other countries, but keep in mind what is non-negotiable, what you might be able to overlook and what boundaries your country might be willing to push. Try to understand your assigned country rather than just researching the topic, but try to stay topic-oriented. You cannot know everything about your delegation, but when research is done properly, one can fill in the gaps that might occur during active debate.

Moreover, it might be helpful to already know some positioning to other countries. Which countries might be possible allies? With which countries has one worked before? Are there countries that you cannot work with under no circumstances? When you research also for your own positioning to other countries, the first part of lobbying might be easier and you can establish contact with the fellow delegation easier, but just because there was a good work-relationship prior does not mean that the beliefs are the same on this topic, although it is likely. A great first impression is always the policy paper, which is written on the basis of the research¹⁴.

Every detail and information that you obtain will give you more insight and help to get an overall picture of the topic and your country's opinion. We recommend to everyone to begin their research ahead of time to ensure that you can do it stress free and thoroughly. To help you you we have a few questions prepared, which would be insightful to know:

¹³ <https://www.un.org/en/>

¹⁴ [https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/\(Delegation Overview\)](https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/(Delegation%20Overview))

- a. What is the female labor force participation rate in your country?
- b. What economic barriers do women face in your country/ globally?
- c. What actions has your country taken to address the economic inequality of women?
- d. What policies and programs globally already exist to address the issue?
- e. What solutions can your country realistically propose?
- f. What are non-negotiable policies in your country that you are not willing to change or strike? What are policies that you are not willing to establish?
- g. Which countries might have similar points of view and might be potential allies?

6. Preparation and deadlines

6.1. Preparation

Besides researching you should also prepare a draft resolution as well as a policy paper and hand them in.

A **draft resolution** is a document that summarises the topic, its problems and suggests solutions, which will be the foundations of our debate. Therefore, it is of high importance that you prepare a constructive draft resolution, which needs to be researched properly.

A resolution has different parts, but the most important parts are the

1. preambulatory clauses and
2. operative clauses.

To explain the difference briefly: A preambulatory clause describes the current situation and already existing solutions and policies, whereas an operative clause describes new solutions and policies that your country wants to establish. There is a special form of writing the resolution, which is expected by you. For an explanation on how to write these documents please look at the **OLMUN Handbook**¹⁵. Examples of previous resolutions can be found on the OLMUN website¹⁶.

We ask you for a minimum of 4 preambulatory and not more than 10 and at least 5 operative clauses.

A **policy paper** is a document which presents your country's position on the topic. There are three parts to a good policy paper:

1. Brief explanation of the topic,
- ¹⁵ [https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ \(Handbook\)](https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ (Handbook))
¹⁶ [https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ \(Archive\)](https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ (Archive))

2. Position of your country and how it is related,
3. Policies and ideas that your country would like to see in the resolution.

We will give each and everyone of you the opportunity to read out your policy paper since it will give you a general idea of other policies and help you gain allies for lobbying. Therefore, we ask you to please prepare an accurate and thoughtful paper, since it is the first expression of your ideas in the committee and very important.

The policy paper should be roughly half a page and not exceed the time limit of 60 seconds. In order to stay within the time limit, it is helpful to practice reading it out loud.

As previously mentioned an explanation on how to write both a resolution and a policy paper can be found in the **OLMUN Handbook**¹⁷. We recommend all of you to take a look at it, to learn about it or to refresh your memory.

During the debate you will need to know and act by the **Rules of Procedure**¹⁸. To be prepared we ask you to read through those to ensure a smooth debate. That being said: If there are any questions about that before or during the debate, please feel free to ask us! We are here for you and understanding the procedure will help everyone.

We would also like to remind everyone that OLMUN has a certain **dress code**. Male participants must wear a suit and tie, and female participants are allowed to wear blouses, skirts, suits, and more. Also make sure to wear the correct footwear. We are aware that formal shoes might be a bit uncomfortable; we recommend coming in your normal streetwear and changing shoes at the venue. If you are not dressed correctly, there will be **punishments** during our debate¹⁹.

During evening activities there is no dresscode, you just have to make sure to wear your OLMUN-badge at all times.

At the moment we do not know our exact venue, if that changes we will let you know as soon as possible.

We are aware of AI and how tempting it might be to use it for your texts. We are not banning you from using AI entirely, but we ask you to use it resourcefully and double check everything and please write your texts (policy paper and draft resolution) yourself. If we notice that the document is mainly written by AI and online checking tools support our suspicion, we will ask you to rewrite your texts.

- ¹⁷ [https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ \(Handbook\)](https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ (Handbook))
¹⁸ [https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ \(Rules of Procedure\)](https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ (Rules of Procedure))
¹⁹ [How to dress for OLMUN - OLMUN](https://www.olmun.org/Downloads/ (How to dress for OLMUN - OLMUN))

It is possible to give an **opening speech** during the Opening Ceremony in the General Assembly, which has a maximum of 45 seconds. In order to give a speech, you must inform the presidents till the 31st of May via this mail address: president@olmun.org. Further information about that can also be found in the Handbook. This is, however, not mandatory.

6.2. Deadlines

	Guidelines	When?	To whom?
Policy paper	Max. 1 Minute/ about half a page	22nd of May	unwomen@olmun.org
Resolution	Min. 4 preambulatory clauses; Min. 5 operative clauses	22nd of May	unwomen@olmun.org
Opening Speech	Max. 45 seconds	31st of May	president@olmun.org

7. Last words

Dear delegates,

We are incredibly excited to meet you all! We look forward to lots of fruitful debates and great evening activities and hope we will all together have a great time at this year's OLMUN.

Please prepare yourself properly and respect our deadlines.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate and feel free to contact us under unwomen@olmun.org or our private mail addresses: emily.singer@olmun.org or christopher.schuette@olmun.org

See you all in Oldenburg

Yours,

Emily Singer and Christopher Schütte

