REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
PERMANENT MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

Group of Friends of Older Persons
United Nations New York

SPECIAL PROCEDURES
UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

NGO Committee on AGEING NY

70TH Session
Commission of the Status of Women

Side event

The Intersection of Ageism and Sexism

Organised by Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the UN in cooperation with the UN Independent Expert for the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons and cosponsored by the Group of Friends of Older Persons and NGO Committee on Ageing

Wednesday 11 March 2026
4:45pm – 6:00pm;

United Nations Headquarters – Conference Room 9

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The world population is rapidly ageing and the share of older persons in the total population is increasing. Women represent the majority of older persons and their share of the global female population is rising.

Ageism and sexism are among the most pervasive forms of discrimination globally. While both have individually received increasing attention in public discourse, policy, and organizational diversity strategies, their intersection remains significantly underexplored.

Gender inequality in older age is a reflection of intersecting inequalities women face throughout their life span. The intersection of discrimination based on age and gender leads to unique forms of inequality, including negative stereotypes that combine ageism and sexism.

In addition, the vital contributions, experiences and concerns of older women often remain invisible and disregarded. Older women worldwide provide unpaid care work to others and are still perceived as unproductive part of society. The policy neglect of long-term care services that promote autonomy and independence thereby becomes a gender issue, and it requires urgent attention.

As a result of many disadvantages older women are also at greater risk of violence, abuse and neglect. Furthermore, they are facing barriers in the areas of education, training and lifelong learning. Lifelong inequality in the labour market also results in lower pensions. All of these unequal treatments have an impact on their social inclusion, economic status, autonomy and independence. As a consequence, older women are more likely than older men to live in poverty, and the risk of poverty is even higher among certain groups, such as women with disabilities or migrant women.

The situation of older women is alarming in armed conflicts and other emergencies. They have been victims of serious human rights violations and face heightened risks of multiple forms of discrimination as well as sexual and gender-based violence.

To manage these challenges and overcome the gaps, faced by older women, disaggregated data and policies with specific measures based on existing good practices to combat inequalities are needed. The systematic, meaningful and effective participation of older women in policy dialogues and decision making as well as in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life is also vital. The elimination of gender inequality and discrimination is crucial for older women to live in dignity and autonomy and for the full enjoyment of their human rights.

In particular better promotion and protection of the rights of older women in their full diversity must be guaranteed in the international human rights framework. The establishment of an open-ended intergovernmental working group by the UN Human Rights Council Resolution 58/13 to elaborate a draft international legally binding instrument on the human rights of older persons offers an opportunity to also address intersecting inequalities faced by older women.

In addition to the focus area of CSW70 "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all older women", this side event aims to address gender inequality and discrimination in older age through the intersection between the age and gender and how this affects the enjoyment of human rights by older women.

Event Objectives

1. Raise awareness about how ageism and sexism intersect in workplaces, media, healthcare, policymaking, and society at large.
2. Highlight lived experiences of individuals affected by compounded discrimination.
3. Present research, data, and case studies that illustrate structural and cultural patterns of bias.
4. Explore practical solutions for organizations, institutions, and policymakers.
5. Foster intergenerational dialogue and solidarity.

Guiding questions:

1. What kind of best practices and measures can be shared to ensure that Member States adopt and duplicate these measures with the aim to ensure and promote human right of older women and what can be the role of the NGOs?
2. How can discriminatory social and cultural measures be best addressed?
3. What kind of measures are needed to highlight the specific risks of older women?
4. How can we best combat the intersection of ageism and sexism?
5. What mechanisms should be used to ensure better participation of older women in policymaking?
6. How can the United Nations system contribute to better addressing the status of older women and the intersection between discrimination based on age and gender?

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DRAFT PROGRAMME

Welcome remarks

- H.E. Mr. Samuel Žbogar, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations

Opening remarks

- H.E. Ms. Darja Bavdaž Kuret, Ambassador-at-Large for Women, Peace and Security, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia
- Statement of the Group of Friends of Older Persons
- Ms. Ilze Brands Kehris, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights

Panel discussion

- Mr. Pio Smith, Assistant Secretary-General and UNFPA Deputy Executive Director – Programme ad interim
- Ms. Maryse Guimond, UN Women
- Ms. Claudia Mahler, UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons
- Ms. Bethany Brown, AARP, NGO Committee on Ageing

Discussion, Q&A session

Closing remarks

- H.E. Mr. Samuel Žbogar, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations

The side event will be broadcasted on UN WebTV.

Kindly register by Tuesday 10 March 2026: https://forms.gle/zzSN6VqFyESUSGY18