



Central and Eastern European Women's Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

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Table of contents:

- Burning Issue
- Regional Updates
- Global Updates
- Upcoming events
- Publications & Resources
- Call to Action

BURNING ISSUE

Report from the Central and Eastern Europe Health Consultation is now available.

The Central and Eastern Europe Health Consultation was convened by ASTRA and Eastern European Alliance for Reproductive Choice in the Russian Federation from 26th to 27th January 2013. The meeting was organised as one of the inputs into the Post 2015 consultation process, with funding from the World Health Organization. Over 20 health experts representing various CSOs from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia met in Moscow to discuss the future development agenda. As a result of the meeting a CEE Health Consultation Report has been prepared and is now available [online](#). The report is crucial to the Post 2015 Process as health, especially women's health, must play a central role in the future development framework. The current understanding of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights has been very limited and has often presented women's issues in an incomplete manner. The future framework should put Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in its focus and also be more inclusive in terms of regional representation and ensure the presence of the Central and Eastern Europe region within the global dialogue.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Possible abortion restrictions in Turkey. A new law on abortion is expected to be introduced which would drastically limit women's access to safe and legal abortion. Under the draft law terminations will only be permitted if carried out by obstetricians in hospitals. Currently the procedure is also offered by certified practitioners and local health clinics. The new law would also introduce the right for doctors to refuse performing an abortion on the grounds of their conscience and additionally a mandatory "consideration time" for women requesting a termination of pregnancy. This would dramatically limit availability of the procedure, especially in rural areas. In the past months there were several anti-choice attempts from the Government. The new law is expected to be presented to the Government and voted on in the coming weeks.

Source: www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/feb/01/turkish-law-abortion-impossible

Domestic violence on the rise in Armenia. Even though there is no official registry of cases of domestic violence, within the period of six months six women died as a result of incidents involving their husbands or fathers in law. A 2008 Amnesty International survey found that out of 1 000 women more than three out of ten suffered from physical abuse and 66% suffered from psychological abuse. On January 21st the Armenian government refused to introduce the first ever domestic violence law. With no funding and support from the officials civil society struggles to meet the growing needs themselves. There are currently three private shelters for victims of domestic violence and a few NGOs offering a telephone hotline in the country.

Source: www.eurasianet.org/node/66484

Civil partnerships in Poland – the discussion continues. The ruling Civic Platform's party liberal and conservative wings are at a strong opposition regarding civil partnerships and have yet not found a compromise. Previous attempts by liberal MPs in the Parliament to introduce legislation on civil partnerships have failed to get the necessary majority. The Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski who was allied to the Civic Platform recently said that such "radical solutions" as introducing civil partnerships for all might not be possible without changes in the Constitution. However, the President sees the need for guaranteeing certain rights to informal couples are needed and declared himself in favor of introducing such regulations.

Source: www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/128021,Ruling-party-liberal-and-conservative-wings-at-war-over-civil-partnerships

www.thenews.pl/1/9/Artykul/128475,Civil-partnerships-%E2%80%98could-clash-with-Polands-constitution

Civil partnerships in Lithuania – premature discussion. Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė said that discussions on introducing same-sex partnerships in Lithuania were premature. She did not express position on the issue herself. Partnerships among heterosexual couples are also not legal.

Source: www.15min.lt/en/article/politics/lithuanian-president-says-discussions-on-same-sex-partnership-are-premature-526-309293

“Gay propaganda” in Russia. On January 25th the State Duma passed a bill on the first reading that prohibits homosexual propaganda aimed at children. The legislation is very loosely worded so that it can give the authorities maximum space for pushing their anti-LGBT agenda. The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs said Russia’s draft law banning homosexual propaganda protects the rights of the majority from a group that wants to promote its own value system. He also admitted that there is no law forbidding homosexual relations between two consenting adults, there are however means to forbid “homosexual propaganda”.

Source: <http://rt.com/politics/lavrov-homosexual-propaganda-united-nations-law-466/>

The European Parliament Working Group on Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS and Development (EPWG) organised an roundtable on the “EU’s unique responsibility in the global fight for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights”. The meeting took place in the European Parliament on January 24th. Participants stressed the importance of keeping issues of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, as well as child and maternal health, high on EU priorities and also in the Post 2015 development agenda.

Source: www.epfweb.org/conferences/50/3701/european-parliament-epwg-roundtable-on-srhr-gathers-over-80-participants

FEMM Committee discussed the Post 2015 MDG framework. On February 18th several Members of the European Parliament discussed the Post 2015 MDG framework. MEP Anne Delvaux (EPP, Belgium) presented her [draft opinion](#) in which she stressed the importance of including at least one goal related to gender equality in the future development of the framework. MEP Sophia In’t Veld (ALDE, the Netherlands) raised the question of the European Union’s political will on the matters related to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

To watch the debate in the FEMM Committee go to:

www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/committees/video?event=20130218-1630-COMMITTEE-FEMM&category=COMMITTEE&format=wmv

GLOBAL UPDATES

United Nations will hold a special session to mark and evaluate the 20-year-old-plan to slow global population. The UN General Assembly agreed to hold the session on September 22nd 2014. This event will mark the 20th anniversary of the Cairo Conference when 180 nations adopted a developing plan focused on women's empowerment, birth control and economic development. The Cairo Conference was also very significant as it changed the UN Populations Fund's focus from numerical targets and statistics to promoting individual women's and men's choices as well as supporting education and economic development of girls.

Source: www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-to-hold-special-session-in-2014-to-assess-20-year-old-plan-to-slow-global-population/2013/02/21/2b28c680-7c55-11e2-9073-e9dda4ac6a66_story.html

Sexual and Reproductive Health included in the Communiqué from the Meeting of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The meeting took place in Monrovia, Liberia from January 30th to February 1st and was meant to strategise on the follow up on the Millenium Development Goals, which expire in 2015. Following this meeting the UN Secretary General's HLP issued a statement which includes reference to Sexual and Reproductive Health. There was also a growing consensus that women and girls are a "core part" of the poverty eradication framework for the future. The outcome document for civil society organizations was released on January 30th and includes several references to population dynamics and SRHR. It can be accessed [online](#).

To read the full High Level Panel communiqué visit www.worldwewant2015.org/node/305724

Source:

<http://ngosbeyond2014.org/articles/2013/2/2/sexual-and-reproductive-health-included-in-the-communique-fr.html>

www.epfweb.org/epf-publications/i151/c2/epf-news/un-post-2015-global-survey-and-civil-society-document-released-ahead-of-monrovia-summit/

www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2013/feb/01/gender-equality-central-development-women

The U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture has called for action against "sex normalizing practices" and other, "often undetected forms of abusive practices that occur under the auspices of health care policies" in his recent [report](#) to the UN. The Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan E. Méndez, has called for action in cases of "reparative" therapy aimed at making gay children straight, as well as legal movement against "forced genital-normalizing surgery" being performed on children who are born with genitals that are sexually atypical". He also recognized reproductive rights violations (such as involuntary sterilization, denial of legally available health services, especially in regards to abortion services) as discrimination on the basis of gender and humiliation in institutional settings. This report will go for further discussion to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Source: www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/02/ending-forced-genital-normalizing-surgeries/273300

Population Dynamics Civil Society Consultation. Representatives from over 40 civil society organizations working in population growth, sexual and reproductive health and rights, aging, migration and urbanization met in Geneva on 18-19 February to contribute to the Call to Integrate Population Dynamics in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. A previous version of this document is available on the Population Dynamics Section of the [World We Want 2015](http://WorldWeWant2015.org) website.

Source: www.worldwewant2015.org/node/301076

Public Dialogue and Leadership Meeting on Addressing Inequalities in the Post 2015 Development Agenda took place in Copenhagen, Denmark on 18-19 February 2013. It was co-hosted by UNICEF, UN Women and the Governments of Ghana and Denmark. This meeting was the culmination of the Global Thematic Consultation on Addressing Inequalities in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. The final report and the findings of the consultation were reviewed.

Source: www.iisd.ca/post2015/gcai/html/crsvol208num1e.html

One Billion Rising. On February 14th a worldwide campaign mobilised women and men from the entire world and created a global solidarity cutting across borders, races, genders, religion and class. In over 200 cities across the globe hundreds of people of all ages united in an action to protest against violence against women under the theme “Strike, Dance, Rise!” This worldwide campaign was started by Eve Ensler, feminist and activist, author of “Vagina Monologues”.

Source: www.onebillionrising.org

Germany accepts adoption within gay couples. The highest court issued a historical ruling which introduces adoption laws within gay couples living in civil partnerships. If one of the partners adopts a child, the other partner will have the right to become adoptive mother or father of that child. The law, until now, allowed for adoption only of partner’s biological children.

Source: www.dw.de/germanys-top-court-extends-gay-adoption-law/a-16609658

PUBLICATIONS & RESOURCES

Euromapping 2012, newest edition of the annual overview of European development assistance related to population issues, is now available. Even though the figures in the report incline that levels of development assistance for Family Planning, Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS are on the increase, the overall input by Europe’s leaders to population issues remains very low. All European donors allocate less than 10% of their development assistance to this issue. This is especially

worrying considering the current global developments and negotiation of future sustainable frameworks as the cross-cutting nature of all issues related to population and SRHR must be fully recognized and also fully funded.

Source: www.euroresources.org/euomapping

WHO points to lacking data on adolescent reproductive health. World Health Organisation released results of a study which shows to the existing gap in research on adolescent sexual and reproductive health in countries of low and middle income. It also emphasised the responsibility of developed countries to assist the less developed ones in making progress in regards to women's reproductive health.

Source: www.epfweb.org/epf-publications/i149/c2/epf-news/who-%EF%BF%BD%EF%BF%BD-setting-research-priorities-for-adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health/

Human Rights Watch – World Report 2013. The 23rd World Report summarises human rights conditions in more than 90 countries and territories in the world in 2012.

Source: www.hrw.org/world-report/2013

UPCOMING EVENTS

High Level Consultation in Botswana, 5-6 March. 50 representatives from governments, UN and CSOs will participate in the High Level Panel meeting which will review the draft report from the “World We Want” consultation.

Source: <http://ngosbeyond2014.org/articles/2013/2/20/information-on-csos-forum-and-outreach-session-of-the-high-l.html>

Global Leadership Meeting, Population Dynamics and the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 12-13 March. This meeting will be a follow up to the previous consultations with population dynamics experts, the private sector, civil society and the governments. Outcomes of these consultations, together with inputs from the global e-consultation will contribute to the main background document for the meeting. This event will provide a clear vision on how population dynamics should be integrated into the Post 2015 development agenda.

Source: www.worldwewant2015.org/node/303691

High Level Panel of Eminent Persons consultative meeting on post-2015 in Bali, Indonesia, 25-27 March. The HLP will meet for the fourth time to continue works on the post-2015 development framework prior to the release of their final report to the UN Secretary General. The discussions of the Panel in Bali will focus on Partnership and Cooperation for Development, with a focus on strategies for implementation and opportunities to shape a global consensus on the new development agenda. A [stakeholder outreach day will be held on March 25th](#). This meeting will be preceded by a CSOs Pre-Consultative Forum on March 24th 2013, with 150 participants (50 International and 100 Indonesian). CSOs participants will have an opportunity to meet among themselves in order to prepare for the engagement with HLP members and agree on strategic positions.

A [Youth Multistakeholder Meeting on the Post 2015 Development Agenda](#) will be held prior to this event on March 24th and 25th.

The 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be held in New York from 4th to 14th March 2013. Priority theme will be the Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. For more information on the event please go to the official website: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/57sess.htm

CALL TO ACTION

Protect sexual and reproductive rights now and for the next generation! Around 1.8 billion young people worldwide are at risk of having their sexual and reproductive rights ignored. Call on world leaders today. Despite commitments made nearly 20 years ago at the International Conference on Population and Development, many of the 1.8 billion young people worldwide still struggle to access the information, sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services they need for a safe and healthy life. Sign the [ONLINE CAMPAIGN](#) today!

ASTRA Network members: Albania - Albanian Family Planning Association, Armenia - Women's Rights Center, Armenia - Society Without Violence, Armenia - Women's Resource Center, Azerbaijan - Center "Women and Modern World", Belarus - Women's Independent Democratic Movement of Belarus, Bulgaria - Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association, Bulgaria - Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation, Bulgaria - Gender Education, Research and Technologies, Bulgaria - Demetra Association, Bulgaria - Gender Alternatives Foundation, Croatia - B.a.b.e. (Be Active, Be Emancipated), Croatia - CESI - Center for Education and Counseling of Woman, Croatia - Women's Room, Georgia - Women's Center, Georgia – Hera XXI, Hungary – PATENT, Kazakhstan - The Legal Center for Women's Initiatives "Sana Sezim", Lithuania - Family Planning and Sexual Health Association, Latvia - Latvia's Association for Family Planning And Sexual Health, Macedonia – Shelter Center, Moldova - Reproductive Health Service Center, Poland - Federation for Women and Family Planning, Romania - Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives; Romania - A.L.E.G., Romania - The East European Institute of Reproductive Health, Romania - AnA: Society for Feminist Analysis, Russia - Novogorod Gender Center, Slovakia – Pro Choice, Ukraine - Women Health and Family Planning, Ukraine - Charitable SALUS Foundation, Uzbekistan – Future Generation.

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