



CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

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BURNING ISSUE

50th session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development

The 50th session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD50) was held at the United Nations HQ in New York On April 3-7, 2017. Despite weeks of informal and 10 days of formal negotiations on a draft resolution on this year's theme "changing population age structures and sustainable development" that had been put forward by the Chair of the Commission, Alya bint Al Thani (Qatar), UN member states failed to come to a consensus. Therefore, this year, for the second time in three years, the CPD session ended without an outcome document.

The member states were divided most sharply in views on SRHR, the role and definition of "the family", and comprehensive sexuality education. Other discussed issues included the demographic dividend, participation of the youth, women's empowerment and participation in the labor market, as well as aging societies and pensions.

The text proposed by Ambassador Thani represented the views of the majority of governments taking part in the negotiations. It emphasized the critical importance of gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, comprehensive sexuality education for adolescents and youth, as well as the promotion and protection of all people's human rights, including reproductive rights, for achieving sustainable development for all.

However, after the efforts of the United States and some countries from the African Group (especially Egypt, Comoros, Cameroon, and Djibouti) to have key paragraphs of the draft deleted, it became clear that the Chair's proposal was not going to be agreed upon. As a result, she decided to withdraw the text, and the session ended with her summary instead of a resolution.

Subsequently, France delivered a statement on behalf of a coalition of 31 countries from various regions that deplored the actions of the states that blocked approval of the resolution, and thus reject fundamental human rights. Other countries that voiced support for SRHR and consequently the chair's efforts, included the European Union states, South Africa, Tunisia, and Argentina on behalf of its own and eight other Latin American countries.

ASTRA Youth (representatives from Poland and Lithuania) attended the CPD session as part of the International Sexual and Reproductive Rights Caucus along with the representatives of more than 100 nonprofit organizations from 50 countries, who advocated for the sexual and reproductive rights of women, girls, and young people around the world.

The failure of the Commission on Population and Development member states to agree on a resolution text addressing the 50th session's theme of "changing age structures and sustainable development" is a setback against the right of all individuals to free and responsible choice regarding their sexual and reproductive life.

Learn more about the 50th CPD here: <http://bit.ly/2ncp8ER>

REGIONAL UPDATES

Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region

The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE region took place in Geneva on April 24-25. The Forum follows up on and reviews the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the UNECE region. Focusing on practical value-added and peer learning, it created a regional space to share policy solutions, best practices and challenges in SDG implementation and helped identify major regional and subregional trends. As an intergovernmental mechanism, the Regional Forum was convened by UNECE, in close cooperation with the regional UN system. It was open to the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including international and regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector.

The Regional Forum was preceded by two meetings on 24 April: a preparatory [civil society consultation](#) and a regional preparatory workshop for the countries from the UNECE region conducting Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) at the [2017 High-Level Political Forum](#).

Source: [UNECE](#)

CoE Commissioner for Human Rights: Lithuania should strengthen the protection of women and children against violence

“While considerable progress has been achieved in protecting human rights in recent years, the Lithuanian authorities still have to address some remaining shortcomings, in particular as regards the protection of women, children and persons with disabilities” said Nils Muižnieks, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, in a report released today based on a visit to the country carried out in December 2016.

Commending the progress made to prevent and combat domestic and gender-based violence, the Commissioner recommends harmonising the provisions of the Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code with those of the 2011 Law on Protection against domestic violence, most notably with regard to the application of protection measures. He also calls on the Lithuanian authorities to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating all forms of violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), because it provides an effective framework and methodology to help address the root causes of gender-based violence.

The Commissioner recommends implementing the law banning all forms of violence against children through a coordinated strategy and effective and independent monitoring. Furthermore, the Commissioner urges the Lithuanian authorities to avoid placing children deprived of parental care or with behavioural problems in institutions, and to develop instead community- and family-based care alternatives.

As regards the human rights of persons with disabilities, the Commissioner recommends accelerating the process of deinstitutionalisation and adopting measures to foster independent and autonomous living. Additionally, he encourages the authorities to pursue their on-going efforts to develop a system of supported decision-making based on individual consent, to treat persons with disability with equal standing in courts and tribunals, and to uphold their rights to vote and stand for elections.

[Read the Commissioner for Human Rights report on Lithuania](#)

[Read the observations of the Lithuanian authorities on the report](#)

[Read the report in a nutshell](#)

Source: [CoE Commissioner for Human Rights](#)

Commissioner encourages Croatia to accelerate the process of ratification of the Istanbul Convention

In a letter addressed to the Prime Minister of Croatia, Commissioner Muižnieks strongly encourages the authorities to move quickly forward on their path towards the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ('Istanbul Convention'). He also underscores the importance of eliminating misconceptions about this Convention in public discourse in Croatia, in particular concerning the use of the term "gender".

"Some critics may acknowledge that violence against women is a problem, but wish to prevent governments from challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes, due to a cultural affirmation that men and women should play very different roles in public life and within the family. This approach limits women to the stereotypical role of mothers, giving birth and staying at home to rear children. The critics go as far as to argue that the Istanbul Convention should not be ratified because it would endanger societies based on traditional families. This is a fallacious claim: all the measures provided for by the Istanbul Convention reinforce family foundations and ties by preventing and combating violence, which represents one of the main causes of destruction of families."

[Read the Commissioner for Human Rights letter addressed to the Prime Minister of Croatia](#)

[Read the reply by the Croatian authorities to the letter](#)

Source: [CoE Commissioner for Human Rights](#)

Life-saving medicines to reach 3,800 people living with HIV/AIDS in Moldova

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) delivered its first batch of medicines under a new project designed to make sure the most vulnerable people get their treatments on time. Based on an agreement with the Ministry of Health, UNDP is [procuring](#) USD 4.25 million worth [medicine and medical devices](#), in the framework of 8 national and special health programs, to treat HIV/AIDS, oncological, haematological diseases, tuberculosis, rare diseases, diabetes and other conditions. The first batch represents USD 328 thousand and will benefit 3,800 people.

"The Ministry of Health, jointly with UNDP, are working to ensure the country's population with high-quality medicines at a reasonable price. Thanks to this partnership, we are now enjoying the first successes: a batch of medicines for patients living with HIV/AIDS has already arrived in Moldova, and the estimates show that once all the medicines envisaged under this health program are delivered, we could save 37 percent of the allocated budget, which means about USD 300,000" said Ruxanda Glavan, Minister of Health.

UNDP finalized the contracting for two out of the eight national and special health programs. All companies under the initiative have been selected following a competitive process, with domestic and foreign companies given a chance to participate. The evaluation and approval of costs for the other six programmes is ongoing. All tender results, reports on expenses, and list of purchased products have been made [public](#). All procured medicines are World Health Organization-prequalified, according to quality standards.

According to official statistics, there is a cumulative number of over 11,000 cases of HIV registered in the Republic of Moldova. About 300 people die every year of causes related to this disease. Earlier this year, about 4,500 people received antiretroviral treatment. Without any proper medical treatment, the virus progresses to the stage of AIDS, which in most cases is fatal.

Source: [United Nations in Moldova](#)

First regional harm reduction conference for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia organized in Lithuania

On April 4- 6, Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, hosted 389 participants from 45 countries for the First Regional Harm Reduction Conference for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (CEECA) entitled “Harm Reduction in the New Environment”. The participants included 80 representatives of governments and government agencies, 150 members of NGOs and communities, donors, experts and delegates from technical agencies, and international and regional networks. Referring to the new environment, one of the major key aspects is a trend toward decreasing international donor funding for harm reduction programs that address HIV, hepatitis C and tuberculosis in CEECA countries. In spite of the gradual growth of the economies in this region, CEECA countries are not ready for sustainable transition from external financing to domestic financing yet, especially programs focusing on key populations. To achieve necessary changes in this new environment the governments and communities must recognize harm reduction as an integral part of health and social development strategies.

An ASTRA Network representative was a panelist in the session exploring mechanisms of usage of the international human rights instruments with the focus on CEDAW to address the rights of women who use drugs in Georgia and also attended the expert group meeting on framing the rights of women who use drugs under CEDAW organized by the International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific.

More details [HERE](#).

Source: [Real People Real Vision](#)

Georgia Has Its First National Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy

The Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoLHSA) with support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) released the National Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy (2017-2030) and a 3-year Action Plan (2017-2019) on April 7 in Tbilisi.

The strategy is aimed at giving direction and providing guidance for the improvement of maternal and newborn health (MNH) and the related reproductive health (RH) fields in Georgia. The main goal is to ensure that by 2030, there will be no preventable deaths of mothers or newborns, or stillbirths and that every child is wanted and every unwanted pregnancy is prevented through appropriate education and full access to all high quality integrated services.

The 3-year Action Plan (2017-2019) will serve as a general framework for MNH, RH, and Family Planning areas and as a guide for interventions for the next three years. The document also provides strategic inputs that will support the development and execution of operating plans at the country level to eliminate maternal and neonatal mortality in Georgia by strengthening and expanding policies and programs for the improvement of Maternal and Newborn Health (MNH) within the continuum of care; and gives direction and provides guidance for the fields of Family Planning and Adolescent SRH, as very important determinants of MNH.

“Georgia can continue to accelerate progress in the direction of maternal and newborn health and the national strategy is an excellent way to achieve this goal. Georgian men, women and youth deserve to have the best health standards,” Alanna Armitage said.

The National Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy (2017-2030) is closely linked to the recent international strategic documents, including the Sustainable Development Goals (2015), the new WHO European Action Plan for Sexual and Reproductive Health (2017-2021), Every Newborn Action Plan (WHO/UNICEF) and WHO/Europe “Health 2020: the European policy for health and well-being.”

Source: [Georgia Today](#)

From ASTRA Members

Meeting of the Lithuanian women’s NGOs network “ReGina”

The meeting of the women’s NGOs network “ReGina” was held on 5 April 2017. The topics discussed by the attending members included: the access to contraception in Lithuania, the action plan of the international ‘I Decide’ campaign, “ReGina” actions regarding the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendation received by Lithuania from Finland in November 2016, the activities of the Youth Group with the Parliamentary Group, the preparatory work for the elections of the “ReGina” network’s board.

As a result, the international “I Decide” campaign action plan was presented. The following decisions were made: the members of the “ReGina” network will sign the letter to the Ministry of Health on the reimbursement of contraception for young people and participate in a press conference on the importance of accessible contraception. They are also going to write a letter of assent to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice to express faith that the recommendation 100.141 is fulfilled, attend in the next parliamentary group meeting and advocate for SRHR, as well as participate in a contest organized by the Ministry of Social Security and Labor. It was also decided to write a letter of inquiry to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment regarding the execution of the sustainable development programme (SDP).

Source: [Family Planning and Sexual Health Association \(Lithuania\)](#)

Armenian street action against sexual harassment in public transportation

Society Without Violence organized a second street action called “My Body is Not a Public Place!” against sexual harassment in public transportation. The SWV team distributed flyers containing messages against sexual harassment and raised the awareness of the passengers in the public buses, specifically women and young girls, to realize that their body is their own private space and attempted to empower them to speak up whenever their bodily integrity is violated.

The SWV team chose peak times to organize the event, so that a large number of passengers could be reached.

Source: [Society Without Violence](#)

“Become a Volunteer - Make Your Future” event held by HERA XXI in Georgia

On 19 April 2017 the HERA XXI association held an event with new volunteers at the Presidential Library in Georgia. The meeting aimed to increase the interest in volunteerism, sexual and reproductive rights, and help them identification of their place as a volunteer within the organization. The event started with the presentation of HERA XXI, and introducing new opportunities for volunteers to engage in the organization’s planned activities. During the meeting the Program Coordinators of HERA XXI presented the association’s strategy, the importance of volunteering, comprehensive sexual education, reproductive health, and sexual rights. At the end of the event a video clip on volunteerism was screened (available [HERE](#)). After the presentations the participants discussed the future perspectives of their engagement in the organization’s campaigns, research and educational activities.

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

Third annual „Women’s Role in Economic Growth and Policy Development” conference held in Georgia

The USAID Governing for Growth (G4G) and Women’s Business Council Georgia (WBCG) hosted the third Annual Conference entitled „Women’s Role in Economic Growth and Policy Development”. The goal of the conference was to empower women in the government, business and civil society. The Believe Foundation participated in the event and shared the organization’s success story. Successful women from the private and public sectors, as well as from international organisations and NGOs participated in the event.

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

The Great Coalition for Equality and Choice joins forces in Poland

The Great Coalition for Equality and Choice, consisting of over 70 non-governmental organizations, was established as a reaction to the offensive of anti-women groups. Among them these threatening

actions are regular draft regulations directly attacking the life and health of women, restricting access to emergency contraception, frightening doctors in their work places, the shocking anti-abortion campaigns, the fight against comprehensive sexuality education, as well as the systemic weakening of the protection of women against domestic violence. These actions call for active and organized resistance of the civil society and all actors.

The Coalition's goal is the comprehensive fight for women's human rights: quick threat identification, coordination of legal activities, and building social awareness. The group demand sexuality education, good standards of perinatal care, the fullness of reproductive rights, and the total elimination of violence against women. The coming weeks will shape the actions of the Coalition.

Read the full text [here](#)

GLOBAL UPDATES

The impact of fundamentalism and extremism on the cultural rights of women – call for submissions

UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Ms. Karima Bennoune invites all relevant stakeholders to contribute to a consultation on the impact of fundamentalism and extremism on the cultural rights of women.

In her last report to the Human Rights Council, the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights presented an overview of the impact of diverse forms of fundamentalism and extremism on the enjoyment of cultural rights ([A/HRC/34/56](#)). She also indicated her intention to study this issue further for her upcoming report to the General Assembly. This follow up report will focus on the impact of fundamentalism and extremism, as defined in A/HRC/34/56, on the cultural rights of women.

Submissions should be sent electronically no later than 19 May 2017.

Access more information [here](#)

The Shrinking Space for Human Rights Organisations – statement of the CoE Commissioner for Human Rights

Nils Muižnieks, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, published a statement in early April on the Shrinking Space for Human Rights Organisations with several references to countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Mr Muižnieks writes: "In recent years I have noticed a clear trend of backsliding in several European countries in the area of freedom of association, particularly in respect of human rights organisations and defenders. The growing pressure and increased obstacles can take a variety of forms: legal and administrative restrictions; judicial harassment and sanctions, including criminal prosecution for failure to comply with new restrictive regulations; smear campaigns and orchestrated ostracism of independent groups; and threats, intimidation and even physical violence against their members. In some cases, the climate is so negative that it forces

human rights work to the margins or even underground.”. He shows to worrying examples from Hungary, Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and Turkey where restrictive measures against civil society groups have been observed in the past years. In his statement the Commissioner also stresses the watchdog role of NGOs which involves imparting information and ideas on all matters of public interest and is considered to be similar to the role of the press.

The CoE Commissioner for Human Rights calls on governments of the Council of Europe to facilitate their participation in mechanisms for dialogue and consultations on public policy, with the objective of identifying solutions to society’s needs. He stresses that governments should treat NGOs equally irrespectively of their sources of funding in order to effectively perform their legitimate functions. Further – he stresses that NGOs should be free to solicit and receive funds not only from public bodies in their own state but also from institutional or individual donors, another state or multilateral agencies. Furthermore, the Commissioner underlines that states should refrain from imposing burdensome administrative requirements on NGOs and should always limit interference with the right to freedom of association according to the necessity and proportionality requirements.

Source: [Commissioner’s Human Rights Comments](#)

Irish Citizens’ Assembly votes for constitutional change and yes to 13 possible grounds for abortion by a large majority

The remit of the Citizens’ Assembly in Ireland, which began meeting in October 2016, was to consider the views of the country on the future of the 8th amendment to the Irish Constitution, which gives an equal right to life to an embryo/fetus as to the woman carrying it. Since then, they have reviewed 13,500 submissions from an enormous number of groups and individuals with views on all sides of the question. There has also been a major campaign by the national abortion rights coalition, Repeal the 8th, and all its member groups and other supporters which has been very visible, garnering enormous support.

On 22-23 April, the Assembly met for the last time, at least on this subject. On 22 April, three votes were taken. In the first vote, members had to choose between retaining the 8th Amendment in full or not retaining it in full. The vote was 79 to 12 for not retaining it in full. In the second vote, members had to choose between repealing the 8th Amendment (deleting it and not replacing it) or to replace and amend it. The vote was 50 to 39 to replace and amend it, with 2 abstentions.

In a third ballot, the group voted 51-38 to an amended ballot paper that proposed the 8th Amendment “should be replaced with a constitutional provision that explicitly authorises the [parliament] to legislate to address termination of pregnancy, any rights of the unborn, and any rights of the pregnant woman”. The parliament will need to act on this recommendation, and a parliamentary committee is already being set up to consider how to do so. If the committee and the parliament can agree a revised clause for the Constitution, it would need to be approved by the parliament and then subjected to a referendum. If passed in a referendum, the parliament would then need to consider a reformed statute or other form of abortion law to reform or replace the current 2013 law, which effectively outlaws almost all abortions. All this is likely to take well into next year, if not longer.

During what was described as a heated debate, some Assembly members said they had voted for reform of the 8th Amendment rather than repeal because the group had been advised that repeal might lead to legal uncertainty over the issue of abortion. They called for a re-vote on the second ballot, but the Chair ruled this out.

On 23 April, the Assembly voted on 13 different grounds on which they might allow abortion. A large majority of the 92 members present voted to allow for abortion on all 13 grounds considered, and a large majority in almost all cases also chose either a 22-week time limit or no upper time limit, and a minority a 12-week limit or voted no.

The Assembly's deliberations and recommendations will form the basis of a report sent to the parliament by the Chair of the Assembly in June.

The reaction has been all over the media and social media ever since. Ulla Mullaly, Irish Times journalist, wrote on 24 April: "...What the Citizens' Assembly showed at the weekend is that abortion has no place in the Irish Constitution, and nor is the Constitution the effective or appropriate place for women's healthcare to be controlled." Independent polls show a pretty consistent and large majority in favour of liberalising the law but to what extent is another question. The answer is not set in stone, since debate over the coming months (as during the previous year) may make a great deal of difference. While everyone except the anti-abortion movement may agree that the Citizens' Assembly provided a strong motivation for change, the views of members of the parliament are unlikely to be as progressive.

As other Irish Times articles summed it up on 24 April: "Attention now switches to the politicians. To say most of them are not exactly relishing it would be an understatement." Many politicians think a referendum is inevitable, but several political sources are saying that current parliamentarians are "highly unlikely to put as liberal a set of proposals as those recommended to the electorate..." On the other hand, as one Minister admitted: "If the Citizens' Assembly is the way middle Ireland is thinking, we can't ignore it".

Sources: [The International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion](#)

International Day of Action for Women's Health

May 28 is the International Day of Action for Women's Health! As the global geo-political context threatens to become increasingly regressive, it is more important than ever to denounce any attempts at curtailing women's rights, including our human rights to decide freely upon all aspects of our bodies, our sexualities, and our lives, free from coercion, discrimination and violence!

This International Day of Action for Women's Health, WGNRR invites all their fierce members, partners, and allies worldwide to Mobilize, Speak Out, and Take Action - let's stand together, voice our resistance, and remind world leaders that Women's Health Matters!

Learn more: <http://may28.org>

YOUTH

Youth statement at the UN ECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

The United Nations Economic Commission of Europe Regional Forum on Sustainable Development was held in Geneva, Switzerland on 24-25 April 2017. The Europe and Central Asia Youth Alliance that issued a youth statement that was endorsed by ASTRA Youth, which is a member of the alliance. The statement is available [HERE](#).

Awareness raising training in an Armenian village

The Society Without Violence organized a two day training in Ayntap in the Ararat region for a group of 21 young women. The topics covered during the trainings included gender stereotypes, domestic violence, gender-based violence and how to react in case subjected to violence. Four SWV trainers also conducted trainings on sexual and reproductive rights and its importance to gender equality. The trainers also discussed feminism, its history and different waves, and the trends of Armenian feminism.

Source: [Society Without Violence](#)

PONTON at the “Courage to Re-embrace Solidarity in Europe – Can Philanthropy Take the Lead?” conference

The PONTON Group of Sex Educators is going to attend the EFC AGA and Conference “Courage to Re-embrace Solidarity in Europe – Can Philanthropy Take the Lead?” that is going to take place on 31 May-2 June 2017 in Warsaw. The PONTON representatives are going to participate in a session entitled “Women’s Movements in Europe – Creativity and Courage”. It will explore the increasing backlash against progressive values and social change actors across Europe. This backlash manifests itself in various forms within the resurgence of nationalist and conservative agendas – including narrowly-defined family values, closing space for civil society, legislation limiting reproductive freedom, and barriers to people’s right to move freely and safely, among others. Together, delegates will hear from activists directly, unpack this phenomenon and explore what works to advance solidarity given the increasingly challenging and polarizing context.

Furthermore, a PONTON representative is also going to attend the “Youth Policy Responses to the Contemporary Challenges Faced by Young People” symposium that will be held in Prague on 12-14 June 2017.

You can read PONTON’s annual report for 2017 in English [HERE](#).

Source: [PONTON Group of Sex Educators](#)

Annual fair on volunteerism held in Georgia

On 27 April 2017 more than 30 representatives of non-governmental organizations and relevant institutions gathered to share their projects, good practices and find potential Georgian volunteers on the sixth “Annual Fair on Volunteerism” in Tbilisi organized to promote the culture of volunteerism in Georgia. The HERA XXI association’s presentation on its youth engagement activities met with great interest from attendees.

The event was organized by Helping Hand with the support of Peace Corps Volunteers.

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

AGORA 2017: applications are OPEN!

The European Women’s Lobby is looking for candidates to participate in AGORA, EWL’s Feminist Summer School, taking place in Brussels from 7 to 11 September 2017. AGORA brings together young feminists from across Europe to empower them to act and lead in a changing world. Through a 5-day participatory summer school, we create a space where young self-identified women (18-30) will have a chance to reflect, exchange ideas and support each other to become confident feminist leaders and activists. AGORA already gathered young women from across Europe in 2015 and 2016 and we are now seeking applications from young feminists for AGORA 2017.

You can apply using the online application form: <http://bit.ly/agora2017application>.

Deadline for applications: 9 May 2017 at midnight.

Source: [EWL](#)

International conference: Sexuality education in Europe

On 15-16 May 2017, the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), a WHO Collaborating Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health, will hold an international technical conference on sexuality education in the WHO European Region in Berlin, Germany. Sexuality education is an integral part of health promotion and a crucial element to support the healthy development of children and young people. BZgA will welcome experts in the field of sexual and reproductive health and sexuality education throughout the WHO European Region (including Eastern Europe and Central Asia) for a technical exchange on:

- the current state of sexuality education in the WHO European region,
- trends and challenges related to the implementation and improvement of sexuality education as well as future strategies and approaches on how to address them.

See the concept paper and programme [here](#).

Source: [BZgA](#)

EuroNGOs 2017 Conference "Re:Frame. Promoting SRHR in a time of growing populism"

The dates for the 2017 EuroNGOs Conference have been shifted to September 27-28 with the event taking place in Brussels. This year, the conference will focus on how we can protect and promote SRHR in a time of growing populism. Rising support for populist movements, echoed through examples such as Brexit in the UK, the rhetoric of Orban in Hungary and Kaczynski in Poland, the success of far-right parties from Germany to Greece, and Trump in the USA, is reshaping the politics of many Western societies. For the SRHR community this global political shift is particularly worrying as populism favours traditional over progressive values and national self-interest over international cooperation and development aid. These changes can have serious implications in terms of political support and financial investment in SRHR and development issues, and also risks undermining the achievement of SDGs and decisions taken at UN level.

More information on the background, rationale and objectives of the 2017 EuroNGOs conference can be found in the [Conference concept note](#).

- Go on [website](#) to access registration instructions and online registration form. Please register before the 25th of August 2017.
- Wish to apply for the financial support? The sponsorship information for participants are also available on [our website](#). Don't forget to apply before the 12th of June 2017.

Source: [EuroNGOs](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Call for Papers: Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in humanitarian crises

EXTENDED Deadline: 15 May 2017, publication: October 2017

For this issue of Reproductive Health Matters, we invite articles that offer new insights and evidence to contribute to the global knowledge base regarding SRHR in humanitarian crises, particularly in relation to the following thematic areas: heightened risk and vulnerability, interventions and responses, and legal and policy issues.

Visit <http://www.rhmjournal.org.uk/journal/call-papers> for more information.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

New call for applications for the Round Four of Safe Abortion Action Fund

SAAF funding is now open in the fourth round of the Fund. Local organisations based in eligible countries who want to submit a concept note for projects aimed at improving access to safe abortion should visit the SAAF website where full instructions and guidelines are available. A few countries of ASTRA region are on that list, i.e. Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and more.

The funding opportunity is available for projects with budgets up to **US \$130,000** for up to **two years**. The deadline for applications is the **21st May 2017**.

Source: <http://www.saafund.org/>

TAKE PART IN SURVEY

Global civil society survey on funding and work to address child, early and forced marriage

This anonymous global civil society survey aims to map current strategies, funding and resource gaps for child, early and forced marriage (CEFM). Your insights will be used to develop a report on the global funding landscape and work to address CEFM – a valuable tool to advocate for further funding. Replies will be kept anonymous.

Complete the [survey](#) before May 31, 2017, RUSSIAN version is available [here](#).

Who can complete the survey? All civil society organisations that currently work to address child, early and forced marriage, or would like to work on these issues.

Please note: if your organisation primarily views itself as a civil society organisation that also has a re-granting program, please complete this survey. However, if your organisation primarily views itself as a grant-making institution that also does programmatic work, please complete the [donor survey](#).

The survey is coordinated by American Jewish World Service, FemJust (Feminist Solutions towards Global Justice), GreeneWorks, and the International Center for Research on Women, in collaboration with Girls Not Brides: The Global Partnership to End Child Marriage.

Do you have questions or feedback about the survey? Please email FemJust at [linda\[at\]femjust\[dot\]com](mailto:linda[at]femjust[dot]com).

Source: [webpage](#)

Member of the Month

Papardes Zieds - Latvia's association for family planning and sexual health

“Papardes zieds” is currently one of the biggest non-governmental organizations in Latvia, which since year 1994 has been working on reproductive health and rights issues in Latvia. Mission of “Papardes zieds” is to make sure that each person's sexual and reproductive rights are carried out in a way that every person has access to quality services and their choices are based on quality information.

Basic principles and values of “Papardes zieds” present at all the levels of the organization are:

- health – considering that sexual and reproductive health is an important part of each individual's physical, mental and social well-being;
- diversity – respecting all not regarding their age, gender, status, identity, sexual orientation etc.;
- inclusion – supporting sexual rights of the most unprotected groups, working to make sure each individual gets their rights of respect, high quality services and freedom of choice about their body and sexual life;
- passion – everyone (staff, members, council, volunteers) understands the goals of the organization and with passion works for it;
- volunteering – one of the basic values that ensures the existence of the organization and its way towards mission. “

Association „Papardes zieds” implements 12 – 15 projects every year in co-operation with state and municipal institutions, international organizations and private sector. Youth health and education centre provides health prevention and education services for young people. It also offers peer education programs, on-line consultations and educational materials. Young people have a possibility to become volunteers at „Papardes zieds” and make decisions on issues important for themselves and their peers.

„Papardes zieds” has been member of ASTRA since its launch 16 years ago. ASTRA unites organisations from Eastern and Central European countries. We share similar history and often it means we are sharing similar struggle for women's rights. To be strong, to be the voice heard, we must be together. And never forget the women we stand for and their rights to better lives.

Webiste: <http://papardeszieds.lv>

Social media: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [You Tube](#)



Team of „Papardes zieds”

ASTRA Network Members: Albania - Albanian Family Planning Association; Armenia - Society Without Violence; Armenia - Women's Resource Center; Armenia - Women's Rights 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; Bosnia and Herzegovina – Sarajevo Open Center; Croatia - B.a.b.e.; Croatia – CESI; Croatia - Women's Room; Georgia – HERA XXI; Georgia – Real People, Real Vision; Georgia - Women's Center; 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 - Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women; Macedonia – H.E.R.A.; Macedonia – Shelter Center; Moldova – Family Planning Association; Moldova - Reproductive Health Training Center; Poland - Federation for Women and Family Planning; Romania - A.L.E.G.; Romania - AnA: Society for Feminist Analysis; Romania - Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives; Romania - The East European Institute of Reproductive Health; Russia - Novogorod Gender Center; Russia – Russian Association for Population and Development; Slovakia – Pro Choice; Tajikistan – Gender and Development; Ukraine - Women Health and Family Planning; Ukraine - Charitable SALUS Foundation; Uzbekistan - Future Generation

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