



CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN WOMEN'S NETWORK FOR
SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Rights

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BURNING ISSUE

The World Aids Day. World AIDS Day is held on 1 December each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day and the first one was held in 1988. The world's AIDS epidemic has hit a plateau, with 2.7 million people becoming newly infected each year for the last five years, according to the annual report from UNAIDS. Last year, 1.35 million got on treatment for the first time, meaning 200 people were newly infected for each 100 newly treated. That is an improvement over two years ago, when 250 were infected for each 100 treated. Although the seven million receiving treatment represent about half the people sick enough to need immediate treatment under World Health Organization guidelines, the figure falls far short of reaching the ambitious new 'test and treat' goal adopted last year by the U.N. program.

The "Getting to Zero" campaign. After the last year's successful World AIDS Day "Light for Rights" campaign the new motto of the anti-AIDS campaign has been formulated as : Zero New HIV Infections, Zero Discrimination and Zero AIDS Related Deaths. The campaign runs until 2015. The 10 goals to be attained by 2015 are: (1.) Sexual transmission of HIV reduced by half, including among young people, men who have sex with men and transmission in the context of sex work; (2.) Vertical transmission of HIV eliminated and AIDS-related maternal deaths reduced by half; (3.) All

new HIV infections prevented among people who use drugs. (4.) Universal access to antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV who are eligible for treatment; (5.) TB deaths among people living with HIV reduced by half; (6.) All people living with HIV and households affected by HIV are addressed in all national social protection strategies and have access to essential care and support. (7.) Countries with punitive laws and practices around HIV transmission, sex work, drug use or homosexuality that block effective responses reduced by half ; (8.) HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence eliminated in half of the countries that have such restrictions; (9.) HIV-specific needs of women and girls are addressed in at least half of all national HIV responses; (10.) Zero tolerance for gender-based violence.

UNAIDS report released on November, 21:
http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2011/JC2216_WorldAIDSday_report_2011_en.pdf at UNAIDS

More: <http://www.worldaidsday.org/about-world-aids-day.php>

REGIONAL UPDATES

Poland: UN Universal Periodic Review. During the 13th Session of UN Universal Periodic Review (May 2012) Poland, along with other 13 countries, will be reviewed in terms of state's realization and promotion of human rights. In the previous review in 2008 the need for the advancement of women's and LGBT rights was highlighted. Polish NGOs (among others: Federation for Women and Family Planning, KARAT Coalition, the Campaign Against Homophobia) submitted alternative report on the state's performance during the last four years to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and contributed to the report submitted by the Polish ATD Fourth World in the UPR mechanism.

More detailed information about 13th Session of UPR and NGOs participation is to be found at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/NgosNhris.aspx>

Georgia: Discrimination of Azeri women. Georgian ASTRA Network member, the Women's Center will establish the Consulting Center with a hot-line and the Minority Women's Rights Network to support the integration of Azeri women in Georgia, prevent their discrimination and support their rights. To build the national minority women's legal protection system the Georgian women rights' organizations advocate for implementation of the international human rights' standards into the domestic legislation and policies. The Women's Center strives to introduce the Human Rights and Gender Equality component into the National Advocacy Plan for Tolerance and Civil Integration (2009 – 2013). This should strengthen the minority protection against discrimination and gender based violence. Various activities are implemented including youth empowerment through education, distribution of the brochures on Azeri language or mass-media involvement thought trainings and articles' publication. Although the Azerbaijan national minority constitutes the largest minority in Georgia it almost does not integrate with the Georgian society. The survey conducted by Women's Center and UNICEF revealed that in some parts of Georgia more than 80% of Azeri women have no education. Lack of education, work and language (Georgian) skills leads to discrimination Azeri.

Source: <http://www.womancenter.org.ge/>

Tajikistan: Reproductive rights on TV. The Tajik audience will watch a cycle of television programs addressing modern family planning methods, the importance of condoms in preventing sexually transmitted diseases and a medical abortion as a safer and less expensive option as compared to the traditional method. The programs will increase social awareness about growth of sexually transmitted diseases (men's migration to and from Russia greatly contribute to) and maternal deaths (due to a lack of proper medical care during pregnancy and labor and unsafe abortions). Within the project diverse activities aiming at raising society awareness of the reproductive rights are implemented including establishment of the women friendly offices within the administrative bodies to support women in need.

Source: KARAT Coalition

Albania: Stop domestic violence! A group of 23 human rights and women's rights organizations (a Network of the Civil Society Organizations Against Gender Based Violence) issued a public letter to protest against an increasing number of domestic violence acts against women in Albania. In the letter they call on the Albanian society to raise its voice against the damage this violence causes to the entire society. The organizations stressed that it is a duty of the Albanian institutions to prevent and punish domestic violence. Further, they stressed that the courts, police, prosecutors, local governments" social units and bailiff office should give special attention to strengthening and increasing effectiveness and implementation of the existing legal means, especially of the Family Code and of law "For legal actions against violence in family relations". The organizations said that effective protection of the victims of domestic violence requires some amendments in the Penal Code and the Code of Penal Procedures. According to the organizations only in 2011 seventeen women has lost their lives inside their family homes.

Source: KARAT Coalition

Lithuania: March to publicize a new law against domestic violence. In December 2011 a new law will come into force in Lithuania providing special protection for women who are victims of domestic violence. After the conference the Women's Issues Information Center led a march aimed at bringing the new law to the attention of the general public. The conference and march gained the attention of the media and the decision makers. Before an implementation of the new law domestic violence was regarded as a private matter in Lithuania. According to the survey almost 20% of married women experience violence at the hand of their partner. However, less than 2% of registered calls reporting domestic violence result in legal proceedings. The new legislation makes domestic violence a public concern. It establishes and funds 10 new centers for victims of violence.

The source: The Advocates for Human Rights

New abortion law in Russia. The President of the Russian Federation, Dmitriy Medvedev, signed "Basics of the protection of the health of the citizens of Russian Federation" act. The draft went through three readings in the State Duma (lower house of Parliament) and was the subject of wide debate in Russian society with interventions from the Orthodox Church, civil society and academia, and was heavily criticized by the Head of the National Medical Chamber of the Russian Federation, Mr. Leonid Roshal. For its final reading, more than 300 amendments were presented, 109 of which were adopted. The new law introduces a new "silence period", ie. a mandatory waiting period before performing an abortion. According to the article 55 § 3, abortions conducted on a woman's request within first 12 weeks of pregnancy will require a waiting period of 48 hours in the case of pregnancy in the 4th-7th week or 11th-12th weeks, but not later than end of 12th week of pregnancy and with waiting period of 7 days in the case of the pregnancy of 8-9th weeks. The law also sets the provision for obtaining an abortion in Art 56 § 4 that reads: "Abortion is conducted on social

grounds until 22 weeks of pregnancy and in case of medical need, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy" (social grounds are set by the Government of the Russian Federation). Additionally the law introduced the possibility of conscientious objection. It allows doctors to abstain from performing abortion but in the case of refusal of the treating doctor to follow and treat the patient and in the case of notice in written form about the refusal to conduct an abortion, the official (head) of the medical organisation (division of medical organisation) must organise a replacement of the treating doctor. The new bill further guarantees free family planning consultations; free medical assistance during pregnancy, during delivery and post-pregnancy; provision of nutrition for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers as well as children under 3 years old.

Source: <http://kremlin.ru/news/13612>

Morning-after pill made available over the counter in Czech Republic. Emergency contraception pill was made available over the counter in Czech Republic. While before it was necessary to present a prescription to buy the pill, now it will be sufficient to present the ID. The data of the person who purchased the pill will be stored in database. The emergency contraception won't be available for minors of 16 years.

Source: <http://www.novinky.cz/domaci/249447-postinor-se-bude-v-cr-prodavat-bez-receptu.html>
http://relax.lidovky.cz/postinor-bude-nove-v-lekarnach-bez-predpisu-feh-/ln-zdravi.asp?c=A111103_132801_ln_domov_rka

GLOBAL UPDATES

16 Days Campaign. Sexual violence is one of the most brutal forms of gender inequality and is a violation of human rights that cannot be ignored. Across Europe one in 10 women have suffered sexual violence. In Lithuania, 26.5% of girls aged 16 or over said that they had been sexually abused by a stranger (Purvanieckine, 1999 EWL briefing on violence against women June 2011). In 2005, a study conducted by Rutgers WPF, a sexual research institute and IPPF Member Association in the Netherlands, found that one out of six girls between the ages of 12 and 25 has been forced to engage in some kind of sexual activity against their will. The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign originating from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute sponsored by the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. Participants chose the dates November 25- International Day Against Violence Against Women- and December 10- International Human Rights Day- in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. This 16-day period also highlights other significant dates including November 29, International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, December 1, World AIDS Day, and December 6, which marks the Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre. This year's theme is "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!".

More: <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/2011-campaign/qwhat-is-securityq-submissions>

EU News: EU and NGO express support for women's rights on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. In a joint statement on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the EU's High Representative, Catherine Ashton, Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, and Commissioner for Home Affairs, Cecilia Malmström, pointed out that one in three women suffers some form of violence or sexual abuse during her lifetime. Within the statement the EU also announced a new programme to tackle

sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is said to be launched next year.

To read the full text of the EU's joint statement, please see:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/126343.pdf

UPCOMING EVENTS

AIDS 2012. XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012), will be held in Washington D.C., U.S. from 22 to 27 July 2012.

More: www.aids2012.org

PUBLICATIONS

Abortion: how late is ‘too late’?- At the Battle of Ideas festival in London at the end of October, Ann Furedi, chief executive of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, debated the issue of late abortion with Will Saletan, a writer for Slate magazine. A transcript of Furedi’s opening comments is published in SPIKED magazine. .

Link: <http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php/site/article/11848/>

“Prevention, Pleasure and Protection- Making female condoms available and accessible, a guide on implementing female condom programs”. The latest Universal Access to Female Condoms Joint Programme publication.

Available here:

http://condoms4all.org/newsarticle/432/International_conference_on_female_condoms

Delivering Cervical Cancer Prevention in the Developing World-newest report by Women Deliver. This report comes at an important time: the GAVI Alliance has just announced its commitment to providing HPV vaccinations for 2 million girls in nine countries by 2015. This is a pivotal milestone in the efforts both to bring global attention to the issue of cervical cancer and to galvanize resources to scale up prevention efforts. Partnerships, worldwide and across sectors, have the potential to bring us closer than ever before to a world free of cervical cancer-related deaths. The report includes profiles of success in increasing access to HPV vaccines and treatment from around the world, with country spotlights on Mexico, Thailand, Bolivia and Rwanda. All of these countries have distinguished themselves as pioneers in ensuring that girls and women have information on and access to the services they need to detect, prevent and treat cervical cancer.

More: http://www.womendeliver.org/assets/CervicalCancer_final.pdf

Announcement:

In the previous issue of the Bulletin information retrieved from AWID was not properly referenced.

The link to original text is here:

<http://www.awid.org/Our-Initiatives/Resisting-and-Challenging-Religious-Fundamentalisms/UN-Special-Rapporteur-Anand-Grover-s-report-on-abortion>

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