



## **CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**

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### **BURNING ISSUE**

#### **2019 – a critical year for staying on-track to realize SDGs**

As stated in the [UN DESA Voice](#), 2019 will be a critical year for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Two High-level Political Forums will take place: one in July under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which will complete its first cycle; and one in September at the summit level under the auspices of the General Assembly.

Many countries can be seen to be aligning their national policies and institutions behind the SDGs. The private sector is taking action to invest in new technologies, opening up new markets, and building the sustainable and inclusive economy of the 21st century. Civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders are using the SDGs to drive change at all levels and to hold their Governments accountable.

Gaps, however, are evident, with the world remaining on a trajectory of increasing inequality. It is also facing armed conflicts, humanitarian and environmental crises, and economic, financial and climate challenges. The scale and pace of change in public and private investment in sustainable

development also remain alarmingly insufficient, with greater financing, investments and technological innovation urgently needed.

In 2019, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) will launch the Global Sustainable Development Report, an analysis by an independent group of scientists undertaken every four years to assess where we stand. In addition, it will release several other analytical reports to assess progress made towards the SDGs to provide context to this year's high-level discussions. Together with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), it will co-facilitate a conference in the spring, seeking to amplify the interlinkages between climate action and the broader 2030 Agenda and share best practices on attracting financing for both.

### **High-level Political Forum in July**

The HLPF will be convened under the auspices of ECOSOC from 9 to 18 July 2019 and will address the theme [“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”](#). Fifty-one countries, both developed and developing, will present their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), sharing their national experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learnt, in implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. **Of these the following countries are in the UNECE Region: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Iceland, Israel, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Serbia, Turkey, United Kingdom.**

The HLPF will review progress in the thematic areas of quality education (SDG 4), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), climate action (SDG 13), peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16), and partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17). Expert Group Meetings on each SDG are planned to prepare and inform the thematic discussions at HLPF.

### **High-level Political Forum in September – SDG Summit**

The HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly will be held at the summit level on 24 and 25 September 2019. Heads of State and Governments, together with CSO leaders and those from foundations, the business sector and other stakeholders, will focus on the overall implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Areas of progress towards the SDGs will be identified and actions for scaling up will be considered. A political declaration of Heads of State and Government is expected to give guidance as to how to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. The SDG Summit will complement the Secretary-General's Climate Summit, to be held on the day before.

DESA has launched a call to receive good practices and success stories in SDG implementation by all stakeholders through its [SDG Good Practices portal](#). The main findings of this evidence-based stocktaking will be highlighted and showcased in the lead-up to, and during the Summit.

A series of side and special events are planned to complement the July HLPF and the SDG Summit, aiming at engaging and mobilizing partners around the SDGs. They will include the SDG Business Forum, Partnership Exchange, SDG Film Festival, Chief Sustainability Officers event, Major Groups and Other Stakeholders meeting, an event with universities and higher education institutions, and Local and Regional Governments Forum, which will convene mayors from the world's major cities to focus on ways to localize the 2030 Agenda.

## Other related events

The [2019 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for UNECE region](#) will take place in Geneva on March 21-22, the registration deadline is 22 February 2019.

2019, four years after the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), will also provide an opportunity to review progress on its commitments and the current state of play on the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum and SDG Investment Fair in April 2019 will provide critical junctures for building momentum in response to emerging risks to the economic outlook and potential opportunities and will feed into the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in September 2019.

In September 2019, the UN General Assembly will also hold a one-day high level review of the progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States (SIDS) through the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway which will lead to a concise, action-oriented and inter-governmentally agreed political declaration.

Source: [UN DESA](#)

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### **Resolution on Women's Rights in the Western Balkans authored by Biljana Borzan adopted in EP**

European Parliament's Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) has adopted the Resolution on Women's Rights in the Western Balkans (focus on Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and the FYR Macedonia), authored by Croatian MEP Biljana Borzan, Rapporteur for Women's Rights. The Resolution has been adopted with a small majority of votes. It is a first document in this area in five years.

"This Resolution is of great importance to me. I have to make women of Western Balkans a priority of the European Parliament for years, and I am very glad that most of my requests, which I have formulated in cooperation with a number of non-governmental organisations from the region, has been adopted", Borzan said.

The main issue tackled by the Resolution is violence against women. It highlights the lack of sufficient safe houses, slow work of the judiciary and non-reporting of the violence. Another issue is the inferior position of women on the job market.

According to the parliamentary procedures, the committee shall decide what procedure is to be followed, which may include the combination of the motion for a resolution with other motions for a resolution or with reports; the adoption of an opinion, which may take the form of a letter; or the drawing up of a report under Rule 52. The committee may also decide not to follow up the motion for a resolution.

Source: [European Western Balkans](#)

## **Report on Armenia recommends measures to improve women's rights, protection of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, and establishing accountability for past human rights violations**

The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, published the report of her visit to Armenia carried out in September 2018. The report focuses on women's rights, gender equality and domestic violence; the human rights of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups; and accountability for past human rights violations.

Finding that women in Armenia remain significantly underrepresented in public decision-making, the Commissioner urges the authorities to ensure women's full and effective participation, as well as equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of public life, equal pay and equal access to the labour market. In order to counter the persisting discriminatory gender stereotypes, Commissioner Mijatović recommends raising public awareness and promoting gender equality, especially through education.

To build on the considerable improvements to Armenia's legislation against domestic violence, the Commissioner recommends ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, while ensuring that the new national legislation is effectively applied in practice. Specifically, she urges the authorities to increase the availability of places in shelters for victims of domestic violence, and to ensure access to education for children staying in such shelters. Another focus area of the report is the human rights of persons with disabilities, children, older persons and LGBTI people.

While welcoming the authorities' clear commitment towards de-institutionalisation of persons with disabilities, the Commissioner recommends that revised legislation governing state support to persons with disabilities ensure their inclusion in all decision-making processes that concern them. In particular, she calls on the authorities to put an end to plenary guardianship for persons with psychosocial disabilities and to move from a substituted to a supported decision-making model for all persons who may require such support.

The Commissioner encourages the government to achieve its aim to make all education fully inclusive by 2025, and recommends that special attention be paid to ensuring inclusive education at the pre-school level and to pursuing de-institutionalisation equally for children with and without disabilities. She also recommends that Armenia solidify its commitment to international standards in this area, by accepting additional provisions of the Revised European Social Charter, and by ratifying instruments allowing for individual and collective complaints. The Commissioner welcomes the recent appointment of a well-known disability rights activist as Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, and encourages the government to take further action to raise public awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Commissioner Mijatović recommends that Armenia strengthen its efforts to combat child poverty and to guarantee the right of all children to an adequate standard of living. She is particularly concerned by the placement in state care of children whose parents face socio-economic difficulties. She encourages the authorities to expand their efforts to allocate resources for parents resuming care over their children, while promoting foster care - including for children with disabilities - when this is in the child's best interest. The Commissioner also recommends that Armenia improve its

legislation protecting all children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, in particular by ratifying the Council of Europe Lanzarote Convention.

To address the inadequate level of social protection of older persons in Armenia, the Commissioner recommends raising the overall level of old age pensions, increasing the availability of primary and specialised health care at the home or in the community, and tackling the shortage of medical professionals specialised in geriatric services.

The Commissioner further recommends that the authorities promptly adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law which should specifically include a clear reference to sexual orientation and gender identity. She calls on the authorities to take prompt and resolute action against all instances of violence, hate speech and hate crime targeting LGBTI persons in Armenia. Such incidents must be firmly condemned and investigated, and those responsible prosecuted. She also urges parliamentarians to unequivocally reject any legislative proposals that may infringe on the rights of LGBTI persons or stoke anti-LGBTI sentiments.

Lastly, Commissioner Mijatović welcomes the steps taken to finally establish the truth and prosecute those responsible for the deaths that occurred during the violent events of March 2008. At the same time, she stresses the importance of ensuring that this process is conducted in a careful manner and in strict adherence to the principles of rule of law, judicial independence, transparency and guarantees of fair trial, in order to dispel any accusations of alleged revenge politics or selective justice. She also calls on the Armenian authorities to protect the presumption of innocence of any person charged with criminal misconduct and to avoid using polarising, stigmatising or inflammatory language in their public discourse, which the Commissioner believes to be an obstacle to building a cohesive society and healing past divisions.

[Read the Commissioner's report following her visit to Armenia from 16 to 20 September 2018](#) (read the report in [Armenian](#))

[Read the comments of the authorities of Armenia](#)

Source: [Council of Europe](#)

### **People's perceptions of the degree to which human rights are respected in the Republic of Moldova have not changed fundamentally over the last two years**

7 out of 10 inhabitants of Republic of Moldova consider their rights to be systematically violated. This is evidenced by the results of the study "Human Rights Perceptions in the Republic of Moldova", presented on December 10, 2018, on the International Human Rights Day. The research was conducted by the iData Company for the People's Advocate Office. It was aimed at observing the dynamic of human rights perceptions as compared to 2016 when a similar research was conducted.

The development of the study was possible with the support from UNDP Moldova, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Population Fund in Moldova.

"The study presented today reflects what people think about the respect for human rights in Moldova and provides a roadmap for the promotion of human rights in the country. This is the second study on human rights perceptions, developed with UN support, the first being conducted in 2016. Data on people's perceptions will be used to develop policies to better channel UN human rights interventions in Moldova and assessing their impact on the country's development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals" said Dafina Gercheva, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to the Republic of Moldova.

Among the most important findings of the study are:

- The human rights situation has not changed, according to 43.8 percent of respondents. At the same time, in 2018, the respondents reported that the human rights situation had improved (35.8%) rather than worsened (16.4%);
- As in the study of 2016, in the participants' opinion, the main right that requires society's attention is the right to health, but the proportion of respondents is higher in 2018 - 71.6% compared to 61% in 2016. The right to education is the second in this list, a significant increase compared to 2016 (31.5%) - 43.5% of respondents placing it among the most sensitive three rights that deserve more attention.
- The third position in the top of the rights that requires more attention, the same as in 2016, is social protection, followed by the right to work and favourable working conditions, the right to information, freedom of opinion and expression. The right to information, the freedom of opinion and expression show an increase in the number of people (from 7.9 to 14.5%), who place it in the category of those who require increased attention.
- The survey of 2018 shows a better perception of the population regarding the right to social protection and a slight improvement in the situation regarding the protection of the rights of socially vulnerable people. However, most of the respondents (43.7%) continue to believe that the rights of this category of people are virtually not protected by state authorities.
- The least respected right in the Republic of Moldova is the right to a fair trial, only 21.8% of the respondents consider that it is respected.
- The most respected rights in Moldova are: the right to culture, cultural identity, free movement, property, personal liberty and private life. As in 2016, according to the respondents' perception, 57.7% consider that children's rights are among the most respected, to a large or very large extent.
- Of the total number of respondents, about half said they had at least one right violated in the past two years. Most frequently, same as in 2016, the right to health was violated the most, which cited by 22.6% of respondents. Compared to 2016, the proportion of those who believe that their right to vote and to be elected has been violated has increased (from 3.1% to 12.8%).
- In the opinion of two-thirds of the respondents, as in 2016, Parliament and Government most frequently violate human rights, and over 62% of respondents consider that two other institutions violating human rights are the Justice Courts and the Police.

Source: [UN in Moldova](#)

## **From ASTRA members**

### **Developments on abortion and conscientious objection in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The price of abortion in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is two times lower than in Croatia and steadily more women from neighbouring Croatia decide to have an abortion in BiH. Even though doctors can use “conscientious objection” in both countries the situation in Croatia and BiH differ in this regard as the public pressure to refrain from abortion is on a higher level in Croatia.

The article below, published in January 2019, on a Bosnian-Herzegovinian news portal [interview.ba](#), tackles the current legislation and medical practice state in performing abortions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It features statements of BH medical professionals specialised in gynaecology and perinatology, as well as lawyer/programme coordinator working on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

It tackles the fact that despite the existence of the Law on Abortion in BiH that is one of the most liberal in Europe, abortion is still not available to everyone under same conditions, creating the practice of illegal abortions, and the reasons behind this. The article tries to answer the questions of how to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies in BiH, meaning also reducing the number of abortions. The dangers of using the rights to conscientious objection are also elaborated. It also deals with the societal perception of abortion as a taboo topic in conservative minds. It criticizes the practice of registering foundations that try to raise awareness on the damage abortions cause to women’s health and lower birth rates, that are gaining momentum in the region of Western Balkans.

Read the full article [here](#).

Source: [Sarajevo Open Center](#)

### **New Draft Law on Abortion adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia**

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia announced that the new Draft Law on Abortion has been adopted and that it will be submitted to the Parliament. HERA - Health Education and Research Association, together with 21 CSOs as part of the Platform of Gender Equality welcomed the adoption of the new draft law in which their representatives participated themselves.

The currently existing law prevents women from receiving abortion services on time, forces them to carry on with the pregnancy and prescribes high penalties for doctors who offer abortions, making the service less accessible to women who need it.

Within the newly adopted Draft Law the administrative obstacles (compulsory and biased counseling and three-day waiting period after the counseling) have been removed. The Commission shifted the legal grounds for abortion from the current 12th to the 22nd gestation week of pregnancy, recognizing the reproductive freedom of women. Personal declaration be sufficient to receive the abortion services. By reducing the penalties, the dignity of the doctors will be restored, their attitude towards the patients and the quality of the service improved. The introduction of medical abortion will facilitate the procedure, and by expanding the service at the primary level, abortion will become available in a large number of cities, what will reduce travel costs for women and their families.

Nevertheless, Macedonian civil society is demanding several additional improvements to the draft law, especially in the section regarding the request for parental/guardian consent for minors above 16 and for people with intellectual disabilities. Another demand is to unanimously adopt this law by the MPs of all political parties after taking into consideration the input of civil society and including all of the stakeholders in the discussions and public debates within the Parliament.

Source: [H.E.R.A.](#)

### **Survey on “Healthy Lifestyle” classes in Armenia**

The Women’s Resource Centre Armenia jointly with the Yerevan State University Centre for Gender and Leadership Studies conducted a survey assessing the effectiveness of the “Healthy lifestyle” subject in schools.

In Armenia, sexuality education is taught within the classes of physical training and is called “Healthy lifestyle”, which is included from classes 8 to 11. The total hours allotted per grade equal to 14 hours, 8 out of which are dedicated to issues concerning reproductive health. The foundation of the “Healthy lifestyle” in Armenia, is firmly embedded solely on abstinence. This principle is reflected in teaching in a way that implies avoiding sexual activity to remain healthy. This has been criticized by various researchers on numerous occasions as a very ineffective option. In the manuals, there are many frightening examples and at times exaggerated stories about STIs, unwanted pregnancies along with their consequences and complications. The manuals also contain detailed information about STIs and HIV/AIDS, which are described using complex terminology and are not adjusted for that age group.

Two research methods were used to collect the primary information: in-depth interviews with teachers who conduct “Healthy lifestyle” subject and observations of the overall process of the subject. Based on the developed methodology on assessing the effectiveness of the “Healthy lifestyle” subject at schools which covers some topics on reproductive rights, field activities were carried out during the reporting period.

The following results were obtained:

- Most of the teachers who have been interviewed participated in the training sessions by the National Institute of Education.
- The majority of interviewed stated that for the effectiveness of the subject it will be more reasonable to organize it by professionalised specialists. In majority of schools which have been chosen for the research “Healthy lifestyle” topics is implemented by physical education teachers.
- Interviewed physical education teachers stated that “Healthy lifestyle” topics are involved in physical education classes just to bring additional money to the teachers.
- The majority of interviewed stated that pupils love these topics and are very active during the classes but in case of reproductive health and rights both teachers and pupils feel very ashamed to talk about sexuality. The topic of sexuality still remains taboo for traditional Armenian society.



- The age and gender of the teacher is also made influence on the effectiveness of “Healthy lifestyle” topics. In case of young male teacher female pupils avoid to ask questions about sexuality.

The full research is available in Armenian: [http://ysu.am/files/Sex-ed\\_Teacher2018\\_WRC\\_CGLS.pdf](http://ysu.am/files/Sex-ed_Teacher2018_WRC_CGLS.pdf)

Source: [Women’s Resource Center](#)

### **Training “No violence against children! No violence against girls!”**

Gender-related violence and discrimination against women and girls are one of the main issues for Kazakhstan that unfortunately continue to exist and that we continue to combat. One main cause of gender-based violence is the idea of certain gender-roles that have to be fulfilled by men and women. This idea is rooted in most societies all over the world and people learn gender roles and stereotypes from early childhood. Therefore, it is necessary to educate children to think outside such ideas of gender roles and stereotypes and to act according the ethics of non-violence.

Thus, on January 9th and 10th, 2019, employees of the NGO “Sana Sezim” carried out trainings “No violence against children! No violence against girls!” for 79 children living in the orphanage Nr. 4 and the Juvenile Adaptation Center in Shymkent. The trainings were carried out with the financial support of the British Embassy in Kazakhstan. The children were at age of 6 to 16 and actively participated in the trainings. The objective of the training was to raise the awareness of children of vulnerable population groups about gender-based violence and raising their knowledge of their rights.

In the course of the training, the children reflected on gender stereotypes, learned what types of violence exist and how violence and gender are related.

Source: [Sana Sezim](#)

## **RESOURCES**

### **Study on Women's Rights in Western Balkans**

This study analyzes the situation of women's rights in the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia and is executed so as to address the following issues: 1. Economic-social factors relevant to women's rights, 2. Violence against women (VAW), including membership of the Istanbul convention and 3. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and LGBTI rights.

[Access the study here](#)

## **European donors continue to champion reproductive safety and care**

Despite the backlash against SRHR and an increasing anti-women's rights sentiment entering our decision-making spaces, the past year saw financial and political commitments being solidified and support for SRHR being championed in many global fora. This concludes the latest report by [Countdown 2030 Europe](#), which analyses the most recent trends in SRH and FP policies and funding support by European donor countries.

The analysis shows that SRH/FP funding largely remained protected, even where some cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA) were made. Most European countries under review (10 out of 12) either increased or maintained funding to SRH/FP, and SRH/FP featured strongly as a key component in humanitarian and long-term development policies across European countries, complemented by renewed commitment and political focus from key European governments.

Denmark showed the most significant increase in percentage growth in funding for SRH/FP, more than doubling its overall funding to SRH/FP. The combined figure for all 12 European donor countries gives an estimated support of 808 million Euros for 2017, an overall increase of 17% on 2016. The UK, Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden remain the largest donors. Amongst the large donors, the Netherlands did not show an increase in funding, but maintained 2016 levels. Increases were also reported by Belgium and Ireland, while Germany, France and Finland sustained 2016 levels. Only Spain and Switzerland decreased their funding.

On the policy side, European donors have strongly increased their commitment and focus on SRH/FP. The five new policy and strategy documents that have been endorsed in 2018 are testament to this. Of particular significance is the increased policy focus on SRH/FP in conflict and humanitarian settings, integrating SRH/FP as a key component in protecting the rights of women and girls, highlighted in new policies by for example Norway, the UK and the Netherlands.

With 2020 fast approaching, Countdown 2030 Europe will hold government's feet to the fire to ensure SRH and FP remains on top of the international development agenda and funding commitments are translated into action.

Read the full report '[European Donor Support to Sexual & Reproductive Health & Family Planning Trends Analysis 2017-18](#)'

For individual country profiles, providing country-specific context, policies and funding information for each of the 12 countries and the European Institutions, please visit: <http://www.countdown2030europe.org/country-profiles>

## **WHO launches new guideline to help health-care workers ensure safe medical abortion care**

When women and girls can access effective contraception and safe abortion services, they are better able to safeguard their health and well-being. Abortions are safe if they are done with a WHO-recommended method that is appropriate to the pregnancy duration, and if the person providing or

supporting the abortion is trained. Such abortions can be done either as a simple outpatient procedure, using vacuum aspiration, or by using medical abortion, the use of pharmacological drugs to terminate pregnancy.

WHO has launched new guidance, [Medical management of abortion](#). These new guidelines provide healthcare workers with evidence-based recommendations to help ensure high-quality healthcare for all pregnant individuals who seek a medical abortion.

Recent evidence has shown that too many women and girls continue to suffer and die due to a lack of access to safe abortion and post-abortion care. Approximately 25 million unsafe abortions (45% of all abortions) took place every year between 2010 and 2014. Following unsafe abortion, women may experience a range of harms that affect their quality of life and well-being, with some women even experiencing life-threatening complications.

Medical abortion plays a crucial role in the provision of access to safe, effective and acceptable abortion care. Mifepristone and misoprostol in combination or, where mifepristone is unavailable, misoprostol alone, are the recommended medications to induce abortion, and to manage incomplete abortion, or ‘intrauterine fetal demise’ – the clinical term used to describe the death of a fetus in the uterus.

It is hoped that by supporting healthcare workers with accurate and evidence-based information on the medical management of abortion, more pregnant individuals who seek abortion will receive high-quality and effective healthcare.

There are many potential advantages of medical abortion. Task sharing, and more efficient use of resources in both high- and low-resource settings, are documented benefits. Medical abortion care reduces the need for skilled surgical abortion providers and offers a non-invasive and highly acceptable option to pregnant individuals.

### **New recommendations**

A number of studies have recently been published which give new evidence related to the timing, dosage, dosing intervals and routes of administration of medications to manage abortion, as well as the timing of contraception initiation following a medical abortion. In recognition of these developments, WHO reviewed the evidence and has now updated its recommendations.

Source: [WHO](#)

### **Abortion stigma ends here: A toolkit for understanding and action**

Abortion stigma plays a critical role in the social, medical and legal marginalization of abortion care around the world—and it leads to negative health outcomes for women, girls, trans people and our communities. It drives the high number of preventable deaths and injuries around the world due to unsafe abortion. Ipas offers this toolkit to address and help mitigate abortion stigma. It is designed to help community members, community health workers, activists and staff of community-based organizations and others address abortion stigma in various settings and contexts. The toolkit activities are clustered into thematic modules, but facilitators can also develop their own workshop

agenda by picking activities that suit the goals of the gathering, the participants' needs, the facilitators' skill level and the time available.

Source: [IPAS](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### UN Commission on the Status of Women 2019

The sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 11 to 22 March 2019. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world are expected to attend the session.

#### Themes

Priority theme: *Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;*

Review theme: *Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the sixtieth session);*

The Bureau of the Commission plays a crucial role in facilitating the preparation for, and in ensuring the successful outcome of the annual sessions of the Commission. Bureau members serve for two years. In 2002, in order to improve its work and ensure continuity, the Commission decided to hold the first meeting of its subsequent session, immediately following the closure of the regular session, for the sole purpose of electing the new Chairperson and other members of the Bureau (ECOSOC decision 2002/234).

The Bureau for the 63rd session (2019) of the Commission on the Status of Women comprises the following members:

H.E. Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland), Chair (Western European and other States Group)

Ms. Koki Muli Grignon (Kenya), Vice-Chair (African States Group)

Mr. Mauricio Carabali Baquero (Colombia), Vice-Chair (Latin American and Caribbean States Group)

Ms. Rena Tasuja (Estonia), Vice-Chair (Eastern European States Group)

Mr. Mohammed S. Marzooq (Iraq), Vice-Chair designate (Asia-Pacific States Group)

Full information about NGO participation can be found [here](#).

Source: [www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw63-2019](http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw63-2019)

## **Commission on Population and Development fifty-second session**

52nd session of the UN CPD will take place on April 1-5, 2019 in New York with the theme of *Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

The appointed Chairperson is H.E. Mr. Courtenay Rattray, designate (Jamaica) - Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) and Vice-Chairpersons are as follows: Ms. Yuliana Angelova (Bulgaria) - Eastern-European Group; Mr. René Lauer (Luxembourg) - Western European and Others Group (WEOG); Mr. Saidu Nallo, designate (Sierra Leone) - African Group; TBD () - Asia-Pacific Group.

Information for NGOs is available [here](#).

Source: [UN](#)

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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