



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

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

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### BURNING ISSUE

#### The ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Report

[The ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Report](#) is the culmination of the two year long UN review of progress, gaps, challenges and emerging issues in relation to the ICPD Programme of Action agreed in Cairo 20 years ago. The ICPD+20 Review Process encompasses input from member states (through the Global Survey), outcomes of and information gathered at the Thematic Conferences (Global Youth Forum, International Conference on Human Rights, Expert Meeting on Women's Health) and Regional Population Conferences. The report gathers data from 176 member states, alongside inputs from civil society and comprehensive academic research. It provides vital support for member states continued commitment to ICPD and asserts the programme's relevance to the Post-2015 development agenda.

At the core of the Global Report, are inequalities – the cost of inequality for dignity and for sustainable development, and how investments in gender equality and rights, in youth, health and

education and securing the human rights of all are essential to deliver sustainable global development goals.

The ICPD report promotes a human-rights based approach to health. It affirms the fundamental rights to life and to security of the person, as well as freedom from cruel, inhumane treatment and from discrimination. It discusses sexual and reproductive health and rights to a broad extent and urges member states to remove unnecessary restrictions on abortion as „the more restrictive legislation on abortion is, the more likely abortion is to be unsafe and to result in death“. It also recalls that the vast majority of governments allow abortion on request, or to save the life of the woman, or for at least one other condition such as fetal anomaly. Moreover the report stresses the importance of comprehensive sex education and access to contraception as key factors decreasing the need for abortion and embraces women’s empowerment and gender equality.

Based on the ICPD Global Report the UN Secretary General prepared a report for the 47th session of the Commission on Population and Development (April 7-11), available [here](#).

Source: [ICPD Beyond 2014](#), [hurriyetdailynews.com](#)

## REGIONAL UPDATES

### **ASTRA at the 8th session of the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals**

ASTRA representative attended the 8th OWG session in New York which was held on February 3-7 with the main theme on "Promoting equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment". This was also the last thematic session of the OWG before it moves into the phase of intergovernmental negotiations in early March.

Andris Piebalgs, European Union Commissioner of Development, spoke at the OWG session on behalf of the European Union Member States. He stressed that „*the post-2015 framework should ensure a rights-based approach encompassing all human rights and be based on the principles of justice, equality, equity, democracy, good governance and the rule of law. (...) The EU considers gender equality and women's and girl's rights and empowerment as a universal priority for the post-2015 development agenda.*“ Read full statement of Mr Piebalgs [here](#).

Source: [ASTRA Network](#), [UN Sustainable Development](#)

### **Government report from implementing Anti-Abortion Act in 2012 in Poland**

Polish government published - with a big delay - its 2012 report from the implementation of the so-called Anti-Abortion Bill. The law obliges the government to inform the society about the impact of strict regulations but - as in previous years - the document makes no attempt to assess the influence of the provisions on women's health and lives. According to the report the number of legal abortions rose compared to 2011 and amounted to 757. The Federation is preparing its analysis of the report and the document is waiting for debate in parliamentary committees and final vote in plenary.

### **Abortion debate reopened in Romania**

Florica Chereches, member of the Romanian Parliament and member of the liberal party PNL, reopened the debate on mandatory counseling sessions for women requesting abortion on demand and declared to campaign in the next years for amending the current abortion law. According to Mrs Chereches, women seeking abortion should be required by law to take between 5-7 days mandatory reflection/waiting period so as to ensure that women with unwanted pregnancies are presented with options and allegedly would then make the “correct” informed decisions. In her statement Mrs Chereches declared that her motivation for her planned campaign lies in the fact that Romania has a high abortion rate, especially among adolescents. She is convinced that tougher laws and regulations on abortion will make women reconsider their decisions but will also cause cuts in medical costs associated with abortion and post-abortion care.

Source: [ASTRA Network](#)

### **Visit of UNFPA Executive Director to Georgia**

Dr Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, visited Georgia on February 16-18, 2014 to participate in UNFPA’s Planning Meeting for the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region. During his official visit, Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin met the Prime Minister of Georgia, Mr. Irakli Garibashvili and the President of Georgia, Mr. Giorgi Margvelashvili, as well as the top officials of the partner ministries to discuss cooperation and reiterate UNFPA’s support to the Government of Georgia for implementing the ICPD Programme of Action.

The visit of the Executive Director was a significant event for UNFPA’s Georgia Country Office, as it celebrates 15 years of presence in Georgia in 2014. UNFPA’s support to the country within the framework of the second Country Programme (2011-2015) aims to support the fulfillment of the country’s international commitments, such as promotion of reproductive health and rights of the population, strengthening gender equality and combating gender-based violence, empowering youth and strengthening national capacities for generating reliable population data for informed policy-making and planning where CSO involvement is crucial.

One of the milestones of development is CSOs meaningful involvement in shaping national , regional and international agenda of SRHR and building linkages between ICPD beyond 2014 and post-2015 development agenda. "Building strong networking that dials with the empowering CSOs and bringing up the voice of the most marginalized is crucial in terms of planning and implementing targeted interventions under development framework. ASTRA Network has been strongly contributing advocating for SRHR already a while within the CEE region as well as effectively cooperating with us on national level. We do appreciate the commitment and count on further coordination" - claims Ms Natalia Zakareishvili (MD, MPH) Programme Analyst of UNFPA Georgia.

For photos from this visit click [here](#).

Source: UNFPA Georgia, [ASTRA Network](#)

### **MEPs back plan to end violence against women**

On Tuesday February 25th MEPs backed calls for the EU to come up with a plan to end violence against women throughout the bloc and supported the Antonia Parvanova "[Combating Violence against Women](#)" report. MEP Parvanova requests the Commission to present an EU-wide Strategy and an Action Plan to combat violence against women. It also calls on the Commission to promote national ratifications and launch the procedure for the accession of the EU to the Istanbul Convention on violence against women. It urges the Commission to establish an EU Year to End Violence against Women. Finally, the report asks the Council to activate the passerelle clause, by adopting a unanimous decision identifying gender based violence (including FGM) as an area of crime listed in Article 83(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Between 20-25% of women in the EU are said to have suffered physical violence at least once in their lives. Around 3,000 die every year.

Source: <http://parvanova.eu/news.php?lang=en>

### **European Parliament for criminalisation of buying sex**

On Wednesday February 26th members of the European Parliament backed a report proposed by the London MEP and Labour spokeswoman for women in Europe, Mary Honeyball: [Report on sexual exploitation and prostituion and its impast on gender equality](#). It recommends the adoption of the Nordic model of sex work that legalises selling sex but criminalises buying it and points out to this model as a successful approach to prevent trafficking, support and assist female sex workers, and change mentalities in terms of gender equality. This non-binding resolution stresses that sex work violates human dignity and human rights, whether it is forced or voluntary, and calls on member states to find exit strategies and alternative sources of income for women who want to leave sex work. The Honeyball report was adopted by 343 votes to 139, with 105 abstentions

Source: [European Parliament](#), [The Guardian](#)

### **Empowering people and women defended as a priority in the post-2015 development agenda**

On February 13-14 the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) organised a conference on the Post-2015 framework. The event, entitled „*A new global partnership: European civil society positions on the post-2015 framework*“, gathered representatives from all spectrums of civil society, who were invited to react to the conclusions put together by different EESC working groups.

The panel debates included Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the UN Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals who specifically addressed sexual and reproductive health and rights and stated that the co-Chair's

Summary on the OWG session would include a balance between progressive and more conservative views on the issue. Mr. Kőrösi also confirmed that gender is expected to be strongly integrated in the SDGs. Throughout the debate, representatives stressed that the new framework needs to be transformative and have an integrated and multi-level approach. The debate also highlighted the need for a human-based rights approach to be undertaken at all levels. Several speakers and members of the audience defended the position that SRHR, women's empowerment and gender equality must be at the heart of the new agenda.

To see the full programme of the event, please click [here](#).

Source: [DSW \[nEUws\]](#)

### **European Parliament called for EU LGBT Roadmap**

On February 4 the European Parliament adopted a report calling on the European Commission to adopt an EU Roadmap tackling homophobia, transphobia and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (*Lunacek Report*). According to this report the EU law should protect all citizens against discrimination, including when they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender as living free from threats and discrimination isn't a 'personal interest', but a human right. To access the report click [here](#).

Source: [ILGA Europe](#)

## **GLOBAL UPDATES**

### **UN Open Working Group ends the „stock-taking phase” and releases its summary report and dokument on focus areas**

The Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals have completed their summary report (access it [here](#)) on the work of the Group during its 'stock-taking phase'. This document will serve as a basis for its work going forward as from 3 March the intergovernmental negotiations on SDGs will begin.

In the report, Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, and Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, summarize the Group's first eight sessions, held between March 2013 and February 2014. The draft document includes summary points from the 18 agenda items (among them: Health, population dynamics; Human rights, the right to development, global governance; Promoting equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment) discussed by the Group, and also recalls the daily meetings held with Major Groups and stakeholders, an intersessional meeting focused on rights-based SDGs, an Expert Group Meeting on Science and Technology for SDGs and an informal meeting on measuring progress with members of the statistical community. Moreover, the OWG has come forward with a document on focus areas (access it [here](#)) which has already been shared with UN Member States. The Group must report to the UNGA during the 68th Session (by September 2014).

## **Opportunity for civil society to make their views known on the focus areas document by the OWG.**

A page has been created on the [World We Want 2015 website](#) for civil society to make their thoughts heard on the focus areas. All civil society representatives are encouraged to submit their comments answering the following questions:

1. Regarding the 'focus areas document' overall: What do you agree with and what is missing?
2. Per specific focus area, what do you agree with and how would you improve it?

This open consultation will run from Monday 24 February to Friday 14 March 2014. It is a chance to make CSO voices heard in advance of the next OWG session starting 3 March where UN member states will move into a process of identifying SDGs and accompanying targets.

Source: <http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/owg-co-chairs-circulate-draft-progress-report/>, [NGOsBeyond2014](#), [ASTRA Network](#)

## **YOUTH**

### **UNFPA Concept Paper on Empowering Adolescents and Youth to Ensure a Sustainable Future for All**

UNFPA has launched its concept paper on [Empowering Adolescents and Youth to Ensure a Sustainable Future for All](#). The concept paper calls for a stand-alone Post-2015 goal on Adolescents and Youth. As well as referring to the numerous recent global and regional discussions and their outcomes that recognize the urgent need to invest in adolescents and youth, it makes proposals for such a goal, together with possible six targets and indicators.

Source: [NGOsBeyond2014](#)

### **Call for Submissions: CPD47 Watchdog**

The Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (YCSRR) is calling on all SRHR advocates to submit articles on the CPD for their upcoming Watchdog Publication.

YCSRR produces their event-based newsletter, the Watchdog, at many international conferences and events. The YCSRR uses the Watchdog as an advocacy tool with policy and decision-makers. This edition will be distributed at the 47th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) being held at the United Nations in New York City from 7-11 April 2014 with the theme Assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

For this edition of the Watchdog they are looking for articles discussing the following topics:

- Experience on what the ICPD PoA has brought to your country;

- How the ICPD PoA impacts the grass-roots level, by providing examples of best practices on abortion services and comprehensive sexuality education;
- How the ICPD should be integrated into the Post-2015 development framework;
- The emerging issues that need to be integrated into the Post-2015 development framework.

Age Requirements: Only submissions written by young people under 30 years of age will be considered. Exceptions may be made for group submissions if written primarily by young people under the age of 30.

Young people under the age of 18 are strongly encouraged to submit articles. Articles are welcome in any widely spoken language (not necessarily UN language) and should not exceed 1 page. Please include pictures, if possible, as well as your full name, date of birth and organizational affiliation, if relevant.

Please send submissions to: [programs@youthcoalition.org](mailto:programs@youthcoalition.org) with subject line "CPD47 Watchdog Submission" no later than 10 March 2014 (midnight EST). Articles submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Please include your full name, country of citizenship/residence and age with your submission.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **GUE/NGL hearing on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the European Parliament**

On 6 March representative of the Federation for Women and Family Planning (Poland) and ASTRA Network will speak at the hearing in the European Parliament: Defending sexual and reproductive health and rights - Ensuring access for all women. The focus presentation will include case studies from Poland, Spain, Ireland, Germany and Portugal.

The event is organized by GUE/NGL. For the agenda and more information click [here](#).

### **Meeting on violence against women in the European Parliament**

Interparliamentary Committee Meeting „Preventing violence against women - a challenge for all" will take place on Wednesday, 5th March 2014 in the European Parliament. It will be chaired by Mikael Gustaffson, the Chair of the FEMM Committee and attended by MEP Antonia Parvanova.

For programme and details click [here](#).

### **58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women**

On March 10-21 the 58th CSW session will take place in New York. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and non-governmental organizations from all regions of the world attend the session to discuss its priority theme of *Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the*

*Millennium Development Goals for women and girls* and the review theme of *Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work*. The draft agreed conclusions are available [online](#).

For more information and the documentation please go to the CSW website at [UN Women](#).

### **President of the General Assembly Events**

President of the UN General Assembly announced that six meetings will be held in 2014 to operationalize the theme for the 68th session of the UN General Assembly: The post-2015 development agenda: setting the stage. Three thematic debates and three high level events are planned to take place this year. The thematic debates will be carried out in consultation with the co-chairs of the OWG and of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. The PGA event on the [Contributions of women, the young and civil society](#) will take place the March 6-7, 2014. The remaining PGA Events will focus on the following:

[Role of Partnerships: 9-10 April](#)

[Ensuring stable and peaceful societies: 24-25 April](#)

[Contributions of North-South, South-South, Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for Development:](#)

[20-21 May](#)

[Human Rights and the Rule of Law: 17-18 June](#)

For more information about the PGA events, click [here](#).

### **11th Conference of the International Federation of Professional Abortion and Contraception Associates**

The international bi-annual conference of FIAPAC for health care professionals working in the field of abortion care and contraception, will be held in Ljubljana, Slovenia on October 3-4, 2014. For more information visit the official website: [www.fiapac.org](http://www.fiapac.org)

### **Less than 100 days left before the EU elections!**

On 22-25 May, European Union voters will go to the polls to elect 751 new MEPs and decide which direction Europe should follow. For more information on the details and logistics visit the [European Parliament online](#) and [Poll Watch 2014](#) for regular predictions of the outcome of the 2014 European Parliament elections.



## PUBLICATIONS

The new ASTRA publication ***Status of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Central and Eastern Europe*** is a tool for all advocates, NGO workers, policy makers and those interested in the CEE region and the SRHR status of women and young people. This factsheet is also a great resource about the Network itself, its mission and members. The factsheet concentrates around four main issues which remain a challenge in the region: access to safe and legal abortion, contraception, comprehensive sexuality education and violence against women. It provides several recommendations for the governments and all stakeholders within the current ongoing UN processes such as the ICPD+20 and post-2015 process.

The factsheet is available for download [here](#).

***Conscientious objection and refusal to provide reproductive healthcare: A White Paper examining prevalence, health consequences, and policy responses*** is a new publication by Global Doctors for Choice. It examines the prevalence, character, and impact of conscience-based refusal and reviews policy efforts to balance individual conscience, autonomy in reproductive decision making, safeguards for health, and professional medical integrity. This White Paper is intended to be a tool for both advocates and policy makers. With the dual commitments toward their own conscience and their obligations to patients' health and rights, providers and professional medical and public health societies are well positioned to lead attempts to respond to conscience-based refusal and to safeguard reproductive health, medical integrity, and women's lives.

[Download the PDF here.](#)

Source: [Global Doctors for Choice](#)

The Center for Reproductive Rights finalized a new resource titled ***Substantive Equality and Reproductive Rights: A Briefing Paper on Aligning Development Goals with Human Rights Obligations***. Over the next two years, states have an opportunity to address the root causes of gender inequality by ensuring that gender equality and reproductive rights are reflected in development programs. This briefing paper seeks to contribute concrete ideas to the global debate on how to integrate international human rights norms surrounding reproductive rights and gender equality into the development framework that emerges from the Post-2015 process.

[Download the briefing paper here.](#)

Source: [Center for Reproductive Rights](#)

## CALL TO ACTION

Stop the extreme anti-gay law in Uganda – sign the online petition at [ALL OUT](#).

**ASTRA Network members:**

Albania - Albanian Family Planning Association  
Armenia - Women's Rights Center  
Armenia - Society Without Violence  
Armenia - Women's Resource Center  
Azerbaijan - Center "Women and Modern World"  
Belarus - Women's Independent Democratic Movement of Belarus  
Bulgaria - Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association  
Bulgaria - Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation  
Bulgaria - Gender Education, Research and Technologies  
Bulgaria - Demetra Association  
Bulgaria - Gender Alternatives Foundation  
Croatia - B.a.b.e. (Be Active, Be Emancipated)  
Croatia - CESI - Center for Education and Counseling of Woman  
Croatia - Women's Room  
Georgia – Real People, Real Vision  
Georgia – HERA XXI  
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 – Shelter Center  
Macedonia - Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women  
Macedonia - Health Education and Research Association  
Moldova – Family Planning Association  
Moldova - Reproductive Health Service Center  
Poland - Federation for Women and Family Planning  
Romania - Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives  
Romania - A.L.E.G.  
Romania - The East European Institute of Reproductive Health  
Romania - AnA: Society for Feminist Analysis  
Russia - Novgorod 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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