



CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

No 4 (174) 2018

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BURNING ISSUE

51st session of the Commission for Population and Development

The 51st UN CPD took place in New York on April 9-13, 2018 under the theme of "Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration". Dr. Ion Jinga, Romanian Ambassador to the UN, was the Chairperson on behalf of the Eastern-European Group

ASTRA Network Advisory Board member from Romania, Daniela Draghici, represented the ASTRA Network at the 51st CPD thanks to the generous support of the International Women's Health Coalition, as part of the International Sexual and Reproductive Rights Coalition. Daniela had a unique opportunity to have a fruitful working collaboration, also thanks to the relationship she had established with the Romanian UN Mission key personnel in charge of CPD, as well as with the government delegate prior to the session. She supported the national delegation, and the ones from Republic of Moldova, Russia, and Serbia throughout the session and provided feedback on the process to the other activists gathered in New York.

This year's CPD session did not end with a much expected outcome document as on the last day the Chairperson withdrew the draft resolution, reflecting compromise that was the product of careful negotiations and positive efforts of all national delegations. Unfortunately the United States refused to join the consensus, imposing their regressive view of sexual and reproductive health and rights on the global stage. In addition, the Ugandan delegate, on behalf of the African group, objected to the removal of the sovereignty clause, as well as the watering down of the Global Compact on Migration language.

To make up for this drawback, the representative of Tunisia read a [powerful statement](#) on behalf of 35 countries, highlighting the paramount importance of access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Comprehensive Sexuality Education underlining that *We, as civil society, were deeply disappointed that after a week of intense debate the member states failed to adopt a resolution at the Commission on Population and Development. Despite this outcome, CPD remains a critical space for countries and advocates to affirm and advance their commitments to advance human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights.*

The special theme of next year's 52nd session of the Commission on Population and Development will be "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.

Additional reading:

[Written statement of the Federation for Women and Family Planning on behalf of the ASTRA Network for the 51st CPD](#)

International Women's Health Coalition, [The 2018 Commission on Population and Development and Prospects for the Future](#)

Countdown Europe 2030, [A roller-coaster of hope and despair for the international SRHR agenda!](#)

REGIONAL UPDATES

Croatia Ratifies the Istanbul Convention

After many months of struggles of women's groups and numerous protests organized by the opposition, the Croatian Parliament voted: 110 in favor, 30 against, 2 abstained from voting. On April 13th the Croatian parliament ratified the Istanbul Convention aimed to be an instrument in combating domestic violence against women, protecting victims and prosecuting accused offenders. Among the forms of violence it seeks to counter are marital rape, stalking, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Additional reading:

[Croatia Ratified the Istanbul Convention and It Was a Big Victory over Fake News, EU Inside](#)

[Total Croatia News](#)

[Croatia ratifies European treaty despite conservative protests, Reuters](#)

Rising support for abortion in Poland

In April and May pro-choice billboards with the slogan “Women in Poland demand legal abortion” have appeared in different cities and towns across Poland. This campaign was organised by an informal women’s group, which managed to gather financial means in a crowdfunding campaign. The organizers and supporters wished to protest with these billboards against manipulative messages of the anti-abortion fundamentalists and to make their voice in the public sphere more distinctive. The billboards were meant to support pro-choice people in smaller, conservative towns and to empower them to show that they possess agency and can change the reality. Their action reflects a solid and growing support for the liberalization of the anti-abortion law.

[The latest opinion poll conducted by IPSOS in cooperation with OKO.press](#), the online portal run by investigative journalists, reaffirms some continued trends, but it also surprises with new observations. The most crucial conclusions:

- 37% of Poles are for liberalization, 44% for the status quo and 11% for a stricter law. Since January the percentage of anti-abortion radicals has dropped by 4%;
- the poll exposes the dual-thinking of Poles. Opinion about the right to abortion is more liberal – among 20% of respondents – when people are faced not with the abstract law, but with a specific situation of a women in an unwanted pregnancy. 55% of interviewees claim that the law should not ban abortion in case of an acquainted in a difficult situation ;
- among voters of the Law and Justice Party there are more supporters of liberalization than opponents;
- number of people appealing for a more restrictive law has fallen since January in almost all electorates;
- youth has become one of the most liberal groups regarding their stance on abortion, for a long time they were one of the most conservative groups;
- acceptance of abortion is lower among people with higher income and with a higher level of formal education, which is not surprising in the light of the fact that they have resources in terms of money, information and contacts to arrange pregnancy termination beside the official system;
- men are much more conservative than women.

Source: [Federation for Women and Family Planning](#)

The Draft Law on Infertility Treatment with Bio-Medically Assisted Fertilization in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

After several attempts and draft laws from many sides in the previous years - attempts to regulate this area in the Federation BiH and harmonize the practice of Bio-Medically Assisted Fertilization in all its cantons, the Federation BiH Government, in March 2018, established the Draft Law on Infertility Treatment with Bio-Medically Assisted Fertilization. The Law regulates the pre-conditions and ways/procedures of infertility treatment, all according to regulation on health care, health insurance, patients' rights, duties and responsibilities. Adoption of this law would enable equal opportunity for all couples, no matter the material status, creditworthiness or the canton they live in.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is still the only country in the Region of Western Balkans that does not have this law on the entity nor state level, and this issue is partially and unequally regulated on the cantonal level. The patients are currently left to the mercy of the private clinics whose prices are extremely high (like those in EU countries' private clinics), and the public sector is not able to compete with the private one, not in terms of the necessary equipment, nor in terms of the number of procedures that resulted in pregnancy. Not adopting this law has often been justified by the insufficient amount of money that would finance the treatment, which is unfounded if we take into account the fact that the BiH entity Republika Srpska enables its citizens, since 2007, two procedures of bio-medically assisted fertilization at the expense of the compulsory health insurance.

The significance of adopting this Law lays in the fact that the issues that have so far existed in the so called "grey area" of the legal system (exploiting the uninhabited status of infertile persons with the aim to gain material benefits), that were not allowed nor prohibited, can be regulated with this Law. This is the way to better protect the Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens, thus improve their position and access to health care/treatment. Citizens do not have adequate access to treatment, they cannot get the treatment for free because of the compulsory health insurance that they exercise via cantonal healthcare institutions or Federation BiH Healthcare Institution, and the participation of the institution varies from canton to canton, which creates the unharmonized picture. The bio-medically assisted fertilization procedures are expensive, financially exhausting for couples and the couples' existence is often in question. So, this is why the support of the community is important in order to facilitate the process and adopting this law for the level of the Federation BiH makes it possible, having in mind the benefits for and welfare of the patients, not political or religious convictions.

We hope that the Federation BiH Parliament will, in the following period, adopt this Law and ensure that having a baby/child is should not be a privilege of the rich and creditworthy, but a human right of all the people who want it.

Source: [Sarajevo Open Center](#)

EU court delivers blow to anti-choice activists

The European Commission was right to deny demands by anti-choice activists to launch new legislation - despite their successful citizen initiative bid on the subject, Europe's top judges have ruled.

The European Court of Justice in Luxembourg on 23rd of April ruled a European citizen's initiative cannot require the commission to submit a proposal for a legal act. The ruling follows a legal challenge by the Belgium-based "One of US" campaign. In 2014 it demanded the EU stop financing the destruction of human embryos. The commission refused to act given, in part, that research into embryonic stem cells offer potential for life-saving treatments. "One of US" then pressed the case at Luxembourg-court, which they lost.

"A contrary interpretation would result in the commission being stripped of all discretion in exercising its powers of legislative initiative following a European citizens' initiative," said the court.

The campaign had amassed some 1.7 million signatures. Of those, around 235,000 came from Poland alone, whose conservative government earlier this year introduced a bill to tighten abortion laws. The predominately Catholic country already has some of the toughest abortion laws in Europe.

"One of US" says any verdict that challenged its demands would amount to discrimination and render the citizen's initiative meaningless. The campaign, which describes itself as an international federation rooted in common Christian values, is supported by right-wing Polish MEP Marek Jurek.

Source: [EU Observer](#)

From ASTRA Members

ASTRA members raise their capacity on international and regional advocacy possibilities

Two day workshop on "Advocacy opportunities for ASTRA members: using the International Human Rights Instruments and Mechanisms" took place in Zagreb, Croatia on April 23-24. Co-hosted by Croatian ASTRA member [CESI - Centar za edukaciju, savjetovanje i istraživanje](#) it brought together 26 participants from Central and Eastern European region who during the two days deepened their knowledge on the United Nations Human Rights system, advocacy opportunities and the available mechanisms and processes. Sustainable Development Goals were also part of the meeting; participants familiarized themselves with the process of Voluntary National Reviews and upcoming meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in New York in July.

Experts from the [Sexual Rights Initiative](#) and the [International Women's Health Coalition](#) shared their their knowledge and experience and provided spaces for discussion.

Source: ASTRA Secretariat

Peaceful mass protests have brought a much awaited turning point to Armenian citizens

Armenia, a small landlocked post-soviet country was on international news headlines recently and the reason, luckily, was not a natural disaster, mass killings or a terrorist attack that usually attracts global media attention in less developed world but the phenomenon of exceptional character of civil disobedience acts bringing to the unprecedented non-violent bottom-up revolution in the post-Soviet territory. Protests and marches took place initially in response to Serzh Sargsyan's third consecutive term as the most powerful figure in the government of the Armenia and later against the Republican Party-controlled government in general. Pashinyan declared it a Velvet Revolution. Read the article by ASTRA's representative, Anna Arusthyan from ASTRA's member [Society Without Violence](#) about what really happened in Armenia this year:

[The winning recipe of Revolution 'Love and Solidarity': Armenian style](#)

Event at the Lithuanian Parliament to counteract anti-abortion draft legislation

On May 8th ASTRA representatives from Lithuania organized a debate and press conference on the threats and consequences of introducing restrictions to abortion services. Polish representative of ASTRA Secretariat participated in the panel discussion and press conference and presented how the current anti-abortion law in Poland influences the lives of women and what the real consequences of this anti-women law are.

The Electoral Action of Poles at the Lithuanian Parliament proposed a bill restricting access to abortion. The new draft proposes that legal abortion would only be possible if pregnancy poses a threat to life or health of the woman or was result of criminal acts. In such cases, abortion would be performed only by 12th week. Currently, abortions are allowed by the 12th week with no additional conditions.

Source: ASTRA Secretariat

Training sessions on sexual and reproductive health and rights issues in Armenia

In the period of six months Women's Resource Center Armenia implemented several training sessions on sexual and reproductive health and rights issues for the 12 different groups of women. Total 135 women from different groups including women from rural areas, women with disabilities, LB women, Yezidi women and others have participated to the workshops on the structure and functionality of sexual and reproductive organs, menstrual cycle, personal hygiene and care, sexually transmitted infections and contraceptive methods, abortion as a fundamental right of women and etc. The aim of the meetings is to pass evidence based information to the women and raise their knowledge on their own rights. Additionally, the Women's Resource Center NGO published 10 monthly newsletters on various topics of sexuality, including abortion, as a woman's fundamental right. It will be distributed among different groups of women.

The Women's Resource Center NGO also conducted an online campaign, spreading posters on women's body choice. The final part of the campaign included a public service announcement on women's choice of her body. The video in English is available [here](#).

Two meetings for the representatives of human rights organizations and activists were held to discuss the abortion topic as a fundamental right of a woman, as well as the issue of son preference abortion in terms of women's rights. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the human rights community with the current situation of abortion rights in the country as well as the legal obstacles of the topic.

Source: [Women's Resource Center NGO](#)

Efforts to implement the Istanbul Convention in Macedonia

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, a public event "What are the next steps after ratification of the Istanbul Convention" organized by the United Nations Office in the Republic of Macedonia was held on 7th of March. The event was attended by numerous representatives of the embassies in the Republic of Macedonia, international and civil society organizations and the media.

The UN Resident Representative in Macedonia, Louisa Vinton, the President of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Zoran Zaev, the Minister of Social Policy and Labor, Mila Carovska and the Minister of Health, Venko Filipce gave a speech at the event.

The focus of the event's discussion was the importance of the ratification of Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and the next steps to be taken for successful implementation of the convention.

Source: <http://iportal.mk/makedonija/zaev-velime-jasno-ne-za-nasilstvoto-vrz-zhenite>

GLOBAL UPDATES

Mark the Day: May 28 International Day of Action for Women's Health!

May 28 is the International Day of Action for Women's Health, for over 30 years, women, girls, advocates and allies have continued to take action, stand up and speak out for sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). May 28 is a key day for us, as activists, to call for the promotion, protection, prioritisation and advancement of sexual and reproductive health rights on local, national and international scales.

On the world stage, women's health particularly sexual and reproductive health rights continues to be systematically violated. Barriers to women's health continue to grow including the impacts as a result of the expansion of the Global Gag Rule, drastic funding cuts to SRHR programs, increased legislation attempts hindering access to safe abortion and online restrictions to accessing information. As rollbacks grow, collective action has never been more important. Collaboration is key if we are to transform the current inequalities in women's health worldwide.

This International Day of Action for Women's Health, WGNRR invites and encourages its members, partners, and allies worldwide to Mobilise, Speak Out, and Take Action - let's stand together, voice our resistance, and remind world leaders that Women's Health Matters! Let's continue to resist and persist on #May28! Visit www.may28.org for materials and ideas of what to do in your communities.

YOUTH

Successful efforts of Ponton youth activists to counteract rollbacks on sexuality education in Poland

In November 2017, the action "Towards Maturity" funded by the National Health Program was launched. "Towards maturity" is a nationwide project in which tutors are trained via an openly accessible online platform. The patronage over the campaign included non-governmental organizations, among others The Evangelium Vitae Foundation (which describes itself as a "living monument of John Paul II") or the Pure Heart Foundation (which as part of its mission mentions actions to "make every marriage sacramental" and to aim for the "largest possible number of girls and boys to begin their sexual life only after marriage").

For an unregistered person, 6 out of 7 films dealing with subjects around reproduction are available – from diet and stimulants, to contraception and sexually transmitted diseases, to "parental tasks before conception and during the development of the prenatal child". The video lectures contain information such as that condoms heighten the risk of contracting STIs/STDs, that supplementation of vitamins is a form of protection against STIs/STDs, or that the impregnated cell can communicate with the mother, "saying" things like "accept me, welcome me to your warm pillow".

The Ponton Group published the article "The rhetoric of fear and repression – project of the Ministry of Health" where you can find more information about this program. After the publication of the article we were contacted by OKO.Press, a Polish non-profit media organization. They amplified our message and soon other media outlets reached out to us. Antonina Lewandowska, author of the very first article, was quoted by news websites such as Newsweek.pl and Onet.pl. After our swift reaction the Ministry of Health withdrew the videos from the website.

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

New publications

Youth Power for Youth Rights: An Interactive Toolkit for Developing Your National Youth Strategy

Amnesty International has published a toolkit that outlines the process of developing and implementing a National Youth Strategy. It is not meant to be a one-size-fits-all template, but rather a journey you can undertake in your Section. This toolkit can also be used to integrate a youth perspective into other existing or soon to be developed strategies, such as an Activism Strategy, Fundraising Strategy, Growth Strategy and Human Rights Education Strategy. This is important as it

will never be enough to have a stand-alone National Youth Strategy if other strategies and plans do not pay attention to young people.

You can access the toolkit [HERE](#).

Source: [Amnesty International](#)

RESOURCES

Contraception Atlas 2018: European States failing to empower citizens to plan their lives

Access to contraception should be a key concern of governments in empowering citizens to plan their families and lives. Yet every country analysed by the 2018 Contraception Atlas needs to do more to improve access. The findings show that for many European countries, ensuring that people have choice over their reproductive lives is not a priority. Now in its second edition, the Atlas tracks government policies on access to contraceptive methods, family planning counseling and the provision of online information on contraception in 46 European states.

States shun cost-effective reimbursement schemes

Only three of the countries analysed offer excellent general reimbursement schemes for contraception, which are a game-changer in opening up access to modern contraception. Considering the burden unintended pregnancy places on states and the relatively small cost of reimbursement schemes, this is surprising. Schemes that offer reimbursement for long acting and reversible contraception (LARCs), such as subdermal contraceptive implants and IUDs, are particularly cost-effective. These methods are also less prone to failure and have higher satisfaction rates than other contraceptive methods.

Online information deficit

Official government websites with information about contraceptive types and where to get them are a minuscule expense for governments, but can make a big difference to citizens seeking accurate information. While there has been an overall improvement in the quality of online information available since the 2017 Atlas was published, still only 11 of the countries surveyed had very good or excellent government supported websites.

Unintended pregnancy

The disappointing findings of the Atlas tally with the statistics on unintended pregnancy in Europe: over 43% pregnancies in Europe are unplanned. Contraception is used by 69.2% of European women aged between 15 and 49 who are married or living with a partner — lower than the usage rates of both the North America and Latin America/Caribbean regions.

Performance Scale

The Atlas stratifies countries by colour according to their performance: green, light green, yellow, orange, red. The red category, indicating a very poor performance, contains 14 countries — more than any of the other groups.

Belgium, France and the UK rank best of the 46 countries surveyed. A major factor setting these states apart is general reimbursement schemes which cover a range of contraceptive supplies, including LARCs. They have additional policies to improve access to contraception for young people and vulnerable groups, such as low-income women. Excellent government supported websites are also a feature of these top performers. However, even Belgium, France and the UK have much to do in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which set out targets for access to family planning.

This initiative is powered by the [European Parliamentary Forum on Population & Development \(EPF\)](#) in partnership with Third-I and group of experts in sexual and reproductive health and rights who designed the questions and structures.

See the atlas here www.contraceptioninfo.eu

New resource exposes European religious network intent on overturning laws related to sexuality and reproduction

- Comprehensive strategy document uncovered, plus information on clandestine meetings
- Links to anti-abortion initiatives in Poland, Spain and at EU level; as well as anti-gay marriage movements in Croatia, Romania and Slovenia
- Secret strategy also targets contraception, divorce and IVF

The publication by the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development reveals that campaigners from the US and Europe have been strategizing ‘achievable goals’ to roll back human rights in Europe since 2013. Documents have recently emerged showing a detailed, extremist strategy called ***Restoring the Natural Order: an Agenda for Europe, which seeks to overturn existing laws on basic human rights related to sexuality and reproduction***.

The book examines that strategy document and the workings of the Vatican-inspired professional advocacy network, going by the name Agenda Europe, aiming for its implementation. Agenda Europe is producing concrete results, such as the 2016 Polish bill to ban abortion, bans on equal marriage in several Central European countries and over a dozen comparable acts at national level and in European institutions aiming to limit women’s and LGBTI rights.

While the rise of ultra-conservatism in Europe has been apparent for several years, precisely how these actors are organising, fundraising and attempting to exert influence has not been clear. In shedding light on several of these questions, the book provides a fascinating insight into the clandestine workings and deliberate strategy of Europe’s anti-choice movement.

Being aware and understanding this ultra-conservative movement is essential for those who want to safeguard a modern, inclusive and tolerant Europe. Intended as a resource for politicians, political parties, civil society and journalists, this book aims to aid that understanding.

Book researched and written by the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development is available [here](#).

Source: [EPF](#)

Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects 2018

The [2018 report](#) of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development launched in advance of the 2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development finds that most types of development financing flows increased in 2017, and that there has been progress across all the action areas of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. This progress was underpinned by an upturn in the world economy, but at the same time the report warns that risks could derail development progress and structural impediments continue to undermine sustainable development prospects.

The 2018 report provides policy options which, if implemented, would put the world on a sustained and sustainable growth and development path. It also examines the financing challenges to the SDGs under in-depth review in 2018 to help assess progress in the means of implementation for goals on water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, sustainable production and consumption, and terrestrial ecosystems.

The 2018 report is the second substantive assessment of progress in implementing the Financing for Development outcomes and the means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The assessment draws on the expertise, analysis and data from almost 60 agencies and international institutions that make up the Task Force, which is led by UN DESA and includes the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation, as well as UN agencies such as UNCTAD and UNDP.

Access the full report and comprehensive and data-rich monitoring of progress from the website of the Task Force: <http://developmentfinance.un.org/iatf2018/>

Source: [Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development](#)

Abort Report website with most up to date information on access to abortion launched

<https://abort-report.eu> is a new and unique website gathering all the European data on abortion in order to provide a wide audience with an updated overview of regulations and practices in European Union member states. By providing free access to data the Abort Report website will enable to improve awareness about abortion care and allow to set up some country specific communication based on comparative data. On this website, you will find abortion, fertility and contraception statistics, for all the country members of the European Union plus Iceland, Norway, Serbia, and Switzerland, and comparative data. This first version of the website is going to be improved and updated with new information by the end of this year.

To find out more, go to <https://abort-report.eu>

Global, Regional, and Subregional Trends in Unintended Pregnancy and Its Outcomes from 1990 to 2014: Estimates from a Bayesian Hierarchical Model

Estimates of pregnancy incidence by intention status and outcome indicate how effectively women and couples are able to fulfil their childbearing aspirations, and can be used to monitor the impact of family-planning programmes. We estimate global, regional, and subregional pregnancy rates by intention status and outcome for 1990–2014.

Methods

We developed a Bayesian hierarchical time series model whereby the unintended pregnancy rate is a function of the distribution of women across subgroups defined by marital status and contraceptive need and use, and of the risk of unintended pregnancy in each subgroup. Data included numbers of births and of women estimated by the UN Population Division, recently published abortion incidence estimates, and findings from surveys of women on the percentage of births or pregnancies that were unintended. Some 298 datapoints on the intention status of births or pregnancies were obtained for 105 countries.

Findings

Worldwide, an estimated 44% (90% uncertainty interval [UI] 42–48) of pregnancies were unintended in 2010–14. The unintended pregnancy rate declined by 30% (90% UI 21–39) in developed regions, from 64 (59–81) per 1000 women aged 15–44 years in 1990–94 to 45 (42–56) in 2010–14. In developing regions, the unintended pregnancy rate fell 16% (90% UI 5–24), from 77 (74–88) per 1000 women aged 15–44 years to 65 (62–76). Whereas the decline in the unintended pregnancy rate in developed regions coincided with a declining abortion rate, the decline in developing regions coincided with a declining unintended birth rate. In 2010–14, 59% (90% UI 54–65) of unintended pregnancies ended in abortion in developed regions, as did 55% (52–60) of unintended pregnancies in developing regions.

Interpretation

The unintended pregnancy rate remains substantially higher in developing regions than in developed regions. Sexual and reproductive health services are needed to help women avoid unintended pregnancies, and to ensure healthy outcomes for those who do experience such pregnancies.

[Full text available on the Lancet](#)

Source: [Guttmacher Institute](#)

New Database linking UPR recommendations to SDGs

The Danish Institute for Human Rights has launched a new tool: **UPR-SDG Data Explorer** which allows users to explore how UPR recommendations for specific countries, regions or groups of rights-holders are linked to the 169 targets contained in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The UPR-SDG Data Explorer is a searchable database that links recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It allows users to explore how UPR recommendations for specific countries, regions or groups of rights-holders are linked to the 169 targets contained in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The UPR-SDG Data Explorer is the result of an experimental data mining project, where an algorithm has been trained to automatically identify links between UPR recommendations and SDG targets. You can read more about the methodology [here](#).

How to use the UPR-SDG Data Explorer?

National implementation:

The UPR-SDG Data Explorer can be used to explore how UPR recommendations for individual countries are linked to the 169 SDG targets. The recommendations can then be used to:

- Identify the salient human rights issues that need to be addressed in strategies to reach the SDGs;
- Guide the strategies and actions to achieve the relevant SDG targets and related human rights obligations; and
- Identify vulnerable groups such as migrant workers, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities, who need special considerations in strategies and actions to achieve particular SDG targets and related human rights obligations.

Follow-up and Review at the global and regional level:

The UPR-SDG Data Explorer can be used to explore the links between UPR recommendations and SDGs at the global and regional level too. In this context the recommendations can be used to:

- Provide an overview of global and regional salient human rights issues as they relate to the SDGs;
- Identify global and regional human rights issues pertaining to particular groups of rights-holders, who require particular attention and considerations in SDG implementation;
- Inform regional and global strategies and actions to achieve the SDGs and related human rights instruments; and
- Identify global and regional trends and tendencies in human rights and sustainable development realization over time.

All data can be explored online as well as exported to pdf and csv formats.

To learn more about the tool click [here](#)

Source: <http://upr.humanrights.dk>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2018 convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council will be held from Monday, 9 July, to Wednesday, 18 July 2018; including the three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from Monday, 16 July, to Wednesday, 18 July 2018.

The theme will be "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies". The set of goals to be reviewed in depth will be the following, including Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, that will be considered each year:

- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Several countries from their region of Central and Eastern Europe will be also participating in the Voluntary National Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among them: Poland, Albania, Armenia, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia. For full list of participating countries click [here](#).

Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018>

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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Supported by the [Sigrid Rausing Trust](#)

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