



CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

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BURNING ISSUE

UN experts: women's rights face global pushback from conservatism, fundamentalism

“[Alarming pushbacks](#) have been progressing across regions of the globe”, through what the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice described as “alliance of conservative political ideologies and religious fundamentalisms,” in its [report](#) to the [Human Rights Council](#) in Geneva.

“Practices such as polygamy, child marriage, female genital mutilation, so-called honour killings, and criminalizing women for sexual and reproductive behavior, have no place in any society,” said a statement from the working group, adding that “there is no acceptable justification for waiting for the elimination of discrimination against women.” Citing “rising authoritarianism, economic crises and rocketing inequality”, the Working Group warned that hard-fought gains risk being reversed.

The expert panel also noted positive changes, including the recent Irish referendum to repeal a near-total constitutional ban on abortion. “Through popular vote as well as legislative and judicial actions,

efforts are being made, in particular to secure reproductive rights, which is encouraging in a global context of retrogressions in this area” the experts said.

Of the “many obstacles” that women face, the UN report contends that family, culture and sexual and reproductive health “remain the most significant challenges” with “the biggest backlash”.

For 70 years, women’s equality has been enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; nearly 40 years ago the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted; and 25 years ago, on Monday, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action established that women’s rights are an indivisible part of human rights. However, the experts spelled out: “No country in the world has successfully eliminated discrimination against women or achieved full equality”. “This should not be tolerated or normalized. There is an urgent need to protect past gains, and move forward to secure equality for women everywhere,” they stressed.

The experts applauded women human rights defenders globally, and urged the international community to move forward on gender equality and guard against what is described as the current backlash.

The UN Working Group on [discrimination against women in law and in practice](#) was created by the Human Rights Council in 2011.

Source: [UN News](#)

Civil Society statements commending the work of the UN WG on Discrimination against Women:

- [Joint statement to the 38th Session of the Human Rights Council by AWID, Center for Reproductive Rights, RFSU, IPPF, SRI, The Federation for Women and Family Planning, ASTRA Network, Plan International](#)
- [Statement by the Sexual Rights Initiative](#)

REGIONAL UPDATES

Poland: the anti-abortion bill back in the game

Fundamentalists led by activist Kaja Godek forced the Social Policy and Family Committee to debate the repressive “Stop abortion” bill on Monday, July 2nd at 4 pm. This draft law would penalize abortions in case of foetal impairment, which now make up 95% of all legal abortions performed in the Polish hospitals. This decision came as a surprise, because the committee declared not to deal with this draft law in the foreseeable future. Even more disrupting is the fact that Godek informed about the Monday session before a) it was announced at the website of the Parliament b) MPs were informed about the bill having been added to the Committee’s agenda. Since March, the anti-choice groups has led an intensified lobbying on the streets, social media, accusing the ruling party (Law and Justice) of being treacherous and too reluctant to sanction the abortion ban. Godek participated in many Committee’s session to exert pressure on the chairperson so that she would include the draft

law in the agenda. The Committee received many critical opinions about the bill from the parliamentary Bureau of Research, The Supreme Bar Council, The Amnesty International Poland, The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and The Federation for Women and Family Planning.

Pro-choice community mobilized for [the Monday protest](#), organized by the Polish Women's Strike and the Warsaw Women's Strike in front of the Parliament. The Federation for Women and Family Planning has launched a mailing action so that members of The Committee are informed about strong social opposition to the draft law.

After half hour of deliberations the anti-abortion bill was directed to the subcommittee what is commonly understood as a legislative freezer. Still, it is crucial to monitor its developments.

Poland has then received many proofs of international solidarity, including statements by the UN human rights experts, a group of MEPs, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, [International Women's Health Coalition](#), [Worldwide Human Rights Movement](#) and over 200 NGOs from across the globe ([more here](#)).

Background and more information: [Federation for Women and Family Planning](#)

“All united for the right to abortion” conference in Brussels

This two day conference took place on the 21st and 22nd June 2018, under the leadership of Rudy Demotte, Minister-President, and Isabelle Simonis, Minister of Women's rights, of Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. Representatives of the political world and civil society, experts and witnesses from all over the world exchanged views and expertise through debated and roundtables. The result of the conference is the *Declaration of Brussels* - a list of commitments and recommendations in order to ensure sustainably abortion as a fundamental right. The objective is to gather as many signatures as possible before the European elections of 2019.

[Support the Declaration of Brussels here](#)

Source: [All united for the right to abortion](#)

Together against the backlash on reproductive rights in the European Union – All of Us event at the European Parliament

Together against the backlash on reproductive rights event organised by the group of pro-choice MEPs in the European Parliament on June 6th. MEPs Terry Reintke (Green/EFA), Iratxe Garcia Perez (S&D) and Malin Björk (GUE/NGL) brought together experts and activists from Poland (Krystyna Kacpura, Federation for Women and Family Planning), Spain (Almudena Rodriguez, Federation of Family Planning of Spain), Hungary (Sari Halasz, PATENT) and Croatia (Marina Skrabalo, Solidarna) to talk about the current status of reproductive rights in the EU and the existing backlash. Irene Donadio from IPPF European Network moderated the event that brought together a wide audience. Angelika Mlinar (FEMM, ALDE) gave the opening remarks pointing to the urgency of actions needed.

This All of Us event informed the public about the political strategies used by ultra-conservative, often religious, actors and organizations to deny women's access to safe abortion care across Europe. In particular, the speakers and participants explored the impact on women's lives of the recent geopolitical trends, which led to a shift towards right-wing populism and authoritarian policies, and its negative impact on civil society organisations defending reproductive freedom. The objective of the event was to raise awareness and denounce the backlash against women's dignity and safety and particularly the denial of abortion care and women reproductive autonomy as part of the coordinated attack on democracy and civic space in many countries in Europe. It also stimulated discussion on solutions and identify key recommendations for EU and Member States.

The debate contributed to raise awareness, propose policy recommendations and fight back strategies and was followed by an interactive discussion with stakeholders, MEPs, policy makers and NGOs.

The event ended with a "[Together against the backlash to reproductive rights' MANIFESTO](#) that was presented to Commissioners Jourova and Frans Timmermans.

See photos from the event [here](#)

[Watch the All of Us event online](#)

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urges Kyrgyzstan to adopt comprehensive equality law

On Friday 11 May, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (the CERD Committee) called on Kyrgyzstan to adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination law, acting on a recommendation made by the Equal Rights Trust, on behalf of our partners, the Kyrgyzstani Coalition for Equality. The adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation was the central recommendation made by the Trust in their written submission to the CERD Committee and during our participation in the Committee's 95th session. The submission presented evidence and recommendations from our 2016 report, *Looking for Harmony: Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Kyrgyzstan*, which concluded, amongst other things, that ethnicity remains a vexed issue in Kyrgyzstan following inter-ethnic violence in 2010. There is limited legislative protection from discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, and many organisations working on behalf of ethnic minority groups – particularly ethnic Uzbeks – feel forced to work with low profile. In this context, the adoption of comprehensive equality legislation will bring particular benefits for ethnic minorities.

The CERD Committee's recommendation on anti-discrimination law followed a declaration by the Kyrgyzstani delegation, during its dialogue with the Committee, that the state is "ready to adopt such legislation" in cooperation with international experts and national organisations. In coming months, the Equal Rights Trust will provide technical, strategic and financial support to the Coalition for Equality, to enable it engage government in this process of reform.

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

Croatia: feminist groups counter the anti-rights March for Freedom

As a reaction to the rise of the neo-conservative groups which aim to reduce women's right to abortion, as well as LGBT and minority rights and the rise of fascist tendencies in the country, people of Rijeka, Croatia decided to organize and fight back through the March for Freedom. The March for Freedom took place on the 19th of May, the same day as the annual March for life which was present in three cities in Croatia: Zagreb, Split and, for the first time ever, Rijeka. As Rijeka is a quite small city, the Marches took place on the same street, but on the opposite sides. As Rijeka is perceived as one of the rare, open-minded cities, in which women can get access to abortion without dealing with conscience-based refusals citizens apalled after they found out the March for Life is taking place "on their ground". During the same time, the conservative groups gathered signatures for two referendums, one on the withdrawal of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and the other one for a "more just election system" (its meaning was to strip minority representation from decision-making bodies). The mayor of Rijeka, Vojko Obersnel, declined the possibility of collection of the signatures in Rijeka, which backfired towards the city government from the conservative groups. Group of citizens, civil society and general public gathered together and organized a crowdfunding campaign. Through this they were successful to organize the March for Freedom which gathered as many as 1800 people of various backgrounds. The main goal of this event was to highlight the fact that Rijeka was, and will be, a city of diversity and a city that will not stand still while peoples' rights are being stripped. Artists, citizens, activist and a veteran of Croatian War of Independence war took the stage and sent out a strong message about equality, love, freedom and human rights. This March for freedom was a first massive, direct response to the March for life and their efforts to reduce women's rights and therefore is a breakpoint when it comes to citizen self-organizing. The organizational team hopes that other cities will follow their example and organize similar events in the following years in order to show that Croatia is not a conservative, fascist-driven country, but a country of people who understand, integrate and respect other peoples life choices and identities.

Source: [PaRiter](#)

Moldova takes lead in adopting new national programme on sexual and reproductive health and rights

A new National Programme on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights puts Moldova at the forefront of improving access to and quality of sexual and reproductive health services in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region. The programme, covering the period 2018–2022, was approved by the Government of the Republic of Moldova in May, following the development with UNFPA support of a regional sexual and reproductive health strategy. This makes Moldova one of the first countries in the region to adopt a national programme based on the European Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan, approved by member states at the 66th session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Europe.

“Making sexual and reproductive health services available and accessible to everyone is the foundation for building universal health coverage,” said Dr. Nino Berdzuli, programme manager for sexual and reproductive, maternal and newborn health at the WHO Regional Office for Europe. “The close links with gender equality, education, employment, poverty eradication and other

development outcomes also make realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights integral to achieving the global Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, and critical to accomplishing the goals of the National Development Strategy 2030 for Moldova.”

Source: [UNFPA EECA](#)

From ASTRA Members

Empowering women in Armenia through education on sexual and reproductive health and rights

The Women’s Resource Center Armenia continues its activities on empowering different groups of women on reproductive health and rights issues by raising their awareness about their body and health. Two day trainings held in the past months allowed many women to gain access to information on contraceptives and family planning, STIs, abortion and other related topics. Groups who lack resources and have limited access to reliable information are targeted. This is especially important as the Armenian state fails to meet its obligation to provide women with reliable and science based information on reproductive health.

During 2018, “The invisible rights of women in the Republic of Armenia. The overall state of reproductive health and rights among various groups of women” report has been developed by a network dealing with Reproductive Health and Rights initiated by the Women’s Resource Center NGO. The members of the network are specialists of reproductive health and human rights defenders specializing in the field.

The report has three sections. In the first section, the authors analyze the reproductive rights in the Republic of Armenia along with the relevant policies. In the second section, the situation analysis of the termination of pregnancy with a thorough analysis of the legal normative framework and existing policies is presented. This area has been given priority, considering the requirement to protect the right for abortion within the women’s human rights concept both worldwide, as well as in Armenia. The right to abortion is one of the most important mechanisms of decision making in relation to woman’s body, life and overall health. Incidentally, the realization of this right frequently leads to triggering deeply embedded stereotypes, superstitions, discriminatory and harmful norms and ideas that are there to limit the rights and opportunities for free choice and decision making of a woman. The second part of the report covers the analysis of reproductive health and rights among various groups of women. In the last section of the report, you can find a glossary of terms related to reproductive health and rights. The report will be available online in the coming weeks.

Source: [Women’s Resource Center Armenia](#)

Annual Fair on Volunteerism in Tbilisi

Association „HERA XXI“ as a solid partner organization of international CSO Helping Hand successfully continues its cooperation and strengthening volunteerism and volunteer movement in Georgia. on 31th of May, Volunteer exhibition/forum was held at the Ministry of Education and Science of

Georgia . HERA XXI has taken a part in the exhibition with other 30 civil organizations. Members of „HERA XXI“ youth group introduced youths about role of volunteerism in the development of their personal skills and civil society.

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

GLOBAL UPDATES

The United States withdrew from the U.N. Human Rights Council

The United States withdrew from the U.N. Human Rights Council calling it a self-serving body which shields human rights abuser. Nikki R. Haley, the American ambassador to the United Nations has castigated the 47-member Human Rights Council, calling it a haven for hypocrisy and an outlet for isolating Israel, the United States' main ally in the Middle East. It is the first time a member has voluntarily left the United Nations Human Rights Council. The United States now joins Iran, North Korea and Eritrea as the only countries that refuse to participate in the council's meetings and deliberations.

Antonio Guterres, the United Nations secretary general, said through a spokeswoman that he would have preferred that the United States remained in the council. He noted that the United Nations' human rights "architecture" plays an important role in the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.

Conservatives have been complaining about the council since its inception in 2006, and the administration of President George W. Bush refused to join the body, citing concerns of bias. Ms. Haley has been a fierce critic of the council since joining the Trump administration and is known to have pushed for a withdrawal. Despite the U.S. exit from the Human Rights Council, Haley said the country is committed to human rights and keeping the eyes of the world on injustice.

Nikki Haley also casted blame on NGOs for U.S. withdrawal from rights council through a letter that was circulated to NGOs. In the letter, Haley said she has pushed for "removing the anti-Israel bias from the Council's agenda" since last June. The U.N. ambassador criticized NGOs for encouraging member states not to support a draft resolution to reform the Human Rights Council that was circulated by the U.S.

U.S. still remains one of the three countries not to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child and one of five countries not to ratify CEDAW.

Source: [New York Times](#), [Politico](#)

Argentina lower house backs bill legalising abortion in first 14 weeks of pregnancy

The lower house of Argentina's congress has approved a bill legalising elective abortion in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy, the first step towards what would be a momentous step for the deeply Catholic nation. The bill was passed to the Senate which could strike it down. Argentinian President Mauricio Macri is opposed to the bill but has encouraged debate on it much to the chagrin of the Catholic Church. He has, however, agreed that he would not exercise veto power should both houses pass it.

Currently, abortion is illegal in the Catholic-majority country, from which Pope Francis hails. Though, there are exceptions in the cases of rape, incest, or when the health of the woman could be jeopardised by carrying out the pregnancy.

Read more: [The Independent](#)

YOUTH

Training of Trainers on Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Association HERA XXI consecutively strengthen young peer educators based on TOT methodology. In June, 2018 TOT training “on Sexual and Reproductive Rights” was conducted by Association “HERA XXI” and 13 youngsters from four different regions of Georgia were equipped with right-based knowledge and skills on SRHR, who will conduct informational-educational activities and cover different regions of Georgia.

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

Policy Brief: ADDRESSING THE NEEDS AND PERCPECTIVES OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN GEORGIA

In June 2018, Association HERA XXI published a policy brief on sexuality education in Georgia: Policy brief provides overview of policy environment and key stakeholders attitudes towards realization of Sexuality Education in Georgia. Evidence-based policy brief brings local research evidence (from systematic reviews) to inform deliberations about sexuality education policies and programs. English version is available [here](#).

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

Teachers’ attitudes towards teaching sexuality education topics reasearch in Georgia

Association relies on evidence-based approaches through provision and analysis of studies and assessments. Conducted studies and assessments intends to analyses situation regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights in Georgia, identify needs and attitudes towards implementation of laws and international recommendations. Association HERA XXI conducted research of teachers’ attitudes towards teaching reproductive health and rights. In June, analytic report of research became available on Association’s website [hera-youth.ge](#). According to survey on Teachers’ attitudes towards teaching sexuality education topics conducted by HERA XXI in 2018, 97% of teachers believe it is essential to teach sexuality education topics in school-based settings. Teachers outline puberty period as most relevant time to start teaching. 33% of respondents emphasize biology lessons and 42% tutor hours as most relevant subject to include sexuality education topics in their curriculum. Teachers understand the need of raising qualification in order to deliver such kind of topics.

Source: [HERA XXI](#)

The European Court of Human Rights ground-breaking ruling on the right of children to information on sexual and emotional literacy

Recently, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) took a major decision in favor of children's right to sexuality education at school on the grounds that this provides them with the skills to protect themselves from sexual violence. This was in response to a case brought forward by a Swiss woman who wanted her child to be exempted from a class where she could ask questions about sexuality and reproductive health.

In Switzerland, teachers are encouraged by law to answer questions related to sexuality and reproductive health in kindergarten and primary school. In the case in question, the highest Swiss court decided that it was in the best interest of the child to have access to information that could protect her health. The ECHR came to the same conclusion.

The ECHR ruling is a clear recognition of the role that sexuality education plays in the global education of children, in the fight against sexual abuses and in the protection of public health. The Court highlighted that society has a vested interest in very young children receiving well thought-out sexuality education.

In addition, it underlined that preparing children to cope with social realities is a core responsibility of public education - a strong argument in support of sexuality education in kindergarten and primary schools.

This decision highlights that a lack of knowledge, even from an early age, can expose children to physical, emotional and social harm. It is vital to give young people the means and skills to recognize sexual abuse, lay down boundaries and be aware of the ownership they hold over their bodies. Sexuality education fosters this type of literacy and builds the competences that help protect children from violence, coercion and gender inequity. It also supports them in developing the emotional and social intelligence that they need to build healthy and fulfilling relationships as they grow up.

A child's right to be taught the skills that will prepare him or her for a responsible, safe and healthy life in a free society must clearly take precedence over a far-fetched interpretation of the right to privacy, of freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

There is no denying that parents also play, and will continue to play, a crucial role in helping their children develop these crucial life skills. But some may be unable or unwilling to do so, and in any case individual families cannot foster these skills in their children's peers and future partners. This is where society as a whole has a role to play in ensuring no young person is left behind.

[ECHR Press release](#)

By Julie Pernet, from the European Humanist Federation

Source: [IPPF EN](#)

New publications

New resource about the current state of sexuality education in five European countries

Aiming to bring attention to the need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education and to empower and encourage young leaders to influence their national policies, CHOICE for Youth and Sexuality and YouAct initiated the "Europe for CSE" project, with support from ShareNet. As part of this project, the aforementioned organizations have developed *The Current State of Sexuality Education in Cyprus, Georgia, Poland, Romania and the Netherlands Insights from a Youth Perspective* publication.

"Europe for CSE" involves five European countries; Cyprus, Georgia, Poland, Romania, and the Netherlands. The first step of the project was to conduct a desk research by following a research template, to inform the planning of the national advocacy action plans in accordance with the identified relevant national events.

The authors have noticed that while formally sexuality education has some recognition, in practice it is not always applied as it should be. Some of the aspects that need further attention according to the research are: skills-building for dealing with situations such as pressure to engage in sexual activity, anti-bullying programs, civic education regarding what are the laws protecting children and young people from gender-based and sexual violence, including where to report it, addressing society's taboos regarding sexuality and sexuality education and advocating for an integrated approach when it comes to young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The value of the desk research is a valuable collection of information and knowledge on CSE gathered by young people, for young people.

Access the publication [HERE](#).

Source: [YouAct](#)

IPPF EN and BZgA's comprehensive country report on CSE in Europe and Central Asia

The IPPF European Network's latest analysis - done in collaboration with the BZgA (Germany's Federal Centre for Health Education) - shows that over the past two decades sexuality education has progressed, but improvements are still needed. The report covers the state of play and latest developments in the field across 25 European and Central Asian countries, including aspects related to the quality of programmes and the impact on young people's health. The roll-out of sexuality education differs widely within the region and while promising steps have been taken, we look forward to more progress.

Sexuality education addresses the need to foster emotional-sexual intelligence and the capacity for healthy, intimate bonding and growth. It is based on an understanding of the concepts of consent, equity and respect for one's own boundaries and the boundaries of others in intimate relationships and in society in general.

When young people lack these crucial skills, they inevitably face a lack of personal growth and joy as much as a lack of ability to form and foster nurturing and stable relationships with others.

To ensure that young people are equipped with these skillsets, the report authors recommend increased knowledge-sharing in the field of sexuality education as well as improving the scope of school programmes and investing in teacher trainings.

[Comprehensive Country Report on CSE in Europe and Central Asia](#)

[Regional Overview on CSE in Europe and Central Asia](#)

Country factsheets:

[Albania](#), [Austria](#), [Belgium](#), [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Bulgaria](#), [Cyprus](#), [Czech Republic](#), [Estonia](#), [Finland](#), [Macedonia](#), [Georgia](#), [Germany](#), [Ireland](#), [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Latvia](#), [Netherlands](#), [Russia](#), [Serbia](#), [Spain](#), [Sweden](#), [Switzerland](#), [Tajikistan](#), [Ukraine](#), [United Kingdom](#)

Source: [IPPF EN](#)

RESOURCES

HowToUse launched a new online Medical Abortion course

The course is designed specifically for medical students and future health care providers. In many countries, the availability of and access to safe abortion care is often hindered by the scarcity of trained providers. Research shows that most medical school curricula do not include sufficient training and education in comprehensive abortion care and the role it plays in reproductive and maternal health. Many medical students and future health care providers have expressed dissatisfaction with this critical knowledge gap in their formal education and, as a result, have often sought out informal information sources on abortion care to bridge this gap.

This short, seven module course aims to shape and inform the practice of future abortion caregivers by arming them with the knowledge and information they need to safely provide comprehensive medical abortion services to their communities. This includes an understanding of the pharmacology of medical abortion drugs, screening patients to determine eligibility, dispensing the drugs, managing side-effects and providing post-abortion care.

The course draws from the World Health Organization's most current standards and protocols and is offered free of charge. The course is currently available with English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Swahili and Hindi subtitles. Simply select which you'd prefer from the CC box in the lower right-hand corner.

[Click here to access the course](#)

Source: <http://www.howtouseabortionpill.org/blog/online-medical-abortion-course-for-students>

Unconscionable: When Providers Deny Abortion Care - new report from IWHC

The global women's movement has fought for many years to affirm safe and legal abortion as a fundamental right, and the global trend has been the liberalization of abortion laws. Progress is not linear, however, and persistent barriers prevent these laws and policies from increasing women's access to services. One such obstacle is the growing use of conscience claims to justify refusal of abortion care.

Often called "conscientious objection," a concept historically associated with the right to refuse to take part in the military or in warfare on religious or moral grounds, the term has recently been co-opted by anti-choice movements. Indeed, accommodations for health care providers to refuse to provide care are often deliberately inserted into policies with the aim of negating the hard-fought right to abortion care. Existing evidence reveals a worrisome and growing global trend of health care providers who are refusing to deliver abortion and other sexual and reproductive health care. This phenomenon violates the ethical principle of "do no harm," and has grave consequences for women, especially those who are already more vulnerable and marginalized.

A woman denied an abortion might have no choice but to continue an unintended pregnancy. She may resort to a clandestine, unsafe abortion, with severe consequences for her health or risk of death. She might be forced to seek out another provider, which can be costly in time and expense. All of these scenarios can lead to health problems, mental anguish, and economic hardship.

International human rights standards to date do not require states to guarantee a right to "conscientious objection" for health care providers. On the contrary, human rights treaty monitoring bodies have called for limitations on the exercise of conscience claims when states do allow them, in order to ensure that providers do not hinder access to services and thus infringe on the rights of patients. They call out states' insufficient regulation of the use of "conscientious objection," and direct states to take steps to guarantee patient access to services.

Patients' health and rights should never be subordinate to providers' individual concerns. Health care providers who put their personal beliefs over their professional obligations toward their patients threaten the health care profession's integrity and its objectives. Nothing would stop such individuals from joining the health care profession, but they ought to specialize in fields in which their abilities to provide comprehensive services is not undermined by their personal beliefs.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE REPORT](#)

Source: [International Women's Health Coalition](#)

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>

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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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