



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

CEE Bulletin on Sexual and Reproductive Rights

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BURNING ISSUE

"Adolescents and Youth" - UN CPD takes historic step in support of reproductive rights for young people. UN Commission on Population and Development adopted a landmark resolution on the theme "Adolescents and Youth" in support of young people's sexual and reproductive health and human rights, including the right to safe abortion care where legal. The resolution was adopted as the CPD's 45th session came to a close in New York on April 27, 2012, after a week-long meeting that brought together representatives of governments and advocacy groups representing civil society. The resolution calls on governments to: Recognize the right of young people to decide on all matters of their sexuality; Recognize the right of young people to decide on all matters of their sexuality; provide young people access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including safe abortion where legal; include abortion in universal access to sexual and reproductive health information; train and equip health-service providers and take other measures to ensure that legal abortion is safe and accessible; protect and promote young people's right to control their sexuality free from violence, discrimination and coercion; meet the reproductive service and information needs of young people with full respect for their privacy and confidentiality, and provide them with comprehensive, evidence-based education on human sexuality. The resolution also contains a number of important provisions on employment, HIV, youth participation, eliminating early and forced marriage, and others. This major step forward comes as a new

UNICEF report highlights the challenges the largest-ever generation of young people face—including HIV/AIDS, violence and unintended pregnancy—and reaffirms long-standing international agreements, including the 1994 United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action. ASTRA Network joined the statement by Global Interfaith and Secular Alliance working for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (GISA) that was delivered by Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre. The oral statement urged the Commission to uphold the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of adolescents and young women, and that you protect and promote universal human freedoms, as mandated by many different international, consensus documents such as the Cairo Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action and international conventions such as the CRC, CEDAW and the ICESR.

The UNICEF report Progress for Children: A Report Card on Adolescents is accessible here:

http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_62280.html

The GISA statement is available here: <http://www.shirkatgah.org/news.php?id=427>

To read the resolution go to:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2012/cpd45.htm>

REGIONAL UPDATES

"No more taboos, end unsafe abortions in EU". The European Parliament Working Group on Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS and Development (EPWG) discussed unsafe abortions in the EU. The head of Polish member of ASTRA Network, Federation for Women and Family Planning, talked about situation in Poland and Eastern Europe, where 13% of the abortions were unsafe in 2008. The cross-party group of Members of European Parliament wants to know how the European Commission assesses the existence of this preventable public health problem within the borders of the EU and its neighboring countries. Although the EU institutions tend to avoid the problem, the EU treaties give a clear mandate to the EU to complement and coordinate national health policies, with a view to ensuring high quality health services for all. The European Parliament has affirmed several times that sexual and reproductive health policies must be integral part of the EU public health policies.

Source: Federation for Women and Family Planning

Anti-choice attempts to restrict access to abortion in Romania. The anti-choice groups partnered with the leading Government party and came up with a legal proposal for mandatory counseling and 5-day waiting period for women before abortion on request. The draft law contains specific description of biased counseling that should include watching video/photo images of fetus, ultrasound of the fetus, video material on the development of the embryo, and being informed about "medical risks" of abortion such as sterility, post-abortion syndrome, etc. ASTRA member organization Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives prepared information campaign to fight stereotypes regarding abortion services and massive mobilization from national and international women's rights CSOs was launched by the Euroregional Center for Public Initiatives, with a letter addressed to the Romanian MPs.

More: <http://www.ecpi.ro/avortul-prejudicati-si-realitate/?lang=en>

Abortion right under attack in Ukraine. The law proposed in the Ukrainian parliament would ban abortion and add a penalty for couples who do not have children. Supporters of the proposed law, seek to address Ukraine's declining population and low fertility by controlling women's choices, with the support from religious figures.

A petition to urge the Prime Minister of Ukraine not to support this proposed law, can be signed At <http://forcechange.com/17532/urge-ukraine-not-to-prohibit-abortion-and-childlessness/>

Universal Periodic Review – Poland, May 2012. The UPR mechanism was created by the UN general Assembly in order to support the activities of the Human Rights Council. It involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every 4 years. Poland was first subjected to the UPR in 2008, and the deadline for the new UPR is May 2012. The report prepared by Coalition of Polish Human Rights NGOs discusses lack of access to reproductive and sexual rights in Poland.

The report prepared by Coalition of Polish Human Rights NGOs is available here: http://www.atd.org.pl/IMG/pdf/UPR__Poland_joint_report.pdf

More on the UPR mechanism: http://www.rightsnow.ie/assets/5/EBAA5041-D2DE-8672-55C9086A7A967DA7_document/UPR_web.pdf

EU Cohesion Policy: Member States Remove Crucial Provision on Gender Equality. The ongoing negotiations on the EU cohesion policy 2014-2020 took an alerting turn, when EU member states decided to remove a crucial provision on gender equality from the legislative text proposed by the Commission. The Council's new text is a serious setback in times of crisis and recovery. Taking a gender perspective into account is all the more important: We must be sure that the programmes will not perpetuate the deep-rooted gender inequalities present in all European societies, and aggravated by the crisis, but deliver equally for women and men Together with a coalition of NGOs, the EWL has called upon the Council of the European Union to uphold the general ex-ante conditionalities regarding non-discrimination, gender equality and disability. These ex-ante conditionalities are necessary to remain coherent with the EU Treaties and legal framework. Removing them is against the spirit of the Treaties.

Source EWL at: <http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?article3416>

EU News: EU Development Commissioner calls for more effort to address MDG 5 on maternal health. During his presentation to the European Parliament Development Committee (DEVE), Andris Piebalgs, the EU Commissioner for Development, gave an overview of development policies planned for 2012. Included was a communication on social protection which aims to develop a more comprehensive approach to human development and inclusive growth. Mr. Piebalgs recognized that even though positive results were achieved with regards to several MDGs (Millennium Development Goals), stronger effort needs to be made to address maternal health.

To stream the full DEVE Committee, please visit: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/DEVE/home.html>

EU News: OECD releases its data on 2011 EU Development Aid. According to new figures released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the vast majority of EU member states are making cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA). Overall,

EU member states' development aid reached €53 billion in 2011, which is about €500 million less compared with last year. Despite the cuts, the EU still remains the world's largest aid donor. Andris Piebalgs, the EU Commissioner for Development, said in statement that "despite the crisis, Europe reaffirms its solidarity with the poorest across the world".

To view the EC press release, please click here:
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/348>

EU News: The "European citizen" initiative. The initiative is the first transnational tool for participatory democracy and enables the EU citizens to make a legislative proposal. It gives citizens of the EU the possibility to send their political demands directly to the European Commission. As of April 1st, initiatives can now register their initiatives and collect 1 million signatures in their support.

For details go to: <http://gef.eu/publication/european-citizens-initiative-pocket-guide>

GLOBAL UPDATES

International Campaign for Women's Right to Safe Abortion. A new international campaign for women's right to safe abortion was launched in order to challenge the growing threat posed by conservative political and religious forces who are seeking to turn the clock back, block efforts to improve laws and provide services, and exclude abortion from maternal mortality reduction and family planning initiatives. This campaign aspires to become such a movement, and to become larger than the sum of its parts by uniting us across borders and constituencies. Involvement in the campaign is open to all civil society and other groups/ organizations/ networks/ individuals who endorse its aims, objectives and guiding principles and who support women's right to safe abortion.

To endorse and get involved in the campaign, please sign via the survey monkey at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CHH62F5>

Reports from the 12th Association for Women's Rights In Development (AWID) Forum. From April 19 to 22, the 12th AWID Forum "Transforming Economic Power to Advance Women's Rights and Justice" has gathered in Istanbul around 2000 women's rights leaders and activists from around the world. ASTRA Network held two panels during the Forum: "How much does abortion cost? " on economic dimension of recent attempts to restrict access to abortion in Poland, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia and "Is sexuality education too expensive?" focused on sexuality education in Bulgaria, Poland and Ukraine.

Source: ASTRA

Setting a strategic research agenda for sexual and reproductive health at the COHRED Forum 2012. Forum 2012, was held 24-26 April 2012 in Cape Town, and was designed as the beginning of an exciting new series of the well-known and respected Global Forum for Health Research meetings. Under the theme of "*Beyond Aid... Research and Innovation as key drivers for Health, Equity and Development*", COHRED and the Global Forum for Health Research focused

on potentials, solutions, and developing capacities – specifically in low- and middle-income countries and emerging economies – and how global collaboration can leverage this for a new era of global development support. ASTRA Network presentation during the panel hosted by the Asian Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW), Setting a strategic research agenda for sexual and reproductive health, focused on poor access to reproductive health services in Central and Eastern Europe.

More:

<http://www.forum2012.org/>

“MDGs Beyond 2015...the process to 2015” a new analysis from NGOs Beyond 2015. A new overview was recently posted on the NGOs Beyond 2015 website, the independent source of information and the voice of NGOs. The article gives an extensive information on the existing groups (such as UNDG MDG Task Force, UN System Task Team) of dedicated senior technical experts coordinating system-wide preparations for the MDGs beyond 2015 and a UN development agenda post-2015. The article also focuses on the objectives, timeline and composition of each of those groups. In addition to the High-Level Panel, which will be appointed after Rio+20, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) is planning to organize National Consultations to stimulate the debate on the post-2015 development agenda between May 2012–January 2013.

More: <http://beyond2015.org/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Fifth International Parliamentarians’ Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD). The conference is a landmark of Global parliamentary movements on population and development. To strengthen their commitments on the ICPD and the MDGs, the IPCI will bring together around four hundred parliamentarians from around the world. The event will be organized by the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development ([EPF](#)) and UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, under the auspices of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. IPCI Istanbul comes at a very significant time for the ICPD mandate. With only two years until the Cairo agenda was expected to be complete, the conference will provide an excellent opportunity for parliamentarians to recommit themselves to this unfinished agenda.

More information is available on www.ipci2012.org

The International congress on women's health and unsafe abortion will be held in Thailand on January 22-25, 2013.

For more information go to: <http://www.womenhealth.or.th/>

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD). The Conference will take place in Brazil on 20-22 June 2012 to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro, and the 10th anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. It is envisaged as a Conference at the highest possible level, including Heads of State and Government or other representatives. The Conference will result in a focused political document.

The Rio+20 conference [website](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Youth Sexual Awareness For Europe (YSAFE) released monthly news flash. Through its monthly bulletin, YSAFE seeks to share updates and tools for networking amongst young people (staff and volunteers), who are involved in the work of IPPFEN Member Associations.

Accessible here: <http://www.ysafe.net/pdf/2012/NewsFlashYSAFEMar2012.pd>

Take Action!

Gender Justice Uncovered Awards. The ECtHR judgment in *RR v Poland* has been nominated through Women's Link Worldwide's Gender Justice Uncovered Awards! The Gender Justice Uncovered Awards are held annually to highlight decisions from around the world that have had a positive or negative impact on gender equality, including those related to sexual and reproductive rights. This year, *RR v Poland* is among the nominated cases.

If you would like to support the case, please vote '5' for the case here: <http://www.womenslinkworldwide.org/wlw/new.php?modo=premios&tp=nominados&pagina=7&y=2012> (it is the fifth from the top).

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