OCTOBER 5-6, 2023

POWER OF THE MANY FORUM

IPPF International Planned Parenthood Federation
European Network

Astoria Grand Hotel
8 A, General Totleben Boulevard Sofia City Province
1606 Sofia, Bulgaria

The Power of the Many Forum (PoMF) is a 1.5 day event that will take place on 5th and 6th October in the framework of the IPPF EN's SRHR Learning and Actions days, a 4-day-long programme (4th to 7th October) of learning, sharing and strategising for IPPF EN members and partners, movement activists, and youth volunteers working to advance Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and gender equality in Europe and Central Asia. The PoMF is the central event within this programme, aiming to foster social and political change, create spaces for participants to share experiences, and build a sense of solidarity and shared purpose.

POWER OF THE MANY FORUM

Thursday, October 5th

11:00-13:00	Registration	Solo		
12:00-13:00	Lunch		Relaxation space...	Graffiti Wall
13.00-13.20	**WELCOME AND OPENING OF THE FORUM** **Heather Barclay and Teodora Mileska**	Opera Ballroom		
13:20-13:45	**POWER TALK** **Uluk Batyrgaliev – Vice Chair of Board of Trustees at IPPF**	Opera Ballroom		
*Concurrent sessions (**pre-registration needed**)*				
14:00-15:15	**ADVANCING THE ABORTION AGENDA THROUGH NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS**	Aria	Relaxation space (Libretto)	Graffiti Wall
	STRATEGIES AND IMPACT OF THE ANTI-RIGHTS MOVEMENT	Bolero		
	GENDER, POWER, AND CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE: TURNING THEORY INTO ACTION	Opera 2		
15:30-16:15	**MARKETPLACE ROUND 1**	Opera 1		
16:15-16:30	Break			
16:30-17:15	**MARKETPLACE ROUND 2**			
17:20-18:00	**CLOSING SESSION** **Heather Barclay and Teodora Mileska**	Opera Ballroom		
From 19:30	Social dinner	Laura restaurant		

POWER OF THE MANY FORUM

Friday, October 6th

8:00-8:45	Morning Quijong lesson *Optional, registration needed*	Aria	Relaxation space (Libretto)	Graffiti Wall
9:00-9:10	Tea/coffee and settling in	Opera ballroom		
9:10-9:30	**OVERVIEW OF THE DAY IN PLENARY** **by moderators**			
9:30-9:50	**INSPIRATIONAL WORDS** **Nika Kovac – Director Institute 8th of March, Slovenia**			
*Concurrent sessions (**pre-registration needed**)*				
10:00-11:30	**ART FOR TRANSFORMATION: USING ART TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY**	Bolero	Relaxation space (Libretto)	Graffiti Wall
	SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL OF RESISTANCE	Opera 2		
	SAFETY AND SECURITY: EXPERIENCES AND GOOD PRACTICES	Opera 1		
	WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE SEX WORKERS' RIGHT	Aria		
11:30-12:00	Break			
12:00-12:45	**FIRESIDE CHAT** **Mara Clarke – co-founder, Supporting Abortions for Everyone (SAFE), member Abortion Without Borders, facilitated by Heather Barclay**	Opera ballroom	Relax...	Graffiti Wall
12:45-13:45	Lunch			

POWER OF THE MANY FORUM

Friday, October 6th

*Concurrent sessions (**pre-registration needed**)*

13:45-15:00	**CURRENT CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS ON LGBTQI+ RIGHTS**	Aria	Relaxation space (Libretto)	Graffiti Wall	Open session (Bolero)
	A NEW ERA FOR SAFE ABORTION	Opera 1			
	INCLUSIVITY AND ANTI-RACISM	Opera 2			
15:15-16:00	**CLOSING OF THE POWER OF MANY FORUM**	Opera ballroom			
16:00-16:30	Tea/coffee break				

OUR FORUM MODERATORS

Participants will be guided through the Power of the Many Forum by the dynamic duo of Heather Barclay and Teodora Mileska, who will moderate the event together. Below you can read a little bit about each moderator:

Heather Barclay
Heather is an independent consultant originally from Canada, supporting a range of SRHRJ organisations in their advocacy, strategy, fundraising and communications. She worked as the Director of External Engagement at Girls Not Brides, and was Senior Advocacy Adviser at IPPF. She has previously held positions at the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the British Institute for Human Rights.

Teodora Mileska
Teodora Mileska is a passionate young human rights activist from North Macedonia and the founder of the PERIOD Skopje initiative, dedicated to addressing period poverty and stigma. She is committed to advancing gender equality, with a particular focus on SRHR. She also serves as a dedicated peer educator for comprehensive sexuality education and peacebuilding. In the past, she has been a member of YSAFE, IPPF EN youth network.

THE CONCURRENT SESSIONS

During the PoMF, there will be three rounds of concurrent sessions with workshops on a range of different topics. Since the breakout rooms have different maximum capacity limits, participants need to pre-register for the sessions they would like to attend. Below you can find an overview of the sessions and you can **pre-register for the sessions using this link**. N.B. Please register by **September 28th**.

ROUND 1 OF CONCURRENT SESSIONS - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5TH: 14.00 - 15.15

ADVANCING THE ABORTION AGENDA THROUGH NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS (LOCATION: ARIA)

The continuing importance of advancing abortion rights cannot be overstated in the quest for gender equality and reproductive autonomy. Even in countries where abortion laws have been passed, it remains crucial to advance abortion access and rights. The ever evolving healthcare landscape demands that we regularly reassess and refine our policies to ensure they reflect the most up-to-date knowledge and meet the changing needs of individuals seeking abortion services. Advancing abortion access safeguards against potential future political changes that might threaten existing laws is crucial to provide a resilient defence of reproductive autonomy for all. There are many different tools we can use at national, European and international level, including engaging with EU and UN mechanisms, pushing for legalisation/decriminalisation, utilising political opportunities and social mobilisation and solidarity. In this session, we will hear from different speakers from the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA), Women's Health and Family Planning (WHFP Ukraine), IPPF EN and Solidarna (Croatia) about the different pathways they are using to advance abortion rights across the region.

STRATEGIES AND IMPACT OF THE ANTI-RIGHTS MOVEMENT (LOCATION: BOLERO)

The emergence of anti-rights movements has become increasingly notable in recent years in the SRHR field, challenging the work of various rights-based initiatives and human rights advocates. These movements employ a range of tactics, including lobbying, petitioning, litigation and narrative campaigns to undermine and dismantle the hard-fought gains in SRHR ranging from abortion and comprehensive sexuality education to STI prevention and gender equality. Against this background, it has become crucial to counter these opposition actions through a comprehensive and strategic approach.

To this aim, this workshop will provide a platform for activists, CSOs and experts to collectively analyse, deconstruct and prepare to proactively respond to the multifaceted strategies employed by anti-rights movements. This session includes speakers from FEDERA (Poland), Sex&Samfund (Denmark), UCL (UK), Transgender Europe (TGEU) and will be facilitated by IPPF EN.

GENDER, POWER, AND CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE: TURNING THEORY INTO ACTION (LOCATION: OPERA 2)

A gender transformative approach is a comprehensive and forward-thinking framework aimed at addressing the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination. It goes beyond merely acknowledging the differences between genders and strives to challenge and transform societal norms, power dynamics, and stereotypes that perpetuate gender-based disparities. Join us for an engaging session dedicated to dive deeper into gender, power and creating positive change. We will examine what is a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) and how we can turn theory into action. This session is facilitated by Rutgers (The Netherlands) and will include a speaker from Serbian Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH). This will be an interactive session for participants to discuss and work together on ideas for implementing GTA practically across their work.

ROUND 2 OF CONCURRENT SESSIONS - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6TH: 10.00 - 11.30

ART FOR TRANSFORMATION: USING ART TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY (LOCATION: ARIA)

Art is a catalyst for change, a powerful tool for transforming gender norms due to its unique ability to tap into emotions, challenge common perceptions, foster conversations and communicate complex ideas in ways that resonate deeply with people. Its ability to communicate on multiple levels–intellectual, emotional and visual–makes it an essential tool in efforts aimed at promoting gender equality and inclusivity. This session aims to familiarise participants with different artistic methods and formats that can be used to promote gender equality.

The session will explore visual art and invite participants to create something together. We will hear from speakers from YSAFE, PaRiter (Croatia) and the Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association (BFPA).

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL OF RESISTANCE (LOCATION: BOLERO)

Social media has emerged as a crucial tool of resistance in the modern era due to its unparalleled reach, accessibility and ability to facilitate rapid communication and mobilisation. It empowers individuals and marginalised communities to amplify their voices, share their stories and unite behind common causes, transcending geographical boundaries. Social media platforms provide a platform for organising grassroots movements, disseminating information and raising awareness about social and political issues that might otherwise remain unnoticed. This workshop aims to reflect together with participants on the effective use of social media as a tool of resistance for promoting social and political change, foster critical thinking and digital literacy skills. It will also provide space for participants to share challenges and successes they have experienced while using social media to advance gender equality and social change. This workshop includes speakers from YSAFE, Kazakhstan Association on Sexual and Reproductive Health, ALL OUT, Cisu Platform (Turkey), and will be facilitated by the moderator Teodora Mileska.

SAFETY AND SECURITY: EXPERIENCES AND GOOD PRACTICES (LOCATION: OPERA 1)

Safety and security are of paramount importance for activists and human rights defenders who dedicate themselves to challenging injustice and advocating for positive societal change. Frontline activists often find themselves at the forefront of movements that challenge oppressive regimes, systemic discrimination and human rights violations and they frequently face threats, intimidation and violence from those who seek to silence dissent and maintain the status quo. Robust security measures, both physical and digital, are essential in safeguarding these champions of human rights, enabling them to persist in their crucial efforts to promote justice and equality.

With this background in mind, fortifying safety is not just a necessity, but a cornerstone of effective advocacy and lasting change. However, knowing how to protect yourself and which tools to use is not always easy to figure out. This workshop aims to create a space to hear from those who have experienced and dealt with threats, share best practices and work together to develop action plans for potential issues which may arise. This session will include speakers from Institute 8th of March (Slovenia), Amnesty International (Poland), Papardes Zieds (Latvia) and Hatter (Hungary), and will be facilitated by Sensoa (Belgium).

WORKING TOGETHER TO ENSURE SEX WORKERS' RIGHTS (LOCATION: OPERA 2)

Reflecting IPPF 2023 policy on sex work, this session aims to enable IPPF EN and partner movements to ensure sex workers' rights, safety and health are protected within our region. IPPF EN recognises that there is still a need to build consensus and ownership on this topic within and across member associations (MA), and that MAs are facing both internal and external obstacles in operationalising the new policy. Therefore, there is a need to provide a safe space in which to share experiences and express concerns related to this, in a way that recognises challenges but is ultimately forward-looking. This session will open up space for participants to discuss struggles/challenges that are experienced when working in this area, as well as solutions to those issues, and to exchange experiences and enable discussion between participants around how they might approach this in their countries and organisations. This session will include speakers from SEDRA-FPFE (Spain), Amnesty International EU office, HERA (North Macedonia) and le Movement Francais pour le Planning Familial (France) and will be facilitated by the moderator Heather Barclay.

ROUND 3 OF CONCURRENT SESSIONS - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6TH: 13.45 - 15.00

CURRENT CHALLENGES AND PROGRESS ON LGBTQI+ RIGHTS (LOCATION: ARIA)

Currently, MAs and partners face many challenges and an increasingly hostile external environment across Europe related to advocacy, service provision and activism to advance LGBTQI+ rights and access to health, particularly in relation to gender diversity. There is therefore a need not only to provide space to share experiences related to the increased politicisation of these topics, but also to share strategies for building solidarity and overcoming such challenges, to build a stronger and more unified movement to achieve gender equality for all. This session will focus on sharing experiences related to the political dimensions of LGBTQI+ rights, and how these relate to challenges in advocacy, service provision and activism towards ensuring LGBTQI+ rights and access to health. It will also aim at sharing strategies for building solidarity and overcoming divisions within and external to SRHR movements relating to LGBTQI+ communities and gender diversity. This session will include speakers from Agedo (Italy), YSAFE (Kyrgyzstan), and Campaign against Homophobia (Poland) and will be facilitated by Sex og Politikk (Norway).

A NEW ERA FOR SAFE ABORTION (LOCATION: OPERA 1)

Across the safe abortion movement, and especially in restrictive contexts, the imperative to share and exchange innovative and bold strategies for ensuring access and fostering movement building becomes paramount. Such hostile environments often stifle open discourse and limit people's reproductive autonomy, endangering their health and rights. By sharing successful strategies, advocates can empower each other with knowledge and tactics that have proven effective in navigating legal, social and cultural obstacles. This session will focus on the contexts of Poland, Italy and Switzerland where speakers from Polish Women Strike, Obiezione Respinta and Sante Sexuelle Suisse will share about what has been working on the ground in these contexts in relation to enabling access and fostering movement building. APF (Portugal) will facilitate.

DRIVING INCLUSION AND ANTI-RACISM (LOCATION: OPERA 2)

The session will explore how race and ethnicity and other related discrimination grounds have an impact on people's rights and their access to SRH services and care. We will look at what steps can be taken (including what tools and strategies are available) to make our advocacy, outreach and services more inclusive and needs-based. Allyship and collaboration with different community groups, as well as working on internal processes and policies that promote inclusion and diversity, are also key to strengthening our response to the SRHRJ needs of those most vulnerable and our accountability to the people we work with. In this workshop we want to explore what we can do to become a more inclusive and anti-racist federation, who truly serves the most marginalised and oppressed. This session will include speakers from Africa Advocacy Fund (UK), RFSU (Sweden) and TSA (Bulgaria) and will be facilitated by BFPA (Bulgaria).

THE MARKETPLACE - THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5TH: 15.30 - 17.15 (LOCATION: OPERA 1)

Co-learning, sharing and building of community are integral principles within the Power of the Many Forum to ensure it is as relevant and impactful as possible. The Forum programme will include different types of networking moments and exchanges. To this end, one activity that will take place during the first day is a participants' Marketplace. This space will be an interactive moment where attendees will be able to showcase insightful tools and knowledge products that they have developed, as well as explore opportunities for collaboration and engagement with one another. The main aim of the Marketplace is to provide a space where attendees can network and synergise, understand better what MAs and partners of IPPF EN are working on, and share inspiring and interesting work that is being done across our movement.

THE SIDE ACTIVITIES

QIGONG - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6TH: 8.00 - 8.45 (LOCATION: ARIA)

Limited spots available. Please note that registration for this event is required and can be done through the concurrent sessions sign - up form

Qigong is an ancient Chinese practice that combines gentle, flowing movements, controlled breathing, and focused meditation to promote physical and mental well-being. The session will be led by Vlado Rashev, a fully certified qigong master teacher and qi-therapist with international teaching experience in New Zealand, Bulgaria, the United States, Sweden and France.

OPEN SESSION - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6TH: 13.45 - 15.00 (LOCATION: BOLERO)

During the last round of concurrent sessions, there is space for an open session. This open session is a space that has been left open in the programme to provide participants with the opportunity to self-organise and discuss topics that they find important but are not included in the programme.

RELAXATION SPACE - THURSDAY 5TH & FRIDAY 6TH (LOCATION: LIBRETTO)

Throughout the Forum a space dedicated to relaxation will be available, to offer a respite for those seeking a moment of calm. Comfortable cushions and soft music will allow Forum participants a chance to unwind and recharge. Whether you want to reflect on discussions, meditate, or simply take a breather, our relaxation area is the perfect haven for you to find your inner peace amidst the Forum's dynamic environment.

GRAFFITI WALL

Participants will have the chance to creatively express their thoughts throughout the event via a graffiti wall. This dynamic canvas serves as a collective outlet for artistic expression and ideas. Attendees are encouraged to leave their mark, share their insights, or even doodle their inspirations. As the Forum progresses, the graffiti wall evolves into a captivating visual and written representation of the diverse perspectives and creativity of our engaged community.

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