

Item 7. Thematic session: Ending violence against women and girls in the UNECE region

Biographies of moderator and panellists

Moderator: Ms. Pille Tsopp-Pagan, Member of GREVIO, Council of Europe



Ms. Pille Tsopp-Pagan currently serves as an expert member of GREVIO (Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence), the independent body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the Parties.

Ms. Tsopp-Pagan is also a board member and co-founder of the Tartu Women's Shelter, established in 2002 as the first domestic violence shelter in the Baltics. Over the past eight years, she has served as its Executive Director, leading the rebranding of the organization into the Women's Support and Information Center (WSIC), an internationally oriented organization engaged in policy analysis, advocacy, research, and education. She is an active human rights advocate in Estonia and a frequent speaker at international conferences on topics such as domestic violence and elder abuse.

Panellists:**Ms. Katarzyna Kotula, Minister for Equality, Republic of Poland**

Ms. Katarzyna Kotula is the Minister for Equality of Poland and a Member of Parliament in the 9th term, actively working in the area of women's rights and social policy. She serves as the Chairwoman of the Parliamentary Group for Reproductive Rights and is a member of the Committee for Social Policy and Family and the standing subcommittee for Family in the 9th term of office

of the Sejm. She is particularly involved in cases where the rights of women, older people, and excluded individuals, including people with disabilities, have been violated. She co-founded the Social Committee "We are," which aimed to introduce and apply the UN Convention on Persons with Disabilities in Poland. Throughout her career, she has organized and participated in various protests and events related to the defense of human rights. She was one of the leaders of the National Women's Strike and has been involved in defending victims of pedophilia in the Church. From the beginning, she has been strongly committed to changing the anti-abortion law and promoting women's rights, including reproductive rights. She was also a member of the legislative initiative committee "Legal abortion. No compromise." She is a philologist, English teacher, social activist, and entrepreneur.

Ms. Ana Racu, Deputy Head of the Parliamentary Commission on National Security, Defence, and Public Order, Republic of Moldova



Ms. Ana Racu is a prominent human rights expert and public servant, currently holding the positions of Vice-chairperson of the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) and the Parliamentary Committee for National Security, Defence, and Public Order in the Republic of Moldova. As a Member of the UNCAT since 2016 and its Vice-chairperson since 2021, she has been actively involved in the global fight against torture and the protection of human rights. In her role as Vice-chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee, she contributes to shaping national policies on security, defence, and public order.

Previously, Ms. Racu's expertise in human rights and criminal justice reform was built upon her extensive experience in monitoring places of detention, drafting reports, and conducting training sessions for stakeholders in the criminal justice system.

Ms. Racu holds a university degree in Law, specializing in Criminal law and procedure. Her steadfast commitment to human rights drives her tireless efforts to promote justice and protect the rights of individuals at both national and international levels.

Ms. Colette Fry, Director of the Geneva Office for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Violence, City of Geneva, Switzerland



Ms. Colette Fry is a delegate at the Office for the Promotion of Equality and the Prevention of Violence-BPEV of the canton of Geneva, where she has worked since 2015.

She is particularly responsible for inter-cantonal and national issues, as well as LGBTIQ+ themes. Prior to this, she spent 21 years running the Victim support counselling Center of Geneva, and 6 years running a social and professional reintegration organisation.

A graduate in social work and ethnology, she completed her training with CAS in gender studies and in social policy and a DAS in management.

Ms. Colette Fry has chaired a number of conferences in French-speaking Switzerland and, at a national level, for 4 years was co-chair of the Swiss Conference against Domestic Violence.

Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe



Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge of Belgium embarked on his role as WHO Regional Director for Europe on February 1, 2020, shortly before COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. Since then, he and his team have led WHO's response to this health emergency across 53 countries encompassing Europe and Central Asia.

Lessons learnt from the crisis, along with other key health priorities, are encapsulated in the WHO European Programme of Work, which reflects a dual track approach to health: Preparing better for mounting health emergencies even as countries strengthen essential health systems and services including for non-communicable diseases.

Having qualified in medicine, surgery and obstetrics, Dr. Kluge's extensive global experience includes seminal years with Médecins

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Sans Frontières (MSF) Belgium amid health and humanitarian crises in Liberia and Somalia, as well as serving as the Moscow-based Regional TB Advisor for countries formerly part of the Soviet Union.

He joined WHO in 1999, first as TB/HIV Project Manager at WHO Russia, and then at WHO Myanmar as TB Medical Officer, eventually becoming Team Leader for the HIV, TB and malaria unit.

Dr. Kluge moved to the WHO European Regional Office in 2009, and a year later was appointed Director of the Division of Health Systems and Public Health, as well as Special Representative of the Regional Director to Combat Multi/Extensively Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis.

In his current role, Dr. Kluge advocates all the more strongly with governments and funders for health systems strengthening, prioritizing primary health care as a cornerstone of public health.

Ms. Branislava Arađan, Project and Youth Ambassador Coordinator, WAVE Network



Ms. Branislava Arađan is a 31-year-old law graduate and human rights activist from Novi Sad, Serbia, with over a decade of experience advocating for human and youth rights and through various NGOs. She co-founded an NGO focused on empowering young people through capacity building, advocacy, and campaigning, while also working as an educator on topics like human trafficking and digital safety. In November 2021, she joined the Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) Network as a Project and Youth Ambassador Coordinator. In this role, Ms. Arađan supports the work of WAVE Youth Ambassadors and initiatives such as the “I am Women/Girl in

Cyberspace” campaign. Her work centres on youth engagement, child safeguarding policies, feminist self-care, and advancing efforts on primary prevention of violence against women and girls. Currently based in Vienna, Austria, Ms. Branislava Arađan continues to champion gender equality and youth empowerment.

Ms. Xeniya Udod, Executive Director, FemAgora Central Asian Feminist Organization, Communications and Advocacy Lead, and Member of the UN Women ECA Beijing+30 Civil Society Steering Committee



Ms. Xeniya Udod is the Executive Director of FemAgora, a regional non-government grassroots feminist organization. She is an experienced gender and feminist researcher and practitioner, event moderator, a Generation Equality Forum (GEF) Advocacy Lead, and a speaker at country- and regional-level policy events.

Ms. Udod is a seasoned journalist, broadcasting presenter, and storytelling editor with more than 25 years of experience working for press, TV, and digital media. She has seven years of work experience with the European Union Delegation in Kazakhstan as a PR and communications specialist, and more than 10 years of working as an editor and translator for UNDP, UN Women, UNECE, etc. As a Chevening Fellow, in 2008, Ms. Udod researched media and development with the Center for Studies in Security and Diplomacy at the University of Birmingham, UK. She holds a BA degree in Journalism and Foreign Languages from Eurasian National University in Kazakhstan and an MA in Eurasian Studies with a focus on gender and feminist studies from Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan.