

## CONCEPT NOTE

# 30 Years, 1 Journey: For All Women and Girls in Europe and Central Asia

May 8, 2025 | Helsinki, Finland

## BACKGROUND

In 1995, as women from across the world mobilized to attend the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, trains departed from multiple cities — Helsinki among them — carrying activists, visionaries, and changemakers determined to push the global agenda for gender equality forward. That journey became a powerful symbol of movement for women's rights, solidarity and momentum, sparking decades of advocacy, progress, and collective action.

Thirty years on, UN Women returns to Helsinki to host one of the central events in the region commemorating the anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This event will reflect on the legacy of 1995 while shining a spotlight on the unfinished agenda and the urgent need to accelerate change.

Rooted in UN Women's 6+1 Action Agenda, the event will bring together a vibrant mix of participants — including original Beijing train participants, policy makers, activists, content creators, and influencers — who are shaping the gender equality conversation today. Their voices will explore and challenge the current state of women's rights across the region, highlighting persistent gaps, bold innovations, and pathways forward.

More than a commemoration, the Helsinki event will serve as a dynamic platform to connect past and present, tradition and innovation, activism and influence. It will reaffirm the region's commitment to gender equality and serve as a rallying moment for renewed advocacy, intergenerational exchange, and collective action across Europe and Central Asia.

The event is initiated by UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia and organized in partnership with UN Women National Committee in Finland.





# AGENDA

## PART 1 | Helsinki Central Station

**12:00 – 13:00** Opening of the anniversary exhibition #JourneyForEquality  
“30 Years, 1 Journey: For All Women and Girls in Europe and Central Asia”

## PART 2 | Finlandia Hall

Masters of Ceremony: **Shadia Rask** and **André Noël Chaker**

**13:00** Doors open

**13:30 - 14:10** Introduction and opening remarks

Screening of “*Are you with us*” Beijing+30 animation, celebrating 30 years of progress in gender equality

**Speakers:**

- › **Belén Sanz Luque**, UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia
- › **Sanni Grahn-Laasonen**, Minister of Social Security, Finland
- › **Jaana Hirsikangas**, Executive Director, UN Women Finland

**Keynote speech:**

- › **Tarja Halonen**, Former President of Finland, participant in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing

**14:10 - 15:15** Let’s Talk: Rights, Equality, Empowerment

**Speakers:**

- › **Adina Nivukoski**, Young advocate for women’s rights, Finland
- › **Aitbek Amangeldi**, Activist, influencer, and human rights defender, Kazakhstan
- › **Beyza Doğuç**, Musician, writer, and IT specialist, Türkiye
- › **Kamilla Sultanova**, Award-winning keynote speaker and DEI-expert, Finland
- › **Khrystyna Kit**, Chairwoman, Ukrainian Women Lawyers Association “JurFem”, Ukraine
- › **Leanne Elliott Young**, Cultural Commentator and Co-founder of the Institute of Digital Fashion, UK
- › **Venero Melua**, Activist and stand-up performer, Georgia
- › **Zhaklin Lekatari**, Journalist and activist, Albania
- › **Ella Cancara**, Vice-Chair of the Generation Equality Youth Group, Finland

**15:15 - 15:30** Screening of the “*Unstoppable*” documentary

A documentary showcasing the inspiring stories of women advancing progress and change across the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

**15:30 – 15:45** Closing remarks

- › **Katri Elina Viinikka**, Ambassador for Gender Equality, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland
- › **Hanna-Mari Manninen**, Chair of the Board, UN Women Finland
- › **Zeliha Ünalı**, Head of Office a.i, UN Women Türkiye Office, Participant in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing

**15:45 - 16:45** Networking