

THE SPIRIT OF WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTS:  
ADVANCING SOCIETY



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24  
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Dear Pia Kjaersgaard,

It is our pleasure to inform you that **The Women in Parliaments Global Forum (WIP) will host the WIP Meeting on Maternal Health and Refugee Women**, in Malta, on 20-21 March 2017. The event will take place at the Verdala Palace, under the patronage of **H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta**.

Within the framework of Malta's Presidency of the Council of the EU and in collaboration with MSD for Mothers, this meeting will convene selected Parliamentarians from the WIP Network and other stakeholders to discuss Maternal Health in Europe. Speakers include **H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta, Vytenis Andriukaitis, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety** as well as **Hon. Christopher Fearn, Minister for Health of Malta**.

WIP is an independent, international and post-partisan foundation, established with the purpose of building a network between female Parliamentarians. WIP brings together female leaders and role models from across the world, to address global challenges and advance society by using the collective strength and ability of women in Parliaments.

MSD for Mothers is a 10-year initiative from MSD which works with 75 partners in 30 countries to reduce maternal mortality worldwide and broaden equitable access to quality maternal healthcare for all women.

The meeting participants will get the chance to visit a refugee open center hosted by the Maltese Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS). The visit will include the possibility to interact with refugee women with children and infants and to hear their personal experiences.

**It is an honour for WIP to extend an invitation to you to set up a delegation of female Parliamentarians from your country to participate in this highly important event.** The draft programme can be found [here](#) and to RSVP,

please contact WIP Senior Director Alexandra Rosén on [alexandra@womeninparliaments.org](mailto:alexandra@womeninparliaments.org). Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at anytime.

We hope that you will accept our invitation and look forward to welcoming you to Malta.

Yours sincerely,



**Silvana Koch-Mehrin**  
Founder Women in Parliaments Global Forum  
Former Vice President European Parliament

in collaboration with

**MSD for mothers**  
Committed to Saving Lives

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## DRAFT AGENDA - Women in Parliaments Global Forum (WIP) Meeting in Malta on Maternal Health and Refugee Women

Under the Patronage of H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta  
In partnership with MSD for Mothers

20-21 March 2017, Malta (Verdala Palace)

### MONDAY, 20 MARCH

09.00-09.30 COFFEE AND REGISTRATION

09.30-10.30 OPENING SESSION

- **H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro-Preica**, President of Malta
- **Christopher Fearne**, Minister of Health, Malta
- **Vytenis Andriukaitis**, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety
- **Silvana Koch-Mehrin**, Founder of the Women in Parliaments Global Forum

10.30-11.00 SETTING THE SCENE

- **Dr. Mary-Ann Etiebet**, Executive Director, MSD for Mothers  
*"Improving access to quality maternal Health as a Global priority"*
- **Dr. Nikitas Kanakis**, Secretary General, Medecins du Monde  
*"The reality of delivering maternal health care to the refugee community – The Mother and Child Programme, Greece"*

11.00-11.15 COFFEE BREAK

11.15-12.00 HIGH LEVEL PANEL SESSION: "A VISION FOR MATERNAL HEALTH IN EUROPE "

The health of mother and child remains a critical concern – not only in the developing world but also in Europe. Despite progress in recent decades, there are still considerable maternal health inequalities across EU Member States. The panellists of this session will highlight the long term vision for maternal health in Europe, as well as the lessons learned from the national level. They will also address the links between the European and the national levels, as well as between health and human mobility.

Speakers:

- **H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro-Preica**, President of Malta
- **Christopher Fearne**, Minister of Health, Malta
- **Vytenis Andriukaitis**, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety
- **Linda Lanzillotta**, Vice President of the Italian Senate
- **Kaia Iva**, Minister of Social Protection, Estonia (tbc)

Moderator: **Ahinara Bascuñana López**, Communications Director, WIP

- 12.00-12.30 **BRIEFING**  
A short introduction to the visit of the Refugee Open Center and a briefing on the procedure for next day's interactive sessions.
- 12.30-13.30 **LUNCH AT THE VERDALA PALACE**
- 13.30-18.00 **SITE VISIT TO REFUGEE OPEN CENTRE**  
Malta is the first point of entry for many refugees fleeing across the Mediterranean Sea. The participants of the meeting will get the opportunity to visit a refugee open center hosted by the Maltese Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS). The visit will include the possibility to interact with refugee women with children and infants and to hear their personal experiences.
- 19.00-21.00 **DINNER RECEPTION HOSTED BY H.E. THE PRESIDENT OF MALTA (VERDALA PALACE)**
- Welcome remarks by H.E. **Marie Louise Coleiro-Preica**, President of Malta
  - Exclusive talk with **Vytenis Andriukaitis**, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

## TUESDAY, 21 MARCH

- 09.00-09.15 **OPENING AND RECAP OF DAY ONE**
- Member of Parliament, WIP (Name tbc)
- 09.15-11.45 **INTERACTIVE PARALLEL SESSIONS: "WORKING TOGETHER FOR MATERNAL HEALTH"**
- The purpose of this highly interactive session will be to answer the question: **What concrete policy steps should the EU institutions and national governments take to ensure that every woman in Europe has the equally high quality and affordable access to maternal healthcare?** The participants will get the chance to join one out of five different parallel discussions which will address different topics and focus on providing concrete solutions and recommendations to improve the current status:
- **TABLE 1 "SAFETY, QUALITY AND STANDARDS"**  
How do we ensure that national policies and complementing EU action work hand in hand to identify best practices and benchmarks for safety, quality and standards that will serve to improve the health and wellbeing of all women across Europe?  
**Table Facilitator: Mary-Ann Etiebet, Executive Director, MSD for Mothers**
  - **TABLE 2 "TIMELINESS AND ACCESSIBILITY"**  
Why is Europe also the target of the SDGs? While maternal morbidity is an issue of global importance, in Europe, many women are still unable to gain access to timely and quality healthcare. How to ensure that migrant and refugee women, having to face new systems

access the proper knowledge and information in order to receive the services and treatments required?

**Table Facilitator: Member of Parliament (Name tbc)**

- **TABLE 3 “RESILIENCE AND EFFICIENCY”**

Maternal health and women’s health represent the broader issue of resilient and efficient healthcare systems and healthcare systems in Europe are increasingly interacting with each other, facing challenges such as the economic crisis and ageing demographics. How to create stronger, effective health systems, capable of facing common challenges through a closer cooperation?

**Table Facilitator: Francois Fille, European Advocacy Coordinator, Medecins du Monde**

- **TABLE 4 “EQUITY”:**

Today, many migrant and refugee women are unable to access quality care, due to a number of reasons, from linguistic barriers to difficulty reaching their healthcare provider. Maternal health is an issue of equity - how do we make the healthcare system work for all women?

**Table Facilitator: Michelle LeVoy, Director, PICUM**

- **TABLE 5 “PERSON-CENTRIC APPROACH”**

Maternal health must be at the heart of people-centred healthcare. However, many women are still subjected to outdated practices and stigmatisation when it comes to maternal health. How do we place women in the centre of all policies and solutions?

**Table Facilitator: Marija Kutajar, President, Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses**

11.45-12.00

**BREAK AND VOTE**

- Participants will get the chance to vote on the main issues emerging from the different table discussions which will form the basis of the meeting’s outcome report.

12.00-12.15

**WRAP-UP OF PARALLEL SESSIONS**

- Reports from Parallel Sessions

12.15-13.00

**PANEL DISCUSSION:**

**“THE WAY FORWARD – POLICY MAKERS RESPONSE TO IMPROVING MATERNAL HEALTH IN EUROPE “**

Building on the outcomes of the discussions held at this WIP meeting, the panellists will outline the way forward, by connecting actions needed between the EU and the national level. They will share best practices and instruments that can be applied for the improvement of maternal health in Europe. The speakers will continue to address the need for a joint approach on maternal health, highlighting that this is an issue that concerns everyone and which needs to be tackled by all.



**Speakers:**

- **Claudette Buttigieg**, Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister for Health, Malta
- **Monika Haukanõmm**, Member of Parliament, Deputy Chairwoman of Committee on Social Affairs, Estonia (tbc)
- **MEP** (Name tbd)
- **Jose Carreira**, Executive Director, European Asylum Support Office (tbc)
- **Dr. Elena Grech**, Head of European Commission Permanent Representation in Malta (tbc)

Moderated by **Dr. Paul Robinson**, Executive Director, Scientific Medical & Patient Perspective, MSD

13.00-13.15

**CONCLUDING REMARKS AND NEXT STEPS**

- **Silvana Koch-Mehrin**, Founder of Women in Parliaments Global Forum
- **Dr Justyne Caruana**, Member of Parliament, WIP Ambassador, Malta

13.15-14.15

**FAREWELL LUNCH**

14.15-

**PARTICIPANTS DEPART**