

**Annual Report of  
the IPPF EN  
Secretariat (ENRO)**

**to the IPPF EN General Assembly**

**2020**

# OUR APPROACH

The Regional Office of the IPPF European Network (ENRO) supports its Member Associations to achieve the Outcomes and Results in the [IPPF Strategic Framework](#).



We work with the European Institutions, the Council of Europe and with national governments to **ensure Europe is a global leader in SRHR and gender equality** home and abroad.



We **facilitate Member Associations (MAs) and partners to work together and learn from each other's experience and expertise**. We enable capacity sharing on advocacy, education, service provision, especially regarding marginalized groups, and organizational development. We provide grants - core funding and strategic grants - and assist with resource mobilisation.



Ensuring **young people** are at the heart of driving SRHR in the region and at national level is a core objective.



Work on **narratives and new initiatives with social movements** help counter opposition to SRHR and gender equality and build a more conducive SRHR environment in which Member Associations can achieve their aims providing more impact for people they serve.



A dedicated focus on **learning** and maintaining a **safe, equal and well-managed organisation** are the underpinning pillars which enable success.

# AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

When the pandemic hit in spring 2020, ENRO hit the ground running, contributing actively to IPPF's global Covid 19 response and ensuring maximum support to our MAs as they stepped up to meet the challenges of the crisis, while the Regional Office team swiftly adapted to continue delivering on all of our strategic priorities in the virtual workplace.

ENRO played an active role in **crisis coordination** efforts as part of IPPF's multi-disciplinary Covid 19 taskforce, and ensured strong information sharing and data gathering within the European Network. This enabled us to facilitate sharing of best practices among MAs and raise the visibility of digital and other innovations, whilst building much-needed understanding among key stakeholders of the emerging impacts of the crisis on access to SRHR.

We facilitated global IPPF **financial support** and supply of PPE/commodities for six regional MAs whose organisations had been hit especially hard by the pandemic and gave further ENRO grants to six countries to strengthen their programmes during the crisis.

With Covid 19 restrictions threatening to cut young people off from vital access to **sexuality education**, ENRO brought over 70 MA representatives together in a webinar on digital delivery of CSE, with members from Estonia, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Spain and Georgia sharing experience and innovative practices. Young volunteers were trained to deliver safe and effective online CSE, and actively contributed to IPPF's learning on how best to engage them in Covid 19 times.

The Regional Office acted as a key interlocutor for **European stakeholders** throughout the year, developing resources to inform decision-makers, donors and journalists about the effects of the pandemic in Europe and around the world, and making recommendations for actions needed to protect SRHR. We co-hosted a webinar for the European SRHR sector and decision-makers on the crisis, and created a [bespoke page](#) on the IPPF EN website for Covid 19 resources.

ENRO moved fast to coordinate **advocacy actions** and build strategic alliances which contributed to crucial recognition of SRHR in the EU's global response to the pandemic, as well as in key EP policy initiatives condemning attacks against SRHR during Covid 19, and highlighting impacts of the crisis on democracy, the Rule of Law and fundamental rights. Through regional advocacy, ENRO and partners successfully contributed to keeping SRHR on the radar screens of European donor governments as they made political and financial commitments in their pandemic responses.

# DRIVING EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP OF SRHR

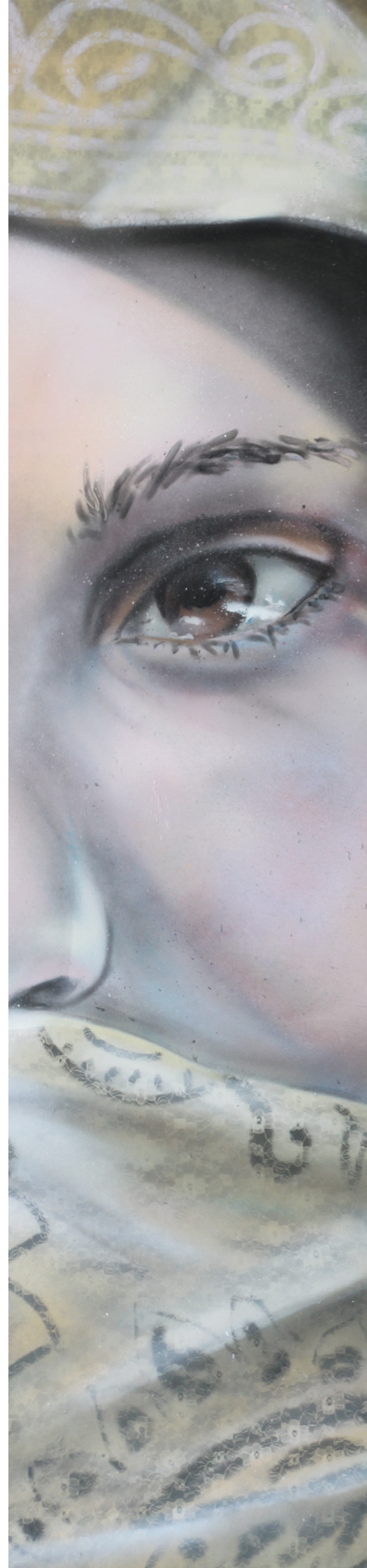
2020 was a stand-out year for driving SRHR into all corners of relevant European processes. IPPF EN achieved a record number of 23 advocacy wins at the regional level, many of which reflected the successful targeting of multiple EU policies, strategies and funding instruments.

2020 saw the finalization of the EU's Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF). Years of targeted advocacy work by IPPF ENRO with its Brussels partners paid off.

**Within the EU:** Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) are prioritized in the new **EU Rights and Values Programme**, the only one dedicated to financially supporting civil society organisations working in these and other areas related to core EU values. Intense pressure by ENRO alongside other civil society actors resulted in the **original budget proposed by the European Commission (EC) being more than doubled**, from €631 million to €1.55 billion.

In addition, ENRO contributed to the inclusion of access to SRH services in **EU4Health**, the first EC standalone programme on health. This is **the first time ever that access to SRH services have been mentioned** as an action eligible for financing under an internal EU instrument.

**EU as global actor:** SRHR is prioritized in the new **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)**, along with Gender Equality, Human Rights and Youth. The NDICI articles and annexes which underpin programming, **identify SRHR as a stand-alone issue** as well as mainstream it in relevant issues. Again, this is a result not just of work in 2020, but of years of cross-European advocacy by IPPF EN and its partners in the Countdown Europe 2030 Consortium.



Our work to coordinate inputs from four Western Balkan MAs (Albania, Bosnia, Macedonia, Serbia) and arrange MA/EC meetings, resulted in specific SRHR mentions in the annual **Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (NEAR)** Progress Reports of three of these countries (Albania, Macedonia and Serbia). This leads to further recommendations on SRHR issues in next EC reports, which creates pressure on candidate governments to take these into account at the national level.

Our objective to remind the **European External Action Service** (EU foreign affairs) of the importance of SRHR has also been successful. ENRO's participation went as far as coordinating a specific EEAS consultation meeting on women's rights and gender equality. A paragraph reaffirming SRHR as a priority for the EU and its Member States was subsequently included in the **EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024**. This plan sets the priorities for 140 EU Delegations and Member State Embassies for initiatives at country level. Adopted via EU Council Conclusions, **it recommits the EC and the Member States to defending and promoting SRHR as a human right in their foreign policy and actions.**

IPPF EN in partnership with CONCORD contributed to two major successes in key bi-regional agreements: the European Commission's new **EU-Africa strategy** recognizes SRHR and family planning as key priorities for a renewed joint partnership. Moreover, the **EU and ACP** countries finalized their renewed partnership agreement which includes the obligation to respect SRHR and implement ICPD and relevant regional commitments, such as the Maputo Plan of Action for Africa and the Montevideo Consensus for the Caribbean.

Our joint IPPF EN and Countdown 2030 Europe expert navigation of global political spaces resulted in supportive statements and inputs from the European region in fora such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women and contributed, along with other partners, to the **establishment of a specific Action Coalition on SRHR and Bodily Autonomy** and to the EC leading the action coalition on GBV under the Beijing +25 Generation Equality Forum.

**All EU.** IPPF EN has long worked to ensure gender equality is at the heart of the EU both internally and externally and is thus delighted to report the **strong recognition of SRHR in the new EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-24**. Remarkably SRHR is included with reference to internal matters for the first time, despite the limited competence of the Union in health, demonstrating the success of advocacy efforts to ensure the **EU considers SRHR fundamental to gender equality and women's rights**, which are in its competence. This was directly affirmed by the Commissioner for Equality.



**The Gender Action Plans (GAP)** are the foundation stone of gender equality in EU external actions. The third GAP 2021 – 2025 includes for the first time **a full pillar on SRHR** as one of six priority areas, and mainstreams SRHR in the pillar on GBV and the one on Health and Education. Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is included, demonstrating that our work to **connect CSE to gender equality and the prevention of GBV** is paying off.

The **Council of Europe (CoE)** is another key advocacy target to drive SRHR in Europe. During 2020, our work was instrumental in ensuring that amendments proposed to the CoE Parliamentary Assembly Resolution on Freedom of Religion or Belief in the Workplace that would have been detrimental to SRHR were voted down, while those safeguarding human rights and SRHR were adopted. The Assembly's first ever report on **Access to Contraception**, to which we had provided extensive input and support, was adopted.

Convening and establishing dialogue with relevant stakeholders – both with policy and decision makers as well as other civil society actors - is key to build trusted partnerships and mutual understanding around SRHR and gender equality. Despite the challenges of remote working, ENRO continued to work with supportive **EU and CoE Parliamentarians** directly as well as facilitating a task force of MAs to jointly coordinate our work with their MEPs. In the new European Commission's first year in office, we built relationships with the cabinet and directors of the International Partnerships Commissioner (formally DEVCO), and extended our network of contacts in DG Justice, especially with the new Equality Commissioner and her cabinet, which contributed to the strong outcomes referenced above. Support from the Cyprus MA enabled contact to be made with the cabinet of the Health Commissioner, which led to the invitation to consult on the EU4Health Covid 19 response programme, and we maintained our dialogue with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. CONCORD and the Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) were both crucial civil society allies in supporting the achievement of MFF outcomes so favourable to SRHR and gender equality.

**Innovative communications approaches** also underpinned successes; the Countdown 2030 Europe 'Because She Counts' campaign created a drum beat to illustrate and amplify messages such as 'Contraceptive Freedom for All' using graffiti artwork outside the European Parliament as well as vox pops, videos, infographics, social media and traditional media. IPPF EN's Abortion Legislation Survey was a key tool in illustrating – via creative content (comic strip, infographic video, bespoke website landing page) - the reality of the obstacles to women's rights in Europe to policy and decision-makers. During European Week of Action for Girls, we partnered with Netflix on an event bringing together MEPs with young women from Europe and Africa.



# SPOTLIGHT ON POLAND

## 2020 saw continued attacks on reproductive freedom by the Polish government.

IPPF EN was a leading member of a coalition in Brussels that included Polish activists and women's rights defenders, other SRHR, human rights and civil society organizations, and a secretariat of parliamentary groups.

This work resulted in two major wins. The European Parliament Resolution in September 2020 on Poland's breaches of the rule of law strongly condemned the government's attempts to criminalise CSE and virtually ban access to abortion care. It reaffirmed that CSE and SRHR are fundamental human rights, and that restrictive abortion laws violate women's human rights and can constitute violence against women. It called on Poland to refrain from any further attempts to restrict women's SRHR, linking the rule of law and EU values with respect for SRHR.

A second resolution in October 2020 denounced the virtual ban on access to abortion care and the serious breaches of the rule of law in Poland. It condemned the violence against protesters and the decision by Poland to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention on tackling GBV. Finally, it called on the EC to support and develop guidelines for Member States to guarantee universal access to SRH services, including abortion.

**"I am sure that we will win. And I see this in young people, - they are the ones that will actually decide what will happen, and they are having these protests with music and dancing because they know that this will just be a phase. They wouldn't dance in the streets if they didn't believe that it was just a phase. And that we will win."**

**Marta Lempart, Women's Strike**



# EMPOWERING AGENTS OF CHANGE

## Member Associations and Collaborative Partners

The work supporting Member Associations in 2020 inevitably looked rather different from the original plan; much is detailed in the specific section on Covid 19 responses. However, much of the work that was foreseen did continue, often through the use of new online platforms and innovative virtual meeting and workshop tools.

The MAs from Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Portugal, Switzerland, Spain, Norway and Germany were **reaccredited as members of IPPF**. Three new **accreditation review** processes were started in 2020, in Ukraine, Belgium and Lithuania, while the MAs from Cyprus, Finland, and Estonia, reviewed in the second part of 2019, continued to progress towards full compliance with IPPF membership standards with tailored support from ENRO.

The regional reach on CSE was strengthened through the addition of **two new IPPF Collaborative Partners** following a competitive application process. Association Health for Youth (Moldova) and Unity Yuksak Salohiyat (Uzbekistan) both received a small seed grant and support from the Regional Office.

2020 saw the mid-term point of the **My Body, My Rights project running across Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia**. A 12% increase in the quality of care was reported in the targeted healthcare facilities, rising from an average score of 69% at baseline to 81%. 7,606 SRH services were provided and many more enabled through trainings and referrals, as well as through outreach to 11,500 peers and community members. An App to support contraception use, “Myra”, based on a similar innovation developed by the Tajikistan MA, was launched at year end.

The Regional Office supported the **Youth SpectActors Project led by the Serbian MA**, enabling three other MAs (**Estonia, Latvia and Romania**) to integrate learnings on social theatre, gender norms and SGBV in their work. The **Latvian MA** was also successfully supported to win its first cross-border project, working with Polish and Armenian partners to tackle the opposition’s strategy of inculcating fear through their invention of ‘gender ideology’.

ENRO continued to play its role in **grant management**, reviewing the Annual Programme and Budget of the thirteen core-grant receiving MAs, as well as managing the global performance reporting. New processes were introduced to support better context-driven decision-making by MAs and strengthened performance monitoring.

## Young people

**YSAFE is the dynamic youth network** of IPPF EN. In 2020, 18 'Ysafers' from the MAs of Portugal, Romania and Serbia completed training in using the pilot 'Safe from SGBV' toolkit developed in their ERASMUS project of the previous year. Recognising the new context, adaptations were made to the draft, to include a section on delivering CSE and especially discussing SGBV online.

As could be expected, digital became the theme of the year. The network launched their **first ever podcast series**; six episodes explore SRHR issues through the lens of sex positivity in order to inform young CSE educators. The network annual meeting was held virtually, training sessions on delivering CSE online were conducted and a half-day virtual workshop was held on issues affecting young people with HIV. The network launched its new website, creating a functional platform for the sharing of news, best practices and resources between its members.

The **Youth-Centred Approach** Toolkit was launched in English and Russian, as was the report of a peer-to-peer coaching programme. Amongst other successes, two 'graduates' of this programme, Portugal and Romania, reached the IPPF accreditation compliance criteria of 20% young people on their Boards.

**Three youth advocates** - a YSAFE member and two young people from Africa - joined thirty others to learn about relations between the EU and the African Union as part of the **European Week of Action for Girls**. They met with representatives of Member States, MEPs and the European Commission to raise SRHR as a key priority for EU development policy.

## Social Movements and Activists

IPPF EN is supporting social movements under the new IPPF 'Movement Accelerator' programme. A new rapid response system was implemented particularly in the context of Poland, where the dramatic erosion of the Rule of Law and democracy led to further setbacks on abortion care. IPPF EN has been instrumental in increasing the visibility and influence of national movements in Poland, both on the national and international scene, as well as providing direct support through capacity sharing and grants. Partners in Poland expressed deep appreciation for the solidarity and practical support. Similarly, support to partners resisting opposition in Italy, Romania and Lithuania increased international visibility of their fights, while information and sharing sessions were held across multiple partners, including the EuropeWeWant network, Italian trade unionists and activists, Spanish activists and Swedish academics and researchers.



# CONTRIBUTING TO KNOWLEDGE AND MAXIMISING LEARNING

A key role of IPPF ENRO as a secretariat supporting Member Associations and partners is to be a hub for aggregating knowledge and learning, and disseminating it for use by those Members and partners to strengthen their work.

Thirteen MAs were supported to conduct **Gender Assessments** in order to boost the impact of their work on gender equality. Findings fed into their annual plans, as well as strengthening overall understanding of how SRHR work can be more gender transformative.

**CSE** continued to be a major focus of learning. The Regional Office built on the previous year's work to **link CSE with SGBV prevention** through designing a call for proposals to enable MAs to put this learning into practice, as well as implement findings from the Gender Assessments. Seven proposals were received, and funding was awarded to Albania, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. Project learnings will continue to build the evidence base for CSE as a contributor to gender equality and SGBV prevention.

A new area of learning, led by the MA from Bosnia and Herzegovina, is **CSE in the pre-school context**, where, under the 2019 CSE small grants programme, they developed a toolkit recognized by the Ministry of Sarajevo Canton.

Stronger context analysis tools are required to ensure the most effective choices of intervention. In 2020, **country context analyses, informed by a political economy approach**, were carried out in France, Ukraine, Serbia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Hungary. These served as the basis for providing tailored support to MAs, as well as identifying partners in countries where IPPF EN was not represented, for narratives development, social mobilization and opposition response.



We continued to support MAs with appropriate tools and training to help better **capture data that evidences the results** of their work. Ensuring all new restricted projects are underpinned by a high-quality Theory of Change continued. The new learning methodology, Stories of Change, was impactfully implemented under the “**My Body, My Rights**” project to understand the key change drivers promoting access and quality of reproductive health care and education in Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia from the perspectives of both health professionals and community members. These learnings will feed into the next stages of project delivery.

The **Community of Practice** as one structured approach to sharing learning is being tested within the Winning Narratives Centre.

As well as its annual Donor Tracking of SRHR funding, Countdown2030 Europe conducted **research on donor support to private sector engagement in SRHR** and family planning. They produced a second research report ‘Beyond 2020 Vision for SRHR’ in Europe, while learning on the impact of the Climate Crisis was also a focus of 2020.

## DRIVING A WINNING NARRATIVE

In respect of the fundamental role that communications has played in furthering the opposition-driven backlash against SRHR, IPPF EN pioneered a **new strategic communications approach** to reclaiming the agenda and countering opposition through **values-based framing**. This expertise and experience is recognized in the role played by the Regional Office as IPPF’s **Winning Narratives Learning Centre**.

**Training and Technical Support:** Due to Covid 19, we developed an online multi-modular training and webinar series on values-based framing of narratives, piloted in Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania as part of a restricted project, and then adapted and rolled out with MAs and partners in France, Italy, Malta, Norway and Ukraine. By running the training remotely, we considerably increased the number of participants, bringing in a much broader network of partners than anticipated.

**Research:** We built on **our body of national level research exploring attitudes and values** in relation to SHRH, adding studies in France, Ukraine and Kenya to those previously done in Poland, Italy and Croatia. The trainings for these countries included dedicated modules on practical application of the research, helping MAs and partners develop targeted strategies to build support for SHRH with defined audiences in their countries.

**Digital Campaigning:** Following the development of a new partnership with Brussels-based CSO Alliance4Europe, expert staff at their Social Media Intelligence Unit provided strategic advice and design support to our Polish partners on their campaign materials. This pilot work confirmed the importance of investing in visual framing and the development of appealing and effective digital content.

**Specialist narrative development:** In response to the worrying discourses adopted by the opponents of gender equality and SRHR, we invested in narrative development and testing to counter fearmongering tactics used on hormonal contraception and demographic decline. Recommendations have been packaged for use by MAs and partners.

# OPTIMISING AND RESOURCING INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Achieving the ambitious programme of work must be underpinned by a well governed, well managed, financially sustainable IPPF EN, part of a Federation where the same principles apply. Following the 2019 IPPF Governance Reforms at global level, our previous Board - the Regional Executive Committee - steered us through the development of **new Articles of Association** enabling a new governance model to align us with the global reform, while remaining a membership-based, Belgian-based non-profit organisation (AISBL) with our own Board and General Assembly. The decision was taken to replace our nine-member representative Board with a smaller competency-based Board, who report to the IPPF EN General Assembly of Member Associations. The REC appointed a Nominating Committee to perform the selection. The General Assembly in December voted in the new Articles of Association and confirmed a Board of five, led by new Chair, Lina Neeb.

The **finance function** continues to be refined on an ongoing basis. When Covid 19 hit, action was promptly taken to guarantee smooth continuity of operations following the teleworking obligation. The accounting system Winbooks was shifted from the office server to the Cloud and a system of authorization and recording invoices from paper to electronic was immediately put in place, ensuring legal compliance. Regular dialogue with donors has ensured that funds could be reallocated to recognize the new context, for example from physical meetings to online, and investment in digital tools.

On the **Human Resources** side, mandatory teleworking for the Regional Office brought challenges in terms of ensuring connectivity between and within teams and promoting the wellbeing of staff. Regular check-in surveys, increased team/departmental meetings and the opportunity for informal 'coffee catch-ups' were deployed and, according to the 2020 Staff Survey, 90% of staff agreed or strongly agreed that the Regional Office cared about their wellbeing while working remotely. The Staff Survey also reported strong improvement in staff feeling that they were given enough authority to do their work effectively (94% agreed or strongly agreed) and improved effective communication from their manager (66% agreeing or strongly agreeing).

It was another successful year for **Resource Mobilisation** for IPPF EN. We were awarded \$1,009,000 USD over 30 months by **MSD for Mothers** for the project "Youth Voices, Youth Choices". ENRO is managing the project, in partnership with the MAs from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Albania, North Macedonia and a partner organisation in Kosovo, focusing on access to youth-friendly SRH information and services, on the basis of the Covid 19 experience.

The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** awarded an eighteen-month extension to the Countdown2030Europe project, representing \$2,900,000. YSAFE won a new grant from **ERASMUS +** to improve online CSE access, learning from the Covid 19 response. This will be delivered in partnership with END FGM and the MAs in Cyprus, Estonia, North Macedonia, Latvia, Portugal, Spain and Serbia. A new partnership was initiated with **UNFPA** to support SRHR organisations and movements in the EU Member States in Eastern Europe. And the MA from Latvia, along with partners in Poland and Armenia, and supported by ENRO, successfully submitted a proposal to a new European Network donor, **Wellspring**, to drive learnings on how to combat the attack on gender and gender equality in these countries. The Romanian MA also was successful in obtaining funding with the support of the Norwegian MA.

**Safeguarding** continued to be a priority, with all staff in the Regional Office as well as thirteen Member Associations provided with comprehensive training by the expert in IPPF. IPPF EN systems were subsequently honed to ensure rapid, effective handling of complaints that come in through IPPF Safe Report or directly.

Finally, we continued to **support the development of a more effective global Federation**, with a more unified approach to how the IPPF Secretariat as a whole works across regions and offices. IPPF EN is leading the **Global Movement Accelerator Platform** and has been awarded the **Global Knowledge Sharing** function, both working under one common Secretariat framework. Under the Championing Rights section above we demonstrate how we support the global SRHR agenda, and staff at all levels are contributing to global initiatives and to ensuring a more effective and efficient global IPPF, able to maximise the outcomes of its successful, member-led, governance reform to deliver more impact on people's SRHR everywhere.



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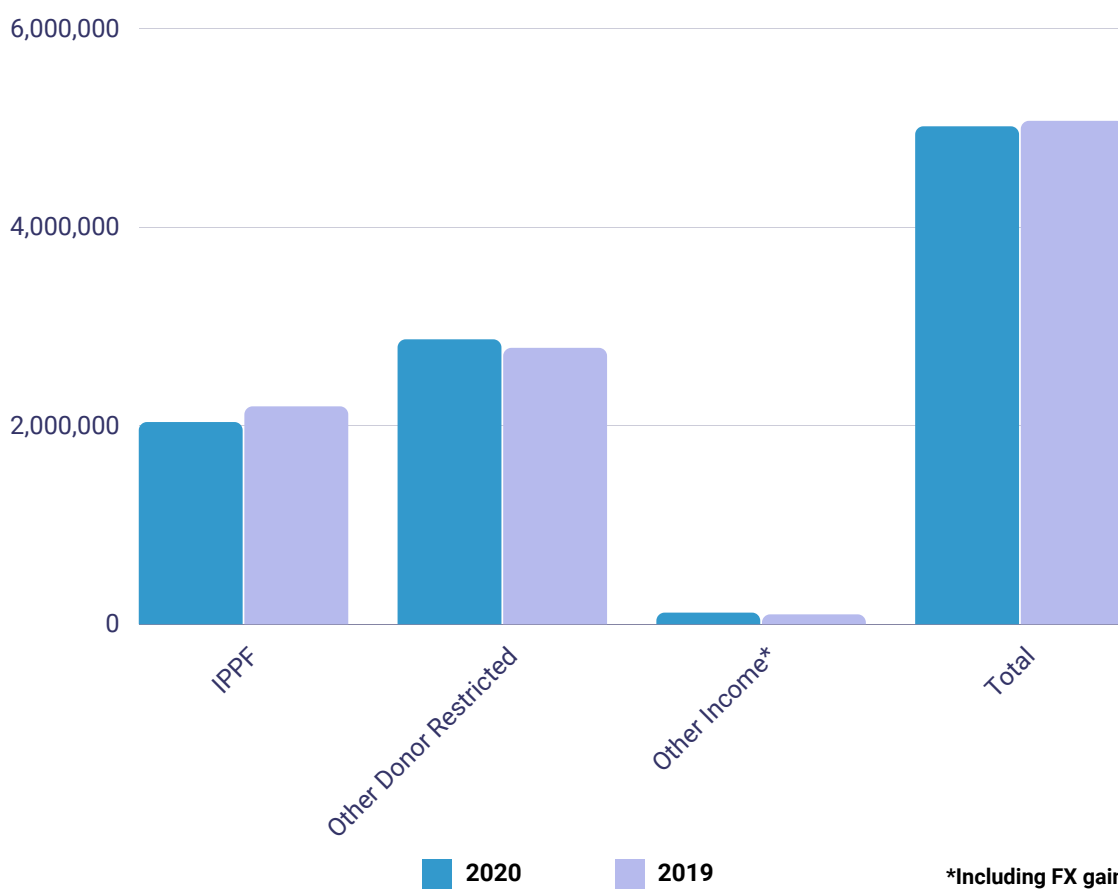
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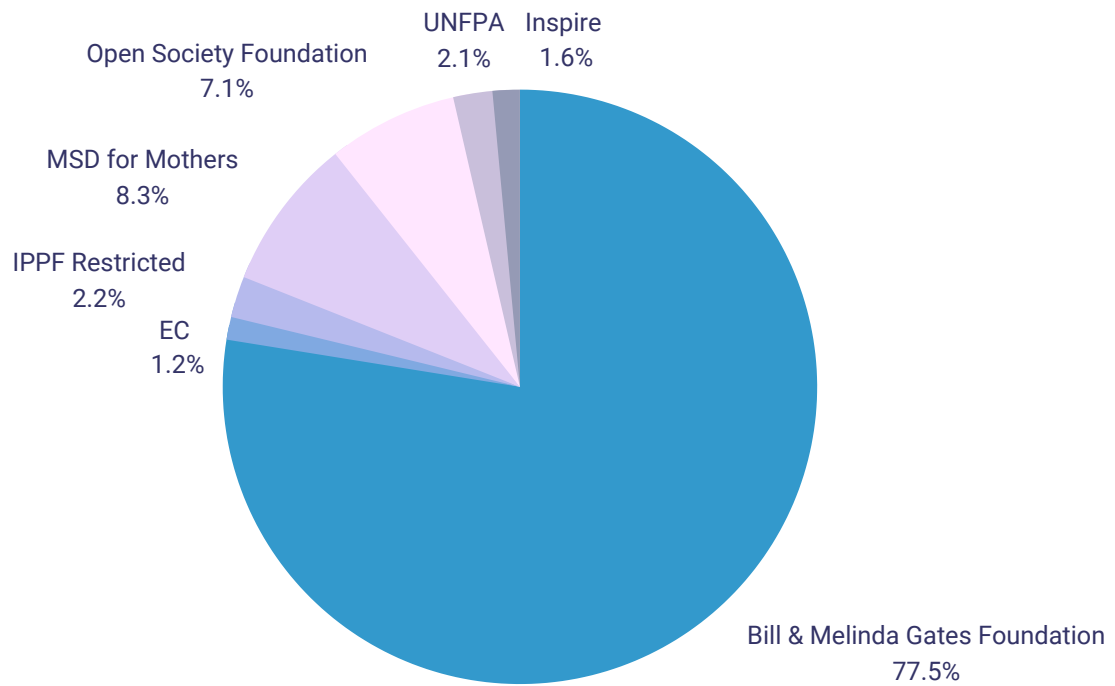


# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

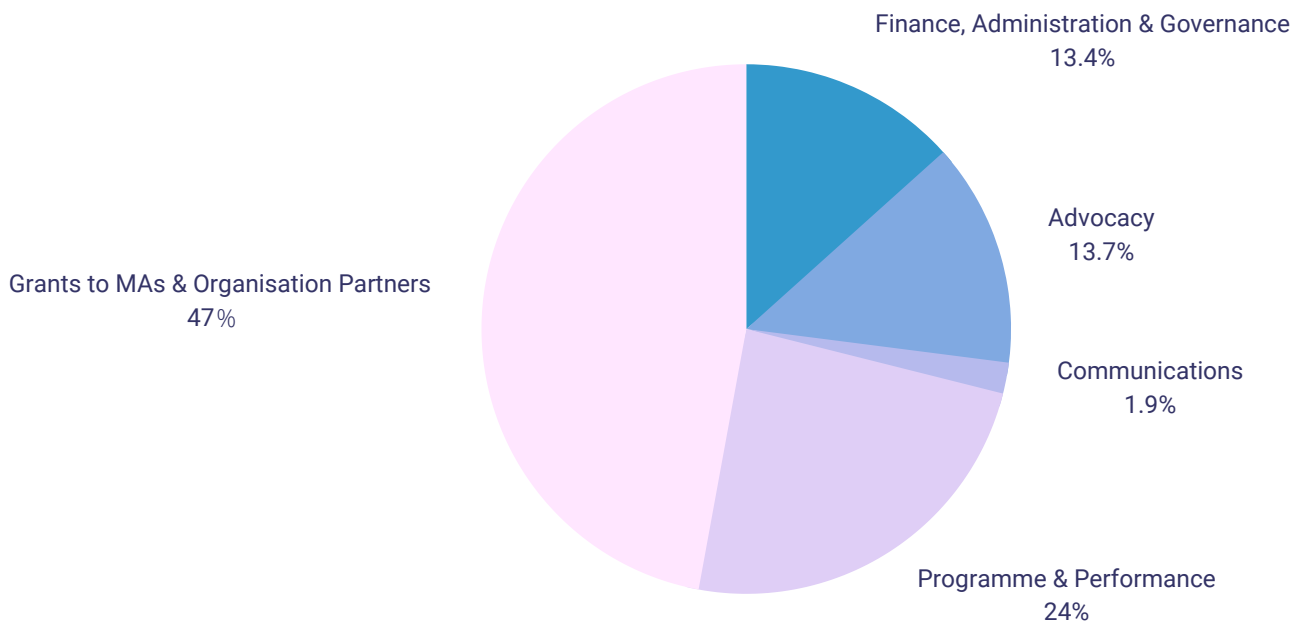
## GRAPH 1 - INCOME 2020 & 2019



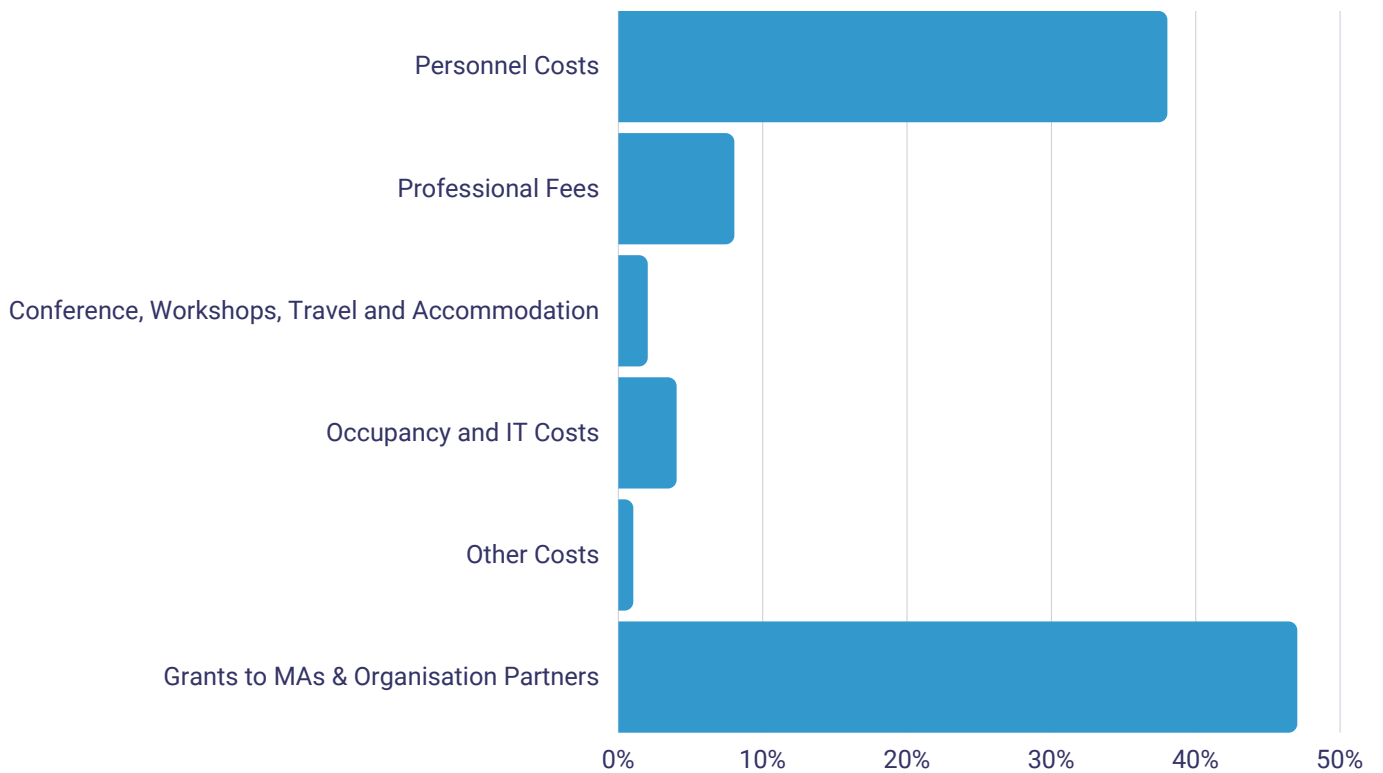
## GRAPH 2 - INCOME RESTRICTED PROJECTS 2020 PER DONOR



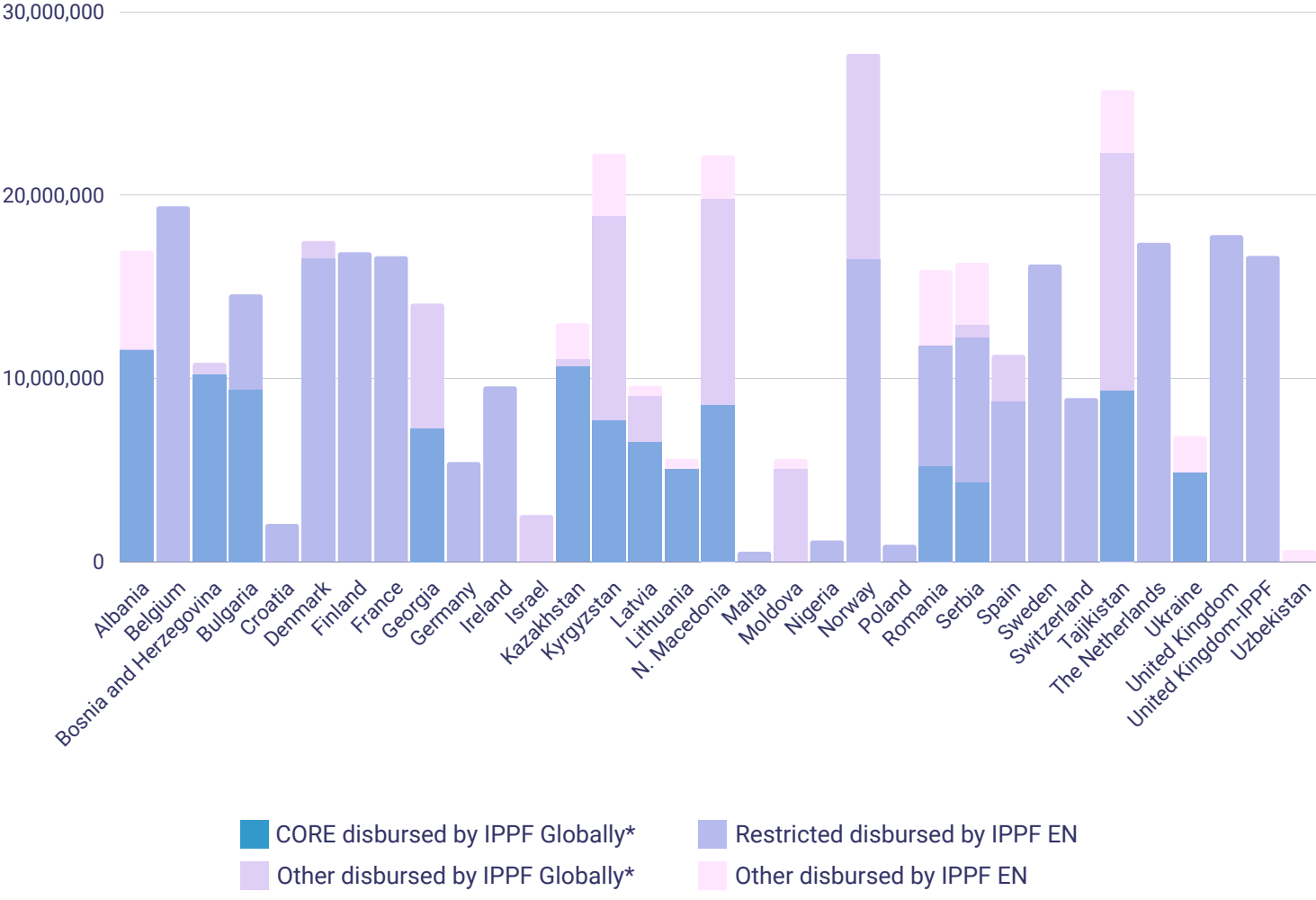
### GRAPH 3 - EXPENSES 2020 PER AREA OF WORK



### GRAPH 4 - EXPENSES 2020 PER TYPE OF COST



# GRAPH 5 - GRANTS TO MAS AND PARTNERS PER COUNTRY



\*Grants not present in IPPF European Network books but disbursed for the EN Region

**ENDS**