BEARR
THE BEARR TRUST

# Prevention of violence against women and girls
## in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

# Speaker Profiles

These profiles introduce our speakers and their organisations ahead of the conference, so the panels can focus on discussion, and so that everyone attending can find out about others working on these issues across the region and make connections for the future.

**9.00** **Registration in London**

**9.30** **Introduction to BEARR, conference format and themes**

**9.40** **Keynote**
*Prof Marianna Muravyeva*, University of Helsinki, Finland

**10.05** **Panel 1: Progression or regression?**
*Halyna Skipalska*, Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health, Ukraine
*Victoria Fletcher MBE*, Women's Centre "Gulrukhsor" UK, Tajikistan
*Nurdin Satarov*, Resource Center for Elderly, Kyrgyzstan

**11.40** **Panel 2: Prevention or cure?**
*Veronica Teleucă*, Ana Fund, Moldova
*Lyubov Maksymovych*, Women's Perspectives, Ukraine
*Nare Hovhannisyan*, Center for Legal Initiatives, Armenia

**13.00** **Conference round-up by journalist Anna Bowles**

**13.30** **Online conference ends. Light lunch in London**

Keynote

# Prof Marianna Muravyeva

Professor of Law in Gender and Law

**University of Helsinki**

**Location** Helsinki, Finland

## Biography

Marianna Muravyeva is a Professor of Law in Gender and Law at the University of Helsinki. Her research is interdisciplinary, bringing together history, social sciences and law to examine long-term trends and patterns in social development with a special focus on normativity, gender and violence. Some of her most recent projects focus on human rights of women, conservative jurisprudence, violence against women, and family violence (violence against parents and domestic violence). Professor Muravyeva co-chairs the Women and Gender Network of the European Social Sciences History Conference.

She has published extensively, including the recent books *Foundations of Russian Law* (Hart, 2023); *Parricide and Violence against Parents: A Cross-Cultural View across the Past and Present* (London, New York: Routledge, 2021); edited volumes *Domestic Disturbances, Patriarchal Values: Violence, Family and Sexuality in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2015); *Women's History in Russia: (Re)Establishing the Field* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014); *Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013) and numerous articles and book chapters.

**Panel 1 · Progression or regression?**

# Halyna Skipalska, PhD

Executive Director

**Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health (UFPH)**

**Location** Kyiv, Ukraine

## Biography

Halyna Skipalska, PhD, is Executive Director of the Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health (UFPH) and Country Director for HealthRight International in Ukraine. She has more than 20 years of experience in public health, gender-based violence prevention and response, social protection and child protection. Her work focuses on strengthening survivor-centred systems for women and girls affected by violence, including conflict-related sexual violence. Since Russia's full-scale invasion, she has led the expansion of community-based services across Ukraine, including safe spaces, mobile teams, social apartments, Barnahus centres, resilience services and digital support platforms. Halyna works closely with national and local authorities, UN agencies and civil society to strengthen locally led, sustainable responses to violence and to ensure coordinated health, psychosocial, social and legal support for survivors.

## About the organisation

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|---|---|
| **Location** | Kyiv, Ukraine; programmes implemented across multiple regions of Ukraine |
| **Founded** | 2008 |
| **Who they work with** | Women and girls, children and families, survivors of gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, internally displaced people, young people, and other individuals and communities affected by war, displacement, poverty, violence and barriers to health and social services. |
| **Support provided** | UFPH provides integrated public health, protection, social and mental health support, with a strong focus on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls. Services include case management, psychosocial and legal support, GBV and child-protection services, safe spaces, mobile teams, social apartments for young people, Barnahus centres, resilience services, referrals to health and social services, community outreach, capacity building for professionals and local authorities, and digital support tools. UFPH also pilots and scales survivor-centred service models and supports their integration into local and national systems. |
| **Partners and networks** | UFPH works in partnership with national, regional and local authorities, municipal social and health services, civil society organisations, UN agencies and international NGOs across Ukraine. It cooperates with ministries and state institutions responsible for social policy, health, gender-based violence prevention and child protection, as well as oblast and municipal authorities in the communities where our programmes operate. UFPH also contributes to key humanitarian and civil society coordination mechanisms, including the PSEA Network, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), UCPN and the Humanitarian NGO Platform in Ukraine. Through these platforms, it advocates for safeguarding, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, survivor-centred responses, localisation and stronger coordination between civil society, authorities and international partners. |

**Panel 1 · Progression or regression?**

# Victoria Fletcher MBE

Chair of the Board of Trustees

**Women's Centre "Gulrukhsor" UK**

**Location** Khujand, Tajikistan

## Biography

Victoria Fletcher has lived full-time in Khujand, Tajikistan, since 2018 and worked in Tajikistan since 2011. For the last 5 years, Victoria has worked as a volunteer Programmes Manager for Women's Centre "Gulrukhsor", the largest provider of free-of-charge services to women victims of violence. Victoria has been instrumental in determining the strategic direction of Women's Centre "Gulrukhsor", emphasising reaching the most vulnerable women in society, helping women to recover from trauma, and advocating for the role that grassroots, civil society organisations play in the fight to prevent violence against women. Recently Victoria established a UK charity that supports work to prevent and respond to violence against women in Tajikistan and wider Central Asia.

## About the organisation

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| **Location** | Khujand, Tajikistan |
| **Founded** | 1996 |
| **Who they work with** | Women at risk of or suffering from violence, perpetrators of violence – male and female, formal and informal community leaders |
| **Support provided** | Women's Centre "Gulrukhsor" is the leading provider of free-of-charge services to women victims of domestic violence in Tajikistan. They are based in Khujand, northern Tajikistan, on the grounds of the regional (oblast) maternity hospital. Their team of dedicated staff includes psychologists, social workers, lawyers, shelter staff and administrative functions. Established in 1996, they work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, taking calls to their hotline and accepting women and children into their shelter day and night. They work with both victims of violence (women and children) and perpetrators of violence (men and older women). Women's Centre "Gulrukhsor" has a strong community outreach programme to work with formal and informal leaders, as well as the local population. The programme is focused on changing attitudes towards violence against women, prevention of violence, and improving the response to cases of violence. |
| **Memberships and networks** | • Founder and current Chair of the Association of Crisis Centers, Tajikistan<br>• Member of the Global Network of Women's Shelters<br>• Member of the Asian Network of Women's Shelters<br>• Listed on lila.help<br>• Member of the Advisory Council of the Institute for Domestic Violence, Religion and Migration (IDVRM), UK<br>• Member of the UN Global Compact<br>• Member of the Tajik network "Life Without Violence"<br>• Member of the Tajik network "Access to Justice"<br>• Member of the alliance "MO", which promotes the rights of women and youth in Sughd region |

**Panel 1 · Progression or regression?**

# Dr Nurdin Satarov

Project Coordinator

**Resource Center for Elderly (RCE)**

**Location** Balykchy, Kyrgyzstan

## Biography

Dr Nurdin Satarov is a medical doctor and civil society practitioner from Kyrgyzstan with more than 30 years of experience in healthcare and community development. As Project Coordinator at the Resource Center for Elderly (RCE), he works on older people's health, rights, social inclusion and participation. His expertise includes community mobilisation, research, training, advocacy, digital inclusion and long-term care. He has coordinated initiatives supported by the European Union, UNICEF, DFID, HelpAge International and UNFPA. In 2026, he contributed to Kyrgyzstan's fifth review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and presented the draft national report at an interministerial conference. He also coordinates the BEARR-supported "Voices Across Generations" project, implemented with Danko Public Foundation, which engages older women, young women and girls, young men and boys, and volunteers in preventing violence through rights awareness and intergenerational dialogue.

## About the organisation

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| **Location** | Head office in Balykchy, Issyk-Kul Region, Kyrgyzstan, with a representation in Bishkek. Works with communities across Kyrgyzstan. |
| **Founded** | 1991 |
| **Who they work with** | Older people, especially older women, people living alone and those needing health or social support; families and carers; and older people's self-help groups. RCE's intergenerational initiatives also involve young women and girls, young men and boys, community activists and volunteers. The BEARR-supported project brings these groups together to prevent violence against women and girls. |
| **Support provided** | RCE provides day care, home visits, health promotion and screening, social assistance, and legal and psychological support. It strengthens older people's self-help groups, community participation and access to services, and advocates for older people's rights, social protection and active ageing.<br>Its educational work includes digital literacy, online safety, volunteer training and intergenerational dialogue. The BEARR-supported project addresses women's rights, gender equality, recognition and prevention of violence, respectful communication and information about available help. |
| **Partners and networks** | RCE works with the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration, the Ministry of Health, local self-government bodies, health and social services, and older people's self-help groups. It cooperates through the AgeNet network.<br>For "Voices Across Generations", RCE partners with Danko Public Foundation, with support from The BEARR Trust. Other cooperation includes HelpAge International, UNFPA and UN ESCAP. RCE has implemented initiatives supported by the European Union, UNICEF and DFID. |

**Panel 2 · Prevention or cure?**

# Veronica Teleucă

Co-founder and Strategic Director

**Ana Fund**

**Location** Chișinău, Moldova

## Biography

Veronica Teleucă is the co-founder of Ana Fund, the first feminist fund in Moldova, and a specialist in organisational and institutional development and NGO network strengthening, with 15 years' experience across six countries. For a decade she led a national network of 22 organisations working to prevent and combat violence against women and provided strategic support to the development of a European network of 160 organisations in the same field.

In the Republic of Moldova, she spent seven years drafting and coordinating legislative amendments and public policy frameworks. She has also designed and delivered training and capacity-building programmes for public institutions and non-governmental organisations.

Over ten years she has managed multi-donor portfolios, supporting local organisations and initiatives and establishing national grant programmes. She has worked with UN agencies, the Council of Europe, the EU Delegation, philanthropic foundations, and private and corporate donors.

She holds a Diploma from the International Advanced Training Programme on Gender-Based Violence in Sweden and serves as a National Tutor for the Council of Europe.

Panel 2 · Prevention or cure?

# Lyubov Maksymovych

Head

**Women's Perspectives**

**Location** Lviv, Ukraine

## Biography

Lyubov Maksymovych is a Ukrainian women's rights advocate, gender equality and women's leadership expert, and Executive Director of the NGO Centre "Women's Perspectives", one of Ukraine's leading organisations dedicated to protecting women's rights. She has over 25 years of experience promoting women's rights, participation in decision-making, economic empowerment, and preventing and responding to gender-based violence. She is a consultant to the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Coordinator of the Lviv Regional Coalition "1325 Women, Peace and Security".

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, she has led humanitarian initiatives supporting women affected by the war, including internally displaced women. In 2022–2023, her organisation provided assistance to more than 10,000 women.

In 2018, she was recognised by the United Nations as one of 12 women change-makers in Europe and Central Asia. She has represented Ukraine at international forums, including the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and is a member of humanitarian gender working groups. As a speaker, trainer, and mentor, she combines practical experience with international advocacy to advance women's leadership, peace, and security.

## About the organisation

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| **Location** | Lviv, Ukraine |
| **Founded** | 1998 |
| **Who they work with** | Women and girls in difficult life circumstances, including survivors of gender-based and domestic violence, human trafficking, exploitation and discrimination; internally displaced women and their children; women with disabilities; low-income and unemployed women and single mothers; and women seeking to develop their leadership skills and take part in civic and political life. |
| **Support provided** | Psychological support, legal assistance, shelter and humanitarian aid, women's economic empowerment, prevention of gender-based violence and human trafficking, women's leadership development, training and organisational development, research and advocacy. |
| **Partners and networks** | Women's Perspectives actively cooperates with civil society organisations, local and regional authorities, national institutions, and international partners across Ukraine.<br>At the local and regional levels, they work with the Lviv City Council, Lviv Regional Military Administration, social services, law enforcement agencies, healthcare institutions and local NGOs, and coordinate the Lviv Regional Coalition "1325 Women, Peace and Security".<br>At the national level, they cooperate with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG), the Regional Gender Task Force (RGTF), and women's rights and humanitarian organisations across Ukraine.<br>At the international level, their partners include UN Women, UN agencies, the OSCE, Zonta International, Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, and other international NGOs and donor organisations. |

**Panel 2 · Prevention or cure?**

# Nare Hovhannisyan

President

**Center for Legal Initiatives**

**Location** Yerevan, Armenia

## Biography

Nare Hovhannisyan is a criminal lawyer, human rights defender, and President and Founder of the Center for Legal Initiatives, an Armenian NGO working to advance human dignity, human rights, and criminal justice reform. Her work focuses particularly on women in contact with the criminal justice system, including women deprived of liberty and women under probation. She has extensive experience in prison monitoring, advocacy, legal and policy reform, and developing gender-sensitive approaches within penitentiary and probation systems. Nare leads initiatives addressing violence against women, trauma, discrimination, rehabilitation, and reintegration, with a particular focus on the specific vulnerabilities of women in detention. She has contributed to national policy and legislative processes and collaborates with civil society, state institutions, and international partners to promote gender-responsive justice and protection of women's rights. She is also a member of several national human rights and criminal justice advisory bodies.

## About the organisation

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|---|---|
| **Location** | Yerevan, Armenia |
| **Founded** | 2019 |
| **Who they work with** | The primary beneficiaries of the NGO's work are people in contact with the criminal justice system, with a particular focus on women deprived of liberty, women in pre-trial detention, sentenced women, women under probation, and their families. The NGO additionally supports specialists working within the penitentiary and probation systems through training and capacity-building on gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, human-rights-based approaches. |
| **Support provided** | The NGO provides legal, psychosocial, social, and rights-based support to people in contact with the criminal justice system, particularly women deprived of liberty, women under probation, and their families. This includes individual consultations, assistance in raising and addressing rights violations, referrals to relevant services, and support for rehabilitation, reintegration, and rebuilding social connections. CLI also provides peer support and empowerment activities for women, including trauma-informed group work, psychosocial support, gender-based violence awareness, and activities addressing isolation, self-worth, and reintegration challenges. At the systemic level, CLI conducts prison monitoring, research, advocacy, policy and legislative work, and capacity-building for penitentiary and probation specialists. Its training promotes gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, non-discriminatory, and human-rights-based approaches to the prevention of violence and protection of women and girls in contact with the criminal justice system. |
| **Partners and networks** | The NGO works with a range of CSOs, public institutions, and professional networks in Armenia on women's rights, LGBTQI+ rights, human rights, and penitentiary and probation reform. This includes cooperation with the Human Rights Defender's Office, the Ministry of Justice, and bodies responsible for penitentiary and probation services. The NGO has established cooperation through Memoranda of Understanding and other forms of partnership, including with state institutions and civil society organisations. CLI also participates in national coalitions and professional networks and engages with international and regional organisations working on human rights, prison reform, gender equality, and the prevention of violence against women and girls. |