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## Men and boys in gender equality policies

Conference co-organised by the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iceland, in the framework of the Icelandic Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023

Room 1  
*Palais* Building  
Council of Europe  
Strasbourg, France

**Biographies of speakers**



## Day 1 – Barbershop event

### Official opening



**Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson** was born in Reykjavík on 26 June 1968. He is the son of Margrét Thorlacius and Jóhannes Sæmundsson; Jóhannes died in 1983. He grew up in Garðabær and has two brothers. He graduated from secondary school in 1987 in Reykjavík, then studied history and political science at Warwick University in England and finished his B.A. degree in 1991. He studied German at Bonn University in Germany in 1991-1992 and Russian at the University of Iceland in 1993-1994. Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson graduated with a master's degree in history from the University of Iceland in 1997. He studied at Oxford University in England and graduated with an M.St. degree in history in 1999. In 2003 he completed his Ph.D. in history from Queen Mary, University of London. Guðni Thorlacius

Jóhannesson is married to Eliza Jean Reid, whom he met while they were both studying at Oxford University. Eliza Jean Reid is from Canada and studied modern history at Oxford University and international relations at Trinity College, University of Toronto. Guðni and Eliza have been living in Iceland since 2003. Their children are Duncan Tindur (b. 2007), Donald Gunnar (b. 2009), Sæþór Peter (b. 2011) and Edda Margrét (b. 2013). Rut (b. 1994) is Guðni's eldest child, from his previous marriage to Elín Haraldsdóttir, business administrator and artist. Before taking office as President, Guðni was Professor of history at the University of Iceland. He has taught at the University of Iceland, Reykjavik University, Bifröst University and the University of London. For a few years he also worked part-time for the Icelandic State Broadcasting Company as a reporter. Guðni has written numerous books on modern Icelandic history, including works about the Cod Wars, the Icelandic presidency, the late Prime Minister Gunnar Thoroddsen, a book about spying in Iceland, a book about former President Kristján Eldjárn, and a book about the 2008 banking collapse. He has also written dozens of scholarly articles and newspaper articles. He has received a variety of recognitions for his works.



**Marija Pejčinović-Burić** is the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the pre-eminent Pan-European international organisation in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Prior to being elected to her current position in 2019, Marija Pejčinović Burić was deputy prime minister and minister for foreign and European affairs of the Republic of Croatia, having served on two previous occasions as state secretary for EU affairs. During her tenure as a deputy in the Croatian Parliament, she chaired the delegation of the Croatia-E.U. Joint Parliamentary Committee, headed the delegation of the Croatian Parliament to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and served on a range of foreign and European-themed committees, including as substitute member of the Croatian Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. She has written, lectured and consulted widely on European affairs and has served as a president and board member for a number of organisations, and is a former secretary general of Europe House in Zagreb.

## Concept of the Barbershop: background and experiences

*Moderator: Roberto Olla, Head of the Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department, Council of Europe*



**A. Edda Jökulsdóttir** has held various positions at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland since the year 1998. Prior to that she was a special adviser to the Ambassador of the United States at the US Embassy in Reykjavik. Edda Jökulsdóttir is currently serving as a Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Directorate for Political Affairs at the MFA in Reykjavik. Prior to that she served as Head of Strategic Partnerships at the MFA's Directorate for International Development Cooperation, Director for international Business and Culture Services at the MFA's Directorate for Trade and Economic Cooperation. Furthermore, she has served as the Deputy Ambassador at Iceland's Embassies in Beijing and Berlin. Appointed as Special Advisor to the Minister for Education and Culture. BA Political Science, University of Iceland, MA Political Economy and International Affairs, Sussex University, United Kingdom.



**Gary Barker, PhD**, has been a global voice in engaging men and boys in advancing gender equality, gender justice and positive masculinities for three decades. He is the CEO and co-founder of Equipundo Center for Masculinities and Social Justice (formerly Promundo-US), a major contributor to international activism on male allyship in gender equality. He was the first Executive Director of Instituto Promundo in Brazil and led its pioneering work on healthy masculinities. He is co-founder of MenCare, a global campaign in more than 50 countries to promote men's involvement as caregivers, and co-founder of MenEngage, a global alliance of more than 700 NGOs. He co-created the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), the largest survey of men's attitudes and behaviours related to violence, fatherhood, and gender equality. He leads Equipundo's State of the World's Fathers reports, which has become a major advocacy platform for the global care economy. He has coordinated Equipundo's partnerships in conflict-affected settings including work on community-based trauma support and restorative justice in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Balkans, the US and Brazil. He advises the UN, the World Bank, national governments, international foundations and corporations on strategies to engage men and boys in promoting gender equality. In 2017 he was named by Apolitical as one of the 20 most influential people in gender policy worldwide. Gary Barker is an Ashoka Fellow and received the Voices of Solidarity Award from Vital Voices for his work to engage men for gender equality. He holds a PhD in Developmental Psychology and a Research Affiliate position at the Center for Social Sciences, University of Coimbra, Portugal. He lived nearly 20 years in Latin America and is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.

## Men and boys as agents of change in gender equality: institutional perspective



**Andrej Slapničar** present position: Ambassador – Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France  
**Academic Background:** 1995 Graduated at the Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana, International Law Programme; 1996 Training for Junior Diplomats from Central and Eastern Europe, Clingendael Institute for International Relations, Hague, Netherlands; 1997/1998 Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia; 2005/2006 European Security and Defence College, European Security and Defence Policy High Level Course, Brussels, Paris, Athens, Madrid, Berlin. **Career:** 1995 Government Office for Personnel Management; 1995 – 2000 Attaché, Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, NATO Department; 2000 – 2004 Second Secretary, Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to NATO, Brussels; 2004 – 2006 Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Slovenia to the OSCE, Vienna (Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2005); 2006 Minister Plenipotentiary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Security Policy Department; 2008 Chairman of the Council Working Group of the External Aspects of the Fight against Terrorism (COTER) during the EU Presidency (January to June 2008); 2010-2011 Negotiations on the future of conventional arms control in Europe, Vienna; 2008 – 2012; Head of the Unit for Common Security and Defence Policy, Security and Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Security Policy Department; 2013 – 2015 Member of the ITF Enhancing Human Security Management Board; 2013 – 2015 Head of the Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia; 2015 – 2019 Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary to the French Republic, Permanent Representative to UNESCO, Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco (non-resident), Ambassador to the Principality of Monaco (non-resident). **Personal information:** Date and place of birth: 21 March 1970, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Foreign languages: English, French, German; Marital status: married, three sons.



**Ralph Kass** was born 7 October and holds Luxembourgish nationality. **Professional background:** 12/2010 - Ministry for Equality between Women and Men - Senior Advisor Equality and Society (Stereotypes and Sexism - Domestic Violence - Human Trafficking – Prostitution - Men and Gender Equality); 01/2006 – 11/2010 Court of Auditors, Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg, Board Member; 10/2003 – 12/2005 Parliamentary Group; Christian Social People's Party, Deputy Secretary General; 02/2001 – 09/2003 Parliamentary Group, Christian Social People's Party, Policy Advisor; 10/1999 – 01/2001 **Internships (in chronological order):** Ministry of Justice and European Affairs, Land Brandenburg, Potsdam (Germany); European Commission – Representation in Germany, Berlin (Germany); VDI/VDE-Technologiezentrum Informationstechnik GmbH, Teltow (Germany); European

Commission, Directorate General Regional Policy, Brussels (Belgium). **School and academic career:** 2006 - 2009 Berlin School of Economics and Law, Master of Arts, European Public Management; 1998 - 1999 Free University Berlin, Otto-Suhr-Institute for Political Sciences; 1994 - 1998 Free University Brussels, Licencié Political Sciences – International relations; 1987 - 1994 Lycée Michel-Rodange Luxembourg, Baccalaureate Section A2 – Languages and Human Sciences; 1981 - 1987 Primary School « Al Schoul » Bettembourg. **Mandates:** Council of Europe - Gender Equality Commission (GEC); European Commission - Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men; National Committee of Professionals for Domestic Violence; Interministerial committees (Human Rights, Cooperation, Digitalization, Committee Prostitution...). **Publications:** Kass, R. (2010): Die EU-Nahostpolitik im Rahmen des Nahostquartetts (2002-2008) – Die Europäische; Union als kohärenter aussenpolitischer Akteur, Diplomica, Hamburg; Kass R. (2018) : La politique nationale en matière d'égalité entre femmes et hommes, dans Le statut des femmes et l'état de droit, Bruylant, Bruxelles, pp.51-56; Kass, R. (2018): Von

der Plattform zum Gesetz. Der lange Weg zu einem luxemburgischen Prostitutionsmodell, Forum, n°380, S.40-43. **Skills:** Personal skills Reliability – Adaptability – Motivation - Problem-solving – Team oriented – Analytical/Critical Thinking; Computer skills MS Office/Social Media; Languages French – English – German – Luxembourgish; **Passions** Photography (Certificate for Digital Photo Designing - Studiengemeinschaft Darmstadt), Hiking, Sports

## **Men and boys as agents of change in gender equality: testimonies and inspiring contributions**



**Sikou Niakaté** is a self-taught director who draws his inspiration from cinema, theatre and, more recently, from contemporary art. He creates with the desire to be free in both narrative and aesthetic form. “In the dark, men cry” is his first film. It is in the “cathartic” conception of art that the author finds his narrative and aesthetic style.



**Gary Barker**

## Day 2 - Policy measures regarding men and boys in gender equality policies

### Opening addresses



**Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir** boasts a distinguished career in public service, with significant expertise as a government official responsible for overseeing administration and legislation related to gender equality in Iceland. Between 2004 and 2009, she served as the Permanent Secretary for Iceland's Ministry of Social Affairs. Ragnhildur played a pivotal role in administering the revision of the Icelandic Gender Equality Act in 2008, which ushered in important amendments, such as: the creation of the Gender Equality Forum, an advisory body comprising

representatives from diverse stakeholders like government ministries, labour unions, and NGOs; the implementation of gender mainstreaming, a mandate for municipalities and government agencies to incorporate gender equality considerations into their decision-making processes; and a new objective, in the Act, to promote the inclusion of men and boys in the discussion of gender equality. Between 2009 and 2020, Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir held the position of Permanent Secretary for the Prime Minister's Office. In 2018, the Prime Minister's Office assumed responsibility for gender equality, establishing a dedicated Department of Equality and Human Rights. This development coincided with a 2017 revision of the Gender Equality Act, which required equal pay certification for both private and public organizations with 25 or more employees. Under this mandate, Icelandic employers must undergo an audit every three years to demonstrate the absence of wage discrimination based on gender. The audit utilizes an Equal Pay Standard, a management requirement standard developed in Iceland. Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir earned a Master of Jurisprudence from the University of Iceland's Faculty of Law and has participated in various programs, courses, conferences, and seminars, primarily focusing on European law, leadership, and public management and administration. In her capacity as Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir has guided the priorities of Iceland's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. Throughout the presidency, in addition to guaranteeing the successful delivery of the 4th Summit in May 2023, which meets the expectations of the Council of Europe's numerous stakeholders, the presidency has concentrated on four primary themes and their interconnections: human rights, democracy, and the rule of law; environmental issues; children and youth; and equality.



Following her appointment by the Secretary General, **Marja Ruotanen** started on 1 September 2022 as the new Director General of Democracy and Human Dignity (DGII). Marja Ruotanen has a deep understanding of the Council of Europe's mission and operations, including in the fields of standard setting, monitoring and cooperation. She has notably served as Director of Equality and Human Dignity (DGII), Director of Justice and Human Dignity (DGI), Director of Cooperation (DGI), as well as Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General. She has also worked several years in the Parliamentary Assembly, most recently as Director of the Committees. Throughout her career, Marja Ruotanen has strived to establish the necessary connections between the

various Council of Europe programmes and actors, fostering transversality and teamwork at the Organisation's level. Marja Ruotanen brings with her a strong commitment to the values of the Organisation and the determination to unleash DGII potential to promote democracy by putting human

dignity at the heart of the effort. Convinced of the fact that today's complex challenges need to be addressed by mobilising expertise in many different fields, she will foster reforms and working methods that allow for cooperation across teams within and beyond the DG. Marja Ruotanen is determined to use her influence as Director General to accelerate progress towards gender equality in the Organisation.

## Session 1: Negative impacts of social norms and gender stereotypes

*Session Moderator: Radan Safarik, member of the Gender Equality Commission, Czech Republic*



**Alia El-Yassir** was appointed as UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia in September 2018 and in this capacity also serves as UN Women Representative to Turkey. She has been working on gender equality and women's empowerment within the United Nations system since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. She has extensive experience of working as UN Women Representative at country level managing normative, co-ordination and operational work within complex contexts that span the development, humanitarian and political continuum. She has also served at HQ level supporting UN Women's global programmatic work. In her country, regional and global roles, she has built strong partnerships with and among diverse groups of stakeholders to advance the rights of women and girls. Before joining the UN system, Alia El-Yassir worked as a teacher and developed educational media for children, in addition to volunteering with a number of women's and human rights non-governmental organisations. Alia El-Yassir holds a BSc degree in Biology (with a specialisation in Ecology) from McGill University and a MSc degree in Desert Studies (with a specialisation in Gender Studies) from Ben Gurion University of the Negev.



(Bielefeld University).

**Diogo Costa** is a researcher in gender-based violence at the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). He holds a PhD in Public Health and a Master's degree in Health Psychology. Before joining EIGE, he collaborated in several international research networks in the areas of social epidemiology and health services research. The themes of the projects included the promotion of mental health and mental healthcare among marginalised groups, intimate partner violence in the various stages of life, socioeconomic inequalities in health, health literacy and child mental health. His previous work experiences were developed in Portugal (University of Porto and University of Coimbra), Angola (Health Research Centre of Angola, Bengo) and Germany



**Shahab Ahmadian** is the president for the organisation MÄN in Sweden, a member-based movement working locally, nationally and internationally with gender equality and against men's violence. Aiming to redefine masculinity by engaging men to become active in a positive change. Shahab Ahmadian has a background as a journalist with a commitment to marginalised voices. Working on empowering people to control of the narrative in their own stories. He became aware of destructive masculinity norms while working with storytelling on a prison radio programme.



**Baia Pataraiia** is a human rights lawyer and civil activist. Since 2013 she chairs prominent women's organization "Sapari". In 2014 Baia Pataraiia founded Georgian Women's Movement, the largest informal feminist group in Georgia, who perform various advocacy activities and social campaigns to protect women's rights. In 2009-2013 she worked at Ministry of Justice of Georgia on various managerial positions. Since 2008 has been a visiting lecturer at various universities in Georgia. Since 2011 as a national expert Baia Pataraiia trains judges, prosecutors and lawyers on gender issues, domestic violence and anti-discrimination law in cooperation with international organizations and national training centers. Currently she chairs board of Human Rights House Tbilisi. She holds LLM in International Human Rights Law from Central European University (2006) and Master's degree in International Law from Tbilisi State University (2004).

## Session 2: Men and gender equality in care

**Session Moderator: Guðjón Björn Guðbjartsson**, member of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe, Iceland



**Ole B. Nordfjell** is a Norwegian sociologist with a broad range of experience in managing and cooperating in national, Nordic, and European projects about boys, men and gender equality. Since 2021 Ole Nordfjell has been the chief advisor at Reform - Resource center for men, which is based in Norway. Reform is an NGO and a national knowledge centre which receives core funding from the government. Reform works for knowledge development and increased levels of gender equality and diversity in different areas, including; fathering, the gender-divided labour market, men's health, purchase of sexual services, immigrant men, and lonely and marginalised men. In his own work, Ole Nordfjell has particularly worked with men in care professions, men as victims of domestic violence, and fathers as carers. Ole Nordfjell was the Norwegian project leader for Men in care: workplace support for caring masculinities (2019-2022), a project which was funded by the European Commission. The project had partners in seven countries, working to promote men taking caring roles in these countries (Austria, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Slovenia and Spain). Currently Ole Nordfjell is leading the project *En likestilt helsestasjon* [A gender equal health centre]. A gender equal health centre is a pilot project looking at how health centres focusing on maternal, child, and infant care can better include and support new fathers.





**Ana Lite Mateo**, Deputy Assistant Director General, Institute of Women, Ministry of Equality, Spain. Ana Lite Mateo is Deputy Assistant Director General for Female Entrepreneurship, Gender Equality in Companies and Collective Bargaining at the Spanish Institute of Women. She has previously worked for the European Commission as a national seconded gender equality expert and for the Gender Equality Unit at the Irish Ministry of Justice. She is a gender equality specialist in employment and working conditions at EU and national level. She is experienced in the design, technical guidance and management of gender equality programmes, including women's professional

advancement, work-life balance, labour and social inclusion of women belonging to vulnerable groups and female entrepreneurship. She is also an expert in legal analysis, as well as in drafting regulations on gender equality seals, gender equality plans and equal pay, and on the development of associated supporting tools. Since 2021, she is also managing the Technical Secretariat of the Spanish Advisory board on Care of the Spanish Ministry of Equality.



**Gordana Gavrilović** has been working as a gender equality advisor of Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and President of Coordination Body for Gender Equality since 2015. In 2014, she worked as a project coordinator at the Podgorica (Montenegro) office of Serbia's oldest cultural-scientific institution, Matica Srpska. In 2013, she was an associate at the Serbian Chamber of Commerce in Croatia. From 2008 to 2012, she worked at the Office of the President of Serbia as an expert associate of the Advisor to the President. She started her career in 2006 at the People's Office of the President of the Republic. As a participant of the Fellowship Programme for Young Government Officials from the Western Balkans, Gordana was an exchange civil servant of the Training for International Diplomats programme at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin in 2016, supporting the Global Diplomacy Lab. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Psychology, University of Belgrade, and of

the Diplomatic Academy at Serbia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## Session 3: Role of men and boys in combating violence

*Session Moderator: Lara Ferguson Vázquez de Parga, member of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe, Spain*



**Iris Luarasi** PhD. is the President of GREVIO at the Council of Europe. She has been leading for 20 years the Counselling Line for Women and Girls (the National Helpline for victims of domestic violence and violence against women) and leads the first male centre in Albania – Counselling Line for Men and Boys that tries to rehabilitate perpetrators of domestic violence and works on prevention with young boys in the country and fatherhood campaigns. She was a member of the GREVIO Working Group on a General Recommendation on the digital dimension of violence against women at the Council of Europe. Iris Luarasi is a professor in the Department of Journalism and Communications at the University of Tirana. She also trains Albanian journalists in human rights, journalism ethics, as well as countering fake news, hate speech and sexism. Her research and publishing activities include leading a study on domestic violence and sex crimes, a guide for reporters on Gender Based Violence and sexual assault, guidelines for data collection and authoring two books on radio journalism and media in Albania.



**Petra Stienen** is an author, strategic advisor, leadership coach and moderator. She is a former diplomat with a focus on the Middle East, human rights and asylum and migration. She is senator for the social-liberal party D66 (parttime position). She is the delegation leader of the delegation of the Netherlands to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Petra Stienen is the vice president of the PACE ALDE group, a member of the PACE equality committee and the women@pace bureau. She is rapporteur for several reports, among others the gender dimensions of foreign policy, gender mainstreaming of migration policies, the role and responsibility of men and boys in stopping gender-based violence against women and girls and innovative approaches to sexual reproductive health and rights.



**Sandra Jovanović Belotić** is the Training and Capacity Building Manager at the European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence (WWP EN). She has extensive experience supporting organisations and professionals across Europe in developing and providing survivor-centred work with perpetrators of domestic violence. Through this work, she gained a comprehensive understanding of the diverse perpetrator work practices across Europe. In line with WWP EN's goal to promote high-quality and effective programmes, she led several research projects on European perpetrator programme quality and their alignment with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and international standards. Currently, she is coordinating the development of the WWP EN European accreditation system for perpetrator programmes. Ms Jovanović Belotić has over a decade of experience rolling out perpetrator programmes in Serbia in different roles; as a facilitator of the perpetrator programme, trainer and supervisor, author of the curriculum for professionals, and consultant.

## Concluding remarks/Closing session



**Dr Panos Kapotas** is a Reader in Equality and Human Rights Law at Portsmouth Law School (University of Portsmouth, UK), where he is also the joint Associate Head – Research and Innovation. He holds degrees in Law from the NKUA (Athens), UCL (UK) and LSE (UK) and his research focuses on equality and non-discrimination in Europe. He has published in English and in Greek, including edited volumes on European consensus (*Building Consensus on European Consensus: Judicial Interpretation of Human Rights in Europe and Beyond*, CUP, 2019) and on human dignity and democracy in Europe (*Human Dignity and Democracy in Europe: Synergies, Tensions and Crises*, Edward Elgar, 2022). Panos Kapotas is a regular invited speaker at Academy of European Law (ERA), and a member of the Berkeley Center of Comparative Equality and Anti-Discrimination Law. He is currently a co-Investigator in the RE-WIRING project (Realising Girls’ and Women’s Inclusion, Representation and Empowerment), funded under the European Commission’s Horizon Europe programme.



**Claudia Luciani** joined the Directorate of Political Affairs of the Council of Europe in 1990, first in the External Relations Department and then as political adviser on South-East Europe and minorities. She held a number of positions in the Directorate of Political Affairs, including in the field, and served as Director of Political Advice and Co-operation for five years. She was appointed Director of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes in 2011 and then of the Democratic Governance and Diversity. Since 2018, she is the Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance with a particular focus on the implementation of the Istanbul and Trafficking Conventions. Claudia’s work on governance focuses on the functioning of institutions, election assistance, civil society and she organises annually the World Forum for Democracy. Claudia studied philosophy at Trinity College (Washington DC), graduated in Political Science (University of Padua) and holds a specialisation in International Public Law and studied at ENA (Paris).



**Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir**