

**Gender equality:  
paving the way**

**Conference to launch the  
Council of Europe  
Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023**

**SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES**

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## Opening Session



**Moderator: Abdel Aziz Mahmoud** was born 11 June 1983 in Abu Dhabi. He is a journalist, television host, author and moderator. He has been working at the Danish Broadcasting Corp, TV2 and Nordisk Film. He is a well-known debate leader especially on integration issues. In 2016, he published the book "Hvor taler du flot dansk" (*"You speak beautiful Danish"*) about his Danish-Palestinian family and his own experiences about living in Denmark. He is a fluent Danish, English and Arabic speaker.

**Eva Kjer Hansen** is Minister for Equal Opportunities of Denmark.



**Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni** has served as the Council of Europe's Deputy Secretary General since 2012 and was re-elected in June 2015. She oversees the implementation of the Secretary General's reform agenda, in line with the decisions and priorities of the Committee of Ministers. Her priorities include shaping the Programme and Budget to guarantee member States value for money, while ensuring that the Organisation's activities have maximum impact in advancing democracy, human rights and the rule of law. She also oversees the Council of Europe's staff policy. Before taking up her post, Mrs Battaini-Dragoni held a number of positions within the Organisation. In 2001 she became the first female Director General in the Organisation's history, in charge of Social Cohesion. Between 2004 and 2011, she served as Director General of Education, Culture and Heritage, taking the Council of Europe's work into new terrain

by introducing programmes on democratic citizenship, intercultural learning and human rights to schools, youth projects and other cultural spaces. In 2011 Mrs Battaini-Dragoni established the Directorate General of Programmes (ODG-PROG), enabling greater decentralisation of activities to the field. Under her leadership a new system was created to mobilise extra-budgetary resources in a sustainable and long-term perspective. Mrs Battaini-Dragoni has published widely on a range of issues relating to the Council of Europe's mission, including social rights and the role of intercultural dialogue in modern democracies. She holds a degree in foreign languages and literature from the University of Venice and a diploma from the Institut Européen des Hautes Études Internationales, University of Nice. She was born in Brescia, Italy and is married with three children.

## ***Ending impunity for violence against women and ensuring gender equality: the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention***



**Feride Acar** is professor of political sociology and gender and women's studies. For many years, she has been working for the promotion and protection of women's human rights, at the international level, as an academic, a researcher and an independent expert. She is currently (2011-2015) member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) where, in the past too (1997-2005), she has served as member, Rapporteur, Vice-Chair and Chairperson (2003-2005). Professor Acar was one of the independent experts of the Council of Europe Task Force that recommended the making of a European Convention on violence against women.

She also served (2006-2011) as the Turkish delegate in the negotiations and drafting of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). She has been elected (2015) as member of the GREVIO, the monitoring body of the Istanbul Convention. She is the author of works on women's human rights; women in education and academia; women and Islamist politics; as well as social and political movements and Turkish political life. She received her BS from Middle East Technical University and her MA and Ph.D from Bryn Mawr College, Pa., USA.

## ***Political commitment: an imperative for gender equality***



**Dr Helena Dalli** was appointed minister for European Affairs and Equality of Malta following the general election of 3 June 2017. First elected to Parliament in 1996, she served as Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister between 1996 and 1998. She was subsequently re-elected to Parliament in 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2017 - making Dr. Dalli's experience in the Maltese Parliament one of the longest, held by a woman in Maltese politics and the only woman to be elected from two districts in the interest of the Labour Party. During the 2013-2017 legislature she was minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties. Under her direction the Government introduced several laws and policies to strengthen the equality and human rights framework placing Malta among the first in

Europe in this field. Helena Dalli holds a PhD in Political Sociology and lectures in Economic and Political Sociology, Public Policy, and Sociology of Law at the University of Malta. In 2016 Minister Dalli was the first Maltese nominee and winner of the European Diversity Award for her work in human rights and equality at the local and international level.



**Bassima Hakkaoui** was appointed Minister for Family Affairs, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in April 2017, following her appointment as Minister for Solidarity, Women, Family Affairs and Social Development on 3 January 2012. Ms Hakkaoui, who holds a master of advanced studies in social psychology awarded in 1990, and a further post-graduate qualification in the same subject obtained in 1996, teaches education sciences. She was elected to Parliament in September 2002 and became Vice-

Chair of the PJD parliamentary group. She was re-elected at the 2007 and 2011 elections and chaired the Social Affairs Committee from 2006 to 2009. Ms Hakkaoui was a member of the Bureau of the House of Representatives from 2009 to 2010; she is a member of the EU-Morocco Joint Parliamentary Committee and of several Arabic and Islamic organisations. She has written a number of research papers on women, the gender approach and education, and has contributed to collective works dealing with these issues. She has also taken part in several international symposiums as a researcher.



**Jari Partanen**, was appointed Finland's State Secretary to the Centre Party's group of ministers - Ministers Anu Vehviläinen, Kimmo Tiilikainen, Anne Berner, Mika Lintilä, Jari Leppä and Annika Saarikko - in June 2015. Between 2007 and 2015 he was the Secretary General for the Centre Party Parliamentary Group. In this conference State Secretary Partanen is representing Minister Annika Saarikko who is responsible for Government's gender equality policy. Government launched 2017 a new biannual Gender Equality Prize (<http://genderequalityprize.fi/>)

to create further promotion of gender equality across the world. Prior to that, he was briefly the Special Adviser to the Minister of Environment and the Special Adviser to the Minister of Defence for four years. He has also served as Secretary of Legislative Affairs for the Centre Party Parliamentary Group. Mr Partanen has a Master's Degree in Law from the University of Lapland. He is currently the Chair of several committees supporting the work of the Finnish government, for example Chairman of the executive group for streamlining legislation and Chairman of the commission promoting the economic co-operation between the governments of Russia and Finland. Mr Partanen is also in the board of two sports clubs and is keen on football.



**Nada Zrinušić** has been Assistant Minister in the Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy of Croatia (MDFYSP) since April 2017. Previously, she was working for over fifteen years in Ministry of Finance of Croatia where she has held various positions in National Fund Division. Throughout her career, she gained vast experience in setting up the management and control system for the implementation of the pre-accession assistance programs of the EU as well as establishing a management and control system for the implementation of European and Investment Funds. This resulted in co-authoring of two books in the area of EU projects management and implementation. Her current position, along with coordination and monitoring of implementation of Operational Programmes financed from the ESF and ERDF related to Social Inclusion

Priorities includes activities related to the coordination of the EU and international affairs.



**Josephina Antoniou** was born in Larnaca, Cyprus. She graduated from the Larnaca High School and studied Law at the Kapodistrian University of Athens. She served as a Chief Executive Officer of J.A. Frangiorgio Ltd. She was President of the Women's Organisation of the Democratic Rally Party (DISY) and a member of the Executive Bureau of DISY. She served as a member of the Central Council of the European Union of Women (EUW), and Vice President of the European Women's Association (EWA). She took part in numerous European and World Conferences on Gender Equality. She represented Cyprus as a member of the National Machinery for Women's Rights in the 49th Session of the United Nations on BEIJING +10 in New York. She served as Municipal Counsellor of Larnaca, President of Parents Associations and a member of various associations and social service organisations. She was appointed Commissioner for Gender Equality on 12 March 2014 by the President of

the Republic. She was re-appointed as Gender Equality Commissioner by the President of the Republic for the period 2018-2023. By a Ministerial Decision in April 2014 she was appointed President of the National Machinery for Women's Rights and of the National Committee in Cyprus.

## ***Planet 50-50 by 2030: Reality or Utopia***



**Moderator: Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele** is Head of the Equality Division at the Council of Europe in charge of promoting and implementing Council of Europe standards and activities in the area of gender equality, the rights of persons with disabilities and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Since joining the Council of Europe in 1997, she has worked in a variety of positions including the Private Office of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary General, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Private Office of the President as well as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele graduated with a MSc. in Management from the University of Surrey in England, and a BA in English Language from the University of Tirana in Albania.



**Asger Ryhl** took up his current role as the Director of the UN Women Nordic Office in Copenhagen on 25 March 2013. Immediately prior he was a Senior Advisor in the Office of the DED/ASG in UN Women and to the ED/USG on Nordic affairs, after being the UNFPA Representative in Papua New Guinea in 2009. Before this Mr. Ryhl held various roles for UNFPA, including Chief of the Nordic Office in Copenhagen and resource mobilization officer in New York. In 1998, before returning to UNFPA, Mr. Ryhl moved to Copenhagen as a Senior Gender Advisor for Development Associates. Mr. Ryhl started his UN career in 1993 as a Junior Professional Officer for UNFPA in New York and Zambia, before becoming a Programme Officer in New York. Mr. Ryhl holds a Master of Economics, from the University of Copenhagen.



**Irena Moozová** is a Director at the European Commission for Equality and Union Citizenship in its department for Justice (DG JUST). She is a Czech national and joined the Commission in 2006 as Head of EU Representation in Prague. Between May 2010 and April 2017 she headed the Unit in charge of supporting the Commission Representations, in the Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM). From 1991 till 2006 she was working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech and Slovak/Czech Republic in various management positions, such as Head of the Department of Internal Administration (1993-1995), Deputy Director of the Department of the Human Rights (1999-2000) and as a team coordinator at the NATO Summit (2002). She had served as Czech Deputy Ambassador in Madrid (1995-1998), Deputy Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the OSCE in Vienna (2000-2004) and the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the UNESCO in Paris (2004-2006). Ms Moozová graduated at the Prague Charles University Faculty of Law and has completed postgraduate studies at Diplomatic Academy in Madrid. She is married and has two daughters.





**Saniye Gülser Corat**, currently the Director for Gender Equality at UNESCO, she was the pioneer in making gender equality a global priority at UNESCO in 2007. She is a senior executive in international development with over 25 years of field experience in over 30 countries in Asia-Pacific, North and Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South America, Europe, and North America. She holds post-graduate degrees from Harvard Kennedy School and Harvard Business School and graduate degrees from the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium; Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and Political Science Department at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.



**Tanya Primiani** joined the World Bank Group in 2008 and started working with the *Women, Business and the Law* team as a Senior Investment Policy Officer in 2017. Prior to this, she coordinated other indicator projects including Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (with a focus on energy access, renewable energy and energy efficiency), and Investing Across Borders (with a focus on the regulation of Foreign Direct Investment). Prior to joining the World Bank Group, she worked for the United Nations in Italy, Siemens Management Consulting in New York and at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. She holds a law degree from the University of Montreal and an MA in International Relations and International Economics from the Johns

Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). She speaks Italian, French, and Spanish.



**Edith Schratzberger-Vecsei MAG.PHIL. DR.MED.** was born on 12 August 1968 in Upper Austria. After studying medicine in Innsbruck (Austria) she started her postgraduate training in hospitals in Salzburg (Austria), Trivandrum (India), and Hallein (Austria) and did a special training in Psychotherapy. From 1997 to 2004 she studied philosophy in Salzburg and Vienna. She works as a general practitioner and psychotherapist in Vienna and have been teaching at the Medical University in Vienna for 10 years. She has been the president of the Austrian Medical Women's Association since 2006 and joined the European Women's Lobby in 2010 as an

alternate delegate for the Medical Women's International Association. Since 2012, she has been on the executive board of the European Women's Lobby, from 2014-2016 she was its vice president, and since 2016 its president. Edith is married and has three children, Benjamin, 25, Paul, 20 and Flora, 16.

## ***Women in decision making: glass ceilings and sticky floors***



**Moderator: Renee Laiviera** is currently the Commissioner of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and NCPE's Acting Executive Director. Ms Laiviera has held a number of management positions in the Malta Public Service since 1998 when she was appointed Director (Women's Rights). She also held positions on a number of government commissions and committees. She has been active in NGOs for many years and up till May 2013 held the position of Executive Member of the European Women's Lobby and that of the Chairperson of the Malta Confederation of Women's Organisations. In March 2007, on the occasion of International Women's Day, Ambassador Molly H. Bordonaro, on

behalf of The Embassy of the United States of America in Malta, honoured her for exceptional 'courage and leadership in advocating for women's rights and advancement in Malta. She started her career in the education field, continued to study management, political studies and reading for an MA in Maltese studies with a dissertation on gender and human rights.



**Laura Boldrini** Laura Boldrini began her career in 1989 at the United Nations. She worked at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and served as spokesperson of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). She carried out several missions to crisis areas, including the Former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Mozambique, Angola and Rwanda. For these activities she has received several honours and awards. In 2013 she became a

Member of Parliament and was elected President of the Chamber of Deputies on 16th March of the same year. Innovative and visionary action has been the hallmark of her term of office, with a focus on social and gender issues, inequalities and peripheries, budgetary savings and transparency, violence on the web and fight against fake news. For the first time in a Parliament she established a Committee on the Internet and digital media as well as a Committee to combat hate phenomena, named after the British MP Jo Cox, brutally murdered by a neo-Nazi pro-Brexit extremist. She has been steadfastly committed to relaunching the European project, also by promoting, in 2015, the Declaration "Greater European integration: the way forward", signed by 15 Speakers of Parliament. She has launched an awareness-raising campaign on fake news, called "BastaBufale" (Stopfakenews), which was supported by over 20,000 people. She then started a cooperative project with the Ministry of Education, University and Research to promote a national digital education campaign against fake news (#BastaBufale) in schools, involving over 4 million students. She has published several books: *Tutti indietro* (Rizzoli 2010), *Solo le montagne non si incontrano mai* (Rizzoli 2013), *Lo sguardo lontano* (Einaudi 2015) and *La comunità possibile. Una nuova rotta per il futuro dell'Europa* (Marsilio 2017). In 2017 she was awarded an honorary degree by the American University of Rome in acknowledgement of her institutional, social and civic engagement throughout her career; her tireless endeavours to uphold fundamental rights, human dignity and equal opportunities against all forms of discrimination and violence; her focus on women and their contribution to society; her political ability and honesty; her bold stance against cultural stereotypes.





**Karen Ross** is Professor of Gender and Media, the first such named chair in the UK. She joined Newcastle in 2016 from her previous position at Northumbria University and has previously held positions at the universities of Liverpool, Coventry, Gloucestershire and Birmingham. In 2015, she was Distinguished Visitor at the University of Alberta and has held visiting positions at Queens University Belfast and Stellenbosch University, South Africa: she will be a Visiting Professor at Massey University (New Zealand) in 2018. She has recently contributed to the drafting of policy recommendations on combating sexism for the Council of Europe (2017). She is currently a reviewer of Athena Swan

charter award applications for the Government's Equality Challenge Unit (2017). Karen is the Principal Investigator on an EU-funded project (2017-2019) to Advance Gender Equality in Media Industries (AGEMI). Karen has authored and edited a large number of books on aspects of media and popular culture including on topics as diverse as the audience, racial stereotypes and television, and the media and the public. However, for the past twenty years, most of her scholarship has focused on the relationship between gender and media and more specifically, the fraught relations which exist between women politicians and journalists. Karen sits on the editorial boards of a number of leading journals. Karen has written for a number of blog sites including The Conversation and has made numerous media appearances, mostly on radio including Woman's Hour, TalkRadio, and most recently appeared on Deutsche Welle's news and current affairs programme (2017). In 2014, she gave oral and written evidence to the House of Lords Inquiry into Women and Current Affairs News Broadcasting and some of her recommendations made their way into the published report of the Inquiry.



**Peter Munk Christiansen** is professor and Department Head at the Department of Political Science, Aarhus University. He is also head of the Independent Research Fund Denmark which support bottom up research in all scientific fields.

## ***Gender stereotypes and sexism: holding women and men back***



**Moderator: Charles Ramsden** is the Vice Chair of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe. He is responsible for International Relations in the Government Equalities Office in the United Kingdom. The Government Equalities Office leads on issues relating to women, sexual orientation and transgender equality matters; it also has responsibility across government for equality strategy and legislation. Charles has been involved in promoting equality and tackling discrimination with the United Kingdom Government for

many years. He has worked on legislation, funding programmes, stakeholder liaison and developing the United Kingdom equality strategy. Prior to working in equality he has worked within the criminal justice system and on immigration policy.



**Michael Kimmel** is one of the world's leading experts on men and masculinities. He is the SUNY Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies at Stony Brook University. Among his many books are *Manhood in America*, *Angry White Men*, *The Politics of Manhood*, *The Gendered Society* and the best seller *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men*. With funding from the MacArthur Foundation, he founded the Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities at Stony Brook in 2013. A

tireless advocate of engaging men to support gender equality, Kimmel has lectured at more than 300 colleges, universities and high schools. He has delivered the International Women's Day annual lecture at the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of Europe, and has worked with the Ministers for Gender Equality of Norway, Denmark and Sweden in developing programs for boys and men. He consults widely with corporations, NGOs and public sector organizations on gender equity issues. He was recently called "the world's most prominent male feminist" in The Guardian newspaper in London.



**Cecilie Nørgaard:** Mangfold is determined to integrate research-based gender perspectives in education and culture. Mangfold promotes gender equality and diversity by nuancing and counteracting the root causes of gender stereotyping to help facilitate and create more sustainable societies. Mangfold strives to change gender stereotypes through innovative academic and creative initiatives. Its expertise is to develop innovations, consult, analyse and convey gender perspectives especially in education in Denmark, but also in the Nordic countries and throughout the European Union. Mangfold operates in diverse settings and collaborates with a broad range of actors including larger organisations, ministries and municipalities, as well as educational institutions, schools and kindergartens and different institutions. The latest initiative "The Prism Certificate" is a strategic and hands-on tool for change towards a more socially sustainable society. The Prism Certificate offers preschools an online educational course in gender, diversity and equality seen through a norm-critical lens. The staff learns how to promote (gender) diversity and (gender) equality by breaking down stereotypes associated with gender, social background, ethnicity, etc.



**Christian Mogensen** is a public speaker and project manager who works with kids, youth and the professionals surrounding them, in an effort to better their digital lives. Christian believes that through social and psychological understandings of the social media impact on our lives, we'll be able to make them work in our favour - instead of the other way around. After working a decade in and around the digital generations unique social arenas, Christian has a keen eye for understanding tech tricks and trends, and their human effect. Christian has worked at the UN, Universities around Europe, several Danish political institutions, technological conferences, hackathons and more than a hundred schools. Christian is a Master of Arts from Aarhus University, and is currently employed at the Danish NGO Center for Digital Youth Care.

## ***Upholding human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers***



**Moderator: Ljiljana Loncar** is a lawyer by training, and has extensive experience in human and minority rights, antidiscrimination rights and gender issues. Her most relevant experience includes working with the Serbian Protector of Citizens and the Commissioner for Protection of Equality as an Assistant to the Commissioner. Currently she is working as a Special Adviser on Gender Equality to the Deputy Prime Minister and the President of the Coordination Body for Gender Equality. Ljiljana has been working with a broad range of international organisations on various projects concerning gender, human and minority rights, antidiscrimination and social inclusion, such as UN WOMEN, USAID, Council of Europe, GIZ, OSCE, FAO, etc. The issues that she has worked on most recently include the Gender Equality Law, the inequality of rural women, social inclusion issues, gender based violence, etc. She also has international experience gained by working in Australia for almost 15 years, especially with the Australian Department for Education, Science and Training that dealt also with indigenous issues. Recently, Ljiljana has completed the UN WOMEN specialisation on Gender Responsive Budgeting and is currently completing a Master's Degree in Gender Equality. She is fluent in Serbian and English.



**Sodfa Daaji** is a pan African feminist. She started her activism when she was 16 years old, and following Tunisia's revolution she has been widely speaking about freedom of speech and religion. She has become an international speaker and represented North African women living in western societies on different platforms.



**Heidi Hautala** is a Vice-President of the European Parliament and a former Minister for International Development and State Ownership Steering of Finland. Currently Heidi is a member of the Development committee and the International Trade committee. Throughout her career, she has focused on human rights, transparency and responsible business. She recently established a cross-party working group on Responsible Business Conduct at the European Parliament. In 2009-2011, Heidi chaired the European Parliament Subcommittee on Human Rights. Heidi has

experience from many development organisations: in 2009, she chaired DEMO, an organisation for Political Parties of Finland for Democracy, supporting multi-party democracy in new and developing democracies. In 2002-2007, Heidi was the chairperson of KEPA, the Service Centre for Development Cooperation, an umbrella organisation of Finnish NGOs. She has for many years been active in organizations promoting direct democracy, e.g. Initiative and Referendum Europe. Heidi is also a member of the Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly, and a substitute member in Committee on Budgets and Committee on Legal Affairs. She is also a former co-President of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly. In addition to the ongoing parliamentary term, she was also an MEP during the years 1995-2003 and 2009-2011. She was previously a Member of the Finnish Parliament and the presidential candidate for the Finnish Green Party in 2000 and 2006.



Advocate for human rights and gender Equality, **Salome Mbugua** is the founder and president of AkiDwA-The migrant women's network in Ireland. She is the head of mission with Wezesha-Africa Diaspora-led development Organization. Salome has been involved in development of several policies and strategies with various Irish government departments and units on migrants integration that include, Department of Justice and Equality, Department on development of policy on sexual harassment and GBV on women seeking asylum, Department of Foreign Affairs on the national action plan on Women Peace and Security, Resolution 1325 and the Health Services Executive on intercultural health strategy. Salome has served at various advisory board, expert groups and boards at European level and in Ireland. She is the chair of European network of migrant women and is a board member of the European Women Lobby. Recently appointed commissioner for Irish Human Right and Equality Salome is a former board member of Equality Authority, state board in Ireland and vice chair of National Women Council of Ireland. Salome holds a Master degree in Equality studies from University College Dublin and is currently undertaking a doctorate research on integrating women in peace building at Trinity College Dublin.



**Nathalie Schlenzka** is Deputy Head of the research division of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA), where she is working since 2011. She is expert for gender, intersectional discrimination as well as equality data. Furthermore she is co-moderation of the gender working group of the European Network of equality bodies (EQUINET). Previously, she has been working for more than ten years as a researcher at the European Migration Centre where she specialised in vulnerable groups such as refugee women, unaccompanied minors or marriage migration. Nathalie Schlenzka holds a Master Degree in Political Science from the Free University Berlin.



## *The Way Ahead*



**Moderator: Eva Fehringer** is Deputy Director of the Department of International and EU Labour Law, Equality and Anti-Discrimination in the Federal, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria. She is Chair of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe and has over 20 years of experience in the field of gender equality. Dr Fehringer holds a doctorate in Law and has vast experience in the area of labour and human rights, policy making and negotiations within the EU, the Council of Europe, ILO, UN and OECD. She is also a member of the European Pensions Forum, of the EU High Level Group on Social Responsibility, and is the Chair of the Working Group on Fighting Human

Trafficking for Labour Exploitation.



**Romain Sabathier:** Having been an active citizen from an early age, Romain first held various positions in the voluntary sector, trade unions and politics. Following studies in France and Norway, he holds a double master's in political science and gender studies. From 2009 to 2013, he worked for MP Danielle Bousquet at the French National Assembly, in particular on gender & regional equality issues. He was Secretary-General of French High Council for Gender Equality (HCE), since the body was set up by presidential decree in 2013 until December 2016. This independent national advisory body has four main tasks: ensuring dialogue, evaluating

public policies, making recommendations and raising awareness by disseminating know-how and stimulating public debate. From 2013 to 2015, on the basis of nine ministerial requests and several initiatives of its own, the HCE issued 7 reports and 10 opinions. In 2017, Romain co-founded INTERSECTIONS Agency: consulting and training to think and do the gender equality. He is currently working with public organizations at local level in France, and at national level in Latin America within EUROsociAL (an EU programme aiming at consolidating cooperation between Latin America and the EU on policy dialogue related to social cohesion, including gender equality policies). He lives between France and New York City.



**Marja Ruotanen's** responsibilities as Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Sport Values within the Directorate General of Democracy cover Violence against Women, Trafficking in Human Beings, Gender Equality, Rights of persons with disabilities, Children's Rights, as well as Sport. Marja Ruotanen joined the Council of Europe in 1990 and has held several positions, including Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General, and recently Director of Justice and Human Dignity within the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law. She has served as Secretary to various Parliamentary Assembly Committees, notably the Political Affairs Committee, Committee on

Migration, Refugees and Population and the Committee on Gender Equality. She was born in Rovaniemi, Finland and studied International Relations (political science and law) at McGill University in Montreal (Canada).



**Kira Appel** is Deputy Head of Department at the Gender Equality Department and Chief Advisor to the Minister for Equal Opportunities in Denmark, and has been working with gender equality issues in ten different ministries over the last 20 years. Kira's areas of expertise are governmental gender equality policy-making, including combating violence in close relations, trafficking in human beings, gender roles and breaking down of gender stereotypes, the gender segregated educational system and labour market, gender mainstreaming, men and gender equality, as well as international negotiations on gender equality. Kira is a Board member and member of the Standing Committee in the European Institute for Gender Equality, a member of the Board of the Nordic Council of Ministers gender equality executive committee, Denmark's representative

to the EU/High Level Group, the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the Danish representative on the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe.