



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.



## IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians

### *Advancing parity: Breaking the barriers of gender stereotypes and negative social norms*

2 to 4 June 2026, Belgrade, Serbia

#### **Background note on the breakout group sessions**

Four breakout groups will take place simultaneously during **Sessions 3 and 7** of the Conference. Participants are invited to register for **one group per session**. Each group can accommodate approximately 50 participants.

Participants are kindly requested to **indicate their first and second choice of breakout group for each session by 31 May 2026 the latest at the following [link](#)**.

Every effort will be made to accommodate participants' preferences. If no selection is received by the deadline, participants will be assigned to groups, taking into account working language and the need to ensure balanced group sizes.

Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Arabic, English, French, Serbian and Spanish in all groups. In addition, Group 1 of both sessions (which will be held in the Main Congress Hall) will have interpretation in Chinese, Japanese and Russian, as provided by the relevant delegations.

In each group, participants will learn about the topic under consideration, share their views and experiences, and identify ways forward to address stereotypes and negative social norms limiting women's political participation.

Each group will designate a rapporteur who will report back to the Conference plenary.

**Session 3**  
**Working together against stereotypes and negative norms**  
**Tuesday, 2 June 2026**  
**16:15-17:30**

The breakout groups will be led by organizations that work towards advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, including jointly with the IPU.

**Group 1: Engaging men and boys against stereotypes and negative social norms**  
***Facilitated by OSCE/ODIHR and the MenEngage Alliance***  
**Location: Main Congress Hall**

This breakout group will explore how gender stereotypes, informal networks and parliamentary cultures continue to shape who leads in parliament and what enables male MPs to move from passive support to active allyship for gender parity. Through honest exchanges and shared reflection, participants will identify practical actions to make parliamentary culture and leadership more inclusive and consider their own role in driving that change.

**Group 2: Advancing equality in the law to address stereotypes and negative social norms**  
***Facilitated by UN Women, Equality Now and the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights***  
**Location: Hall 9**

This breakout group will focus on the advancement of equality in the law to address stereotypes and negative social norms, countering the backlash on women's rights, and thereby contributing to gender equality and women's equal citizenship. Inspiring women impacted by discriminatory laws and who have contributed to reform efforts will share their strategies with parliamentarians, including in relation to gender-based violence, nationality rights and economic empowerment. Participants will be invited to share reform efforts in their countries, to indicate where they might need support to advance these efforts and to discuss innovative ways to secure legal equality with a view to addressing stereotypes and negative social norms, including through multi-pronged, evidence-based approaches to achieving legislative wins.

**Group 3: Combatting stereotypes in line with the CEDAW Convention**  
***Facilitated by the IPU and the CEDAW Committee***  
**Location: Hall 11**

This breakout group will explore how the CEDAW Convention can support parliamentary action to challenge and dismantle gender stereotypes that limit women's political participation and leadership. Participants will examine how such stereotypes influence women's access to, retention in and advancement within decision-making roles, and discuss practical ways parliaments can respond through legislation, oversight and institutional change in line with CEDAW principles.

**Group 4: Combatting sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament**  
***Facilitated by the IPU***  
**Location: Hall 13**

This breakout group will serve to pilot a practical training exercise on combating sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament. The training is designed to deepen understanding of violence against women in politics, including its root causes, forms and consequences. It will also explore how parliamentarians can respond to such violence through individual and institutional measures, and how stronger parliamentary cultures that ensure safety, dignity and equal participation can be developed.

**Session 7**  
**The Women and Youth Democratic Engagement (WYDE) initiative: Supporting women's political participation and combatting stereotypes and negative norms**  
**Wednesday, 3 June 2026**  
**15:30-16:45**

The four groups will be led by the IPU and some of its partners in the European Union funded WYDE / Women's Political Participation initiative.

**Group 1: Intergenerational cooperation challenging stereotypes and negative social norms**  
***Facilitated by UN Women***  
**Location: Main Congress Hall**

This breakout group will explore how age and gender-related negative social norms shape political participation and leadership opportunities in parliament. Through discussion and shared reflection, participants will develop recommendations on how intergenerational engagement can help parliaments challenge negative social norms, strengthen solidarity and mentorship across generations, and build more inclusive and representative political institutions.

**Group 2: Men and women working together against stereotypes and negative social norms**  
***Facilitated by International IDEA***  
**Location: Hall 9**

This breakout group will bring participants together to reflect on how women and men parliamentarians can work collectively to transform negative social norms hindering women's political participation. Through discussions and sharing of experience, participants will explore how male MPs can move towards active allyship by promoting inclusive leadership, challenging discriminatory norms and behaviours, and supporting concrete action to advance gender equality within parliaments.

**Group 3: Combatting sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament**  
***Facilitated by the IPU***  
**Location: Hall 11**

This breakout group will serve to pilot a practical training exercise on combating sexism, harassment, and violence against women in parliament. The training is designed to deepen understanding of violence against women in politics, including its root causes, forms and consequences. It will also explore how parliamentarians can respond to such violence through individual and institutional measures, and how stronger parliamentary cultures that ensure safety, dignity and equal participation can be developed.

**Group 4: Training on combatting social norms limiting women's participation in parliament**  
***Facilitated by the IPU***  
**Location: Hall 13**

This breakout group will offer participants a sample training on combatting social norms that limit women's participation in parliament. Through interactive exercises participants will learn how to identify and name harmful social norms and reflect on the role MPs can play in addressing them. The session will explore concrete actions that parliamentarians can take individually, collectively and institutionally to address negative social norms and advance more inclusive and gender-responsive parliaments.

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