

FORWARD Conference: Fostering Knowledge and Action for the Rights of Older Women

 Friday, 28th November 2025

 09:30 a.m – 2 p.m (CET)

 Conference Hall, Faculty of Economics and Business – University of Barcelona

Programme

09:30 – 09:40 | Institutional Opening

- Representative of the University of Barcelona – host institution (TBC)
- Representative Department for Equality and Feminisms of the Government of Catalonia (TBC)
- Mr. Pedro M. Cano, Director General for Older Persons, Government of Catalonia.

09:50 – 09:45 | Tribute to Miss Elizabeth Sclater

The FORWARD conference and the policy brief are dedicated to the memory of Miss Elizabeth Sclater (1946–2024), a key figure in advancing the rights of older women, both through her professional practice as a social worker and through her advocacy for the human rights of older women at the European and international levels. With a professional career spanning over four decades — including her role as Equal Opportunities Officer for older people in the London Borough of Lewisham — she was a co-founder of OWN Europe, promoted pioneering work on gender and age, and played a decisive role in monitoring CEDAW and advancing the agenda for a United Nations Convention on the Rights of Older Persons, among other contributions. In 2019 she was awarded the *Officers of the British Empire* (OBE) for her services to older women. Her legacy continues to inspire the international movement for the rights of older women.

09:50 – 10:10 | Opening Keynote speech

Dr. Claudia Mahler, United Nations Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons. Team leader on older persons human rights at the German Institute for Human Rights.

10:10 – 11:10 Panel 1 - Human Rights and Public Responsibility in Addressing Gender-Based Violence Against Older Women

Frame GBV older women within the international human rights and due diligence framework, ensuring effective protection of their rights.

Speakers:

- Anne-Sophie Parent (OWN Europe) - joining remotely
- Nena Gerogantzi (AGE Platform Europe)
- Bridget Penhale (University of East Anglia / INPEA / OWN Europe)
- Laia Rosich i Solé (independent expert, former Director-General for the Eradication of Gender-Based Violence, Government of Catalonia)

Moderator: Neus Pociello Cayuela (Aroa Foundation)

11:10 – 11:30 | Coffee break and networking

11:30 – 12:30 Panel 2 - Overlooked GBV and Emerging Knowledge: Feminist Contributions to Uphold Older Women's Rights

Sharing data and knowledge produced within academia and through the situated knowledge of feminist organisations, with the aim of making visible gender-based violence against older women and bringing to light its most hidden manifestations.

Speakers:

- Mònica Ramos Toro (UNATE) – academic research and situated feminist knowledge.
- Maria Petkova (Tulip Foundation / OWN Europe) – research on professional practices and from the perspective of care.
- Sonia Ibañez (independent expert)- intersection of dependency and disabilities.
- Eva Cruells (ALIA) – digital gender-based violence

Moderator: Núria Vergés Bosch (COPOLIS Research Group – University of Barcelona)

12:30 – 13:30 | Panel 3 – Good Practices and Transformative Strategies

Presenting local, national, and European experiences that have fostered tangible progress in awareness-raising, institutional coordination, and policy advocacy.

Speakers:

- Arantza Núñez (AGINTZARI) – community-based work and prevention
- Beatriu Masià (Therapist specialised in the response to gender-based violence) – counselling for older women experiencing gender-based violence
- Bombo N'Dir (Association of Sub-Saharan Immigrant Women – ADIS) – community-based work with older migrant women.
- Paulina Blanco (Fundació Enllaç) – support and visibility for older LBTIQ+ women
- Janet Stevenson (OWN-EU) - justice system to ensure protection and access to rights.

Moderator: Anna Morero, University of Barcelona

13:30 – 13:55 | Presentation of the Policy Brief “A life free from gender-based violence at all ages: policy recommendations to uphold the rights of older women”

Presentation of the recommendations and advocacy strategies led by civil society, together with a roadmap for advancing the rights of older women in the current context.

- **Policybrief, strategies and roadmap:** Neus Pociello i Cayuela, Aroa Foundation)
- **POWER presentation:** Catarina Alves (Project Manager – ABD)

13:55 – 14h | Closing remarks and acknowledgements – Aroa Foundation and COPOLIS