

# Speakers



## Kristin Engh Førde

Director of Kilden

Kristin Engh Førde is the director of Kilden [genderresearch.no](http://genderresearch.no). She has a doctoral degree in medical anthropology and has both researched and taught on the subject of gender. Førde is a former postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Gender Research at the University of Oslo and has experience as a researcher at the Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies.



## Aksel Kjær Vidnes

Conference Host

Aksel Kjær Vidnes is a journalist and the editor-in-chief/executive director of [forskning.no](http://forskning.no). In 2009, he was the editor of the student newspaper Universitas. He is a trained journalist from the University of Queensland and a sociologist from the University of Oslo. Aksel is also a member of the advisory board for Kilden [genderresearch.no](http://genderresearch.no).



## Mona Eltahawy

Keynote

Mona Eltahawy is an award-winning Egyptian-American feminist, author, and activist, known for her critique of patriarchy in both the Middle East and the West. Through books like *Headscarves and Hymens*, she challenges religious and cultural norms, arguing for a social and sexual revolution as necessary for women's liberation.

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## Anne Hellum

### Presentation/Talk

Anne Hellum is a professor emerita at the Department of Public and International Law at the University of Oslo. She has been the head of the Department of Women's Law and has contributed to the development of Legal Counselling for Women (JURK), the Women's Law program at the University of Oslo, and women's law studies in Zimbabwe and at the University of Peshawar. Hellum's work spans across women's law, family law, human rights, legal anthropology, development law, and African law.



## Tina Askanius

### Keynote

Tina Askanius is a professor of media and communication studies and co-director of the Imagining and Co-Creating Futures research centre at Malmö University. She is also an affiliated researcher at Södertörn University, studying networked misogyny. Her work focuses on online activism and far-right extremism, particularly female-fronted misogyny and anti-rights movements in digital ecosystems.



## Åsmund Grøver Aukrust

Åsmund Aukrust was appointed Minister of International Development in February 2025. He is a Member of Parliament representing the constituency of Akershus. Before his appointment as minister, Aukrust served as the First Vice Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence and was a member of the European Committee. In 2011, he was a political advisor in the Ministry of Culture. Aukrust is a passionate advocate for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

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## Marie Hulthin

### Researcher relay

Marie Hulthin is a PhD fellow at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR). In her work, she explores the significance of state reporting under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) for the formulation of gender equality policies and protection against discrimination in a Nordic context. Marie previously worked at Kilden. She has also served as the committee secretary for the Women's Health Committee.



## Jørn Holm-Hansen

### Researcher relay

Jørn Holm-Hansen is a Dr. Polit., political scientist, and Researcher I. His academic specialty is politics and public administration in Eastern and Central European countries, particularly Russia, Ukraine, and Poland. Within commissioned research, Holm-Hansen is frequently used as an expert, mainly of development aid and democracy support.



## Torunn Tryggestad

### Researcher relay

Torunn Tryggestad is a Norwegian political scientist and researcher, best known for her work on gender, peace, and security, and issues related to the UN in general and Security Council Resolution 1325 in particular. She is the deputy director at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and director of PRIO's Centre on Gender, Peace and Security. Additionally, she is a member of the Afghanistan Commission, tasked with assessing Norway's engagement in the country from 2015 to 2021.

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## Haley McEwen

Researcher relay

Haley McEwen is an American researcher and author. She has written about how transnational "anti-gender" and "pro-family" movements affect democracy, human rights, and development. Beyond academia, she collaborates with organizations like the UN and civil society to translate research into strategies that strengthen LGBTIQ+ justice and democratic resilience.



## Salma Nims

Dr. Salma Nims is a recognized Jordanian expert on gender equality and the women, peace, and security agenda. She led the development of Jordan's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which is recognized by the UN. She is the former Secretary General of the Jordanian National Commission for Women and has received awards for her work.



## Sidsel Bleken

Panel discussion

Sidsel Bleken is a Norwegian diplomat with extensive experience from the Foreign Service. She is Norway's Ambassador for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a position she has held since 2020. Bleken has been with the Foreign Service since 1999. She has served as Counsellor at the embassy in Warsaw and as Ambassador in Dhaka, Bangladesh. She has also held several senior positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo.

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## Khansa Ali

### Panel discussion

Khansa Ali is the director of the MiRA Centre, a resource center for women with minority backgrounds. She was born and raised in Oslo and has a Pakistani background. Ali has a long history with the MiRA Centre, where she previously served as the deputy leader.



## Ask Stenseth-Kilstad

### Youth Speech relay

Ask Stenseth Kilstad has studied political science at the University of Oslo, and currently works as the 1st Deputy Chairperson in Press - Save the Children Youth. He has previously been the deputy chairperson of Queer Youth and has experience with volunteer work from the Socialist Youth and Nature and Youth. His key issues are child participation in political decision-making processes, queer liberation, and the rights of transgender children.



## Maria Lie Jordheim

### Youth Speech relay

Maria Lie Jordheim is the former vice president of the Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund (SAIH). Jordheim has previously been an intern at the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution and involved in the UN Students. She is also a youth delegate for the European Law Students Association and a youth delegate for gender equality, and participated in the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), where she worked to promote women's rights internationally.

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## Nora hager

Youth Speech relay

Nora Hager is the international officer at the National Union of Students in Norway (NSO). She studies at the University of Oslo. Hager wants to strengthen NSO's solidarity work and mobilize students for demonstrations on issues such as increased student grants and more student housing. She has experience from the University Board at UiO and the Welfare Council in Oslo and Akershus.



## Solveig Hagen Strand

Youth Speech relay

Solveig is the chairperson of the Norwegian Women's Lobby and is in the final year of a master's degree in sociology at the University of Oslo, where she is writing about women in manual and traditionally male-dominated professions. In addition, she works as a project secretary for the Ottar Women's Group.



## Patrick Habiambere

Youth Speech relay

Patrick Habiambere is part of the wave of young anti-racists who seek social justice through means such as volunteerism, art, and lobbying. Patrick has roots from Rwanda and he likes to break with social constructs and people's perception of the truth, patriarchal structures, and racialization. He thrives on being a clear voice behind the scenes to give others the opportunity to shine, whether it is in volunteering, youth politics, or on the stage.