Who we are

The International Institute for Youth Development PETRI– Sofia is a knowledge hub and regional resource center at the National Center of Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA), Bulgaria, that supports youth empowerment in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender equality and peacebuilding in the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia and beyond.

Established in 2007, as a joint initiative of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, NCPHA and the Y-PEER International Network, PETRI – Sofia has over 9 years of experience working on peer education standardization, youth leadership, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), youth-adult partnership, research, monitoring and evaluation, training and information sharing in the field of HIV prevention and SRHR of young people.
WHO WE ARE
PETRI – Sofia envisions a world, where every adolescent and young person is an empowered changemaker contributing to sustainable development.

Our mission is to inspire and support adolescents and young people to become leaders that work for SRHR, gender equality and peacebuilding, through international cooperation and innovative approaches.
Role of PETRI – Sofia

PETRI – Sofia is an implementing partner of the UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia in capacity building and research and is helping to improve the access of young people to SRHR education and services with a special focus on addressing the needs of vulnerable/underprivileged young people and young key populations.

PETRI – Sofia together with the newly-established International Center for Youth Development in National Center for Culture and Arts (NCCA) in Amman and Y-PEER Center Asia Pacific serve as a Secretariat for the international Y-PEER network and provide institutional and technical support for the Network activities.
PETRI Team

The professional PETRI team members all together bring on board psychological, public health and theater-based training and research expertise, more than 45 years of experience in the areas of health promotion and health education, young people development, SRHR and HIV prevention among mainstream and vulnerable youth, one CSE programme package for school teachers, more than 3,000 professionals and peer educators trained, 8 international and more than 20 national surveys, more than 180 peer trainers and fellows supervised and mentored.

Our fellows and the Y-PEER International Coordinators in charge come up with new ideas, creativity, and innovative ways in tackling big problems. They are highly skilled and motivated young activists and volunteers, coming from different countries and having the opportunity to work in a professional and multicultural environment.

Meet the PETRI team at:
http://petri.ncpha.government.bg
Our partners

Ministry of Health, Bulgaria is the political body, supporting the establishment and guaranteeing the sustainability of PETRI – Sofia. The Department “Sustainable Donor Program Management” and the National Program “HIV/AIDS and STIs Prevention and Control” supports the activities of the Institute especially in the area of monitoring and evaluation.

National Center of Public Health and Analyses is an expert and consultative body within the Ministry of Health, Bulgaria, which assists MoH and other governmental bodies, municipal authorities and NGOs in the field of public and environmental health and information for healthcare system. NCPHA implements applied research activities, training and capacity building in health care, educational system etc. NCPHA is involved in international cooperation with EU, UNFPA, WHO, NATO, UNDP, FAO, UNICEF etc.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) implements the state policy of the Republic of Bulgaria with other countries and international organizations and develops bilateral and multinational relations, security policy and regional cooperation. MFA has supported PETRI – Sofia since 2015 through medium-term programmes for development assistance and the provision of humanitarian aid, 2013-2015 and 2016-2019.

Youth Peer Education Network (Y-PEER) is youth to youth peer education initiative pioneered by UNFPA uniting thousands of young people working on adolescent SRH and youth participation all over the world (in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Arab States, East Africa, South America and Asia Pacific).

UNFPA (the United Nations Population Fund) is an international development agency that supports countries in using population data for programs to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.
PETRI International Fellowship Program

A unique feature of PETRI’s portfolio is its International fellowship program for young activists. PETRI – Sofia provides space for emerging youth leaders and innovative thinkers from Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries and the Arab States participation in creating solutions and contributes to their personal and professional development. For six months they have grown as youth leaders and changed lives of other young people with passion and skills, built upon a strong and effective youth-adult partnership. After their time at PETRI, our fellows stay connected to the Institute, and to each other.
Achievements

- Recognized brand, guaranteeing high-quality trainings, youth leadership opportunities and research.
- Organized study tours and welcome national delegations (e.g., from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Moldova, Vietnam, Kazakhstan).
- Signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Two grants awarded in 2015 and 2016 within the Bulgarian Mid-Term Programme for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance.
- Engaged in ICPDb2014 review processes and discussions on Post-2015 development agenda.
- Regional needs assessments and desk reviews conducted.
- Served as a model for development of other regional centers for Y-PEER support.
- More than 800 youth leaders and professionals participated in training programmes.
- Thousands of mainstream youth and members of key populations reached by education and services provided by PETRI trainees.
Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building

- Capacity building activities and trainings for young leaders and activists, peer educators, and managers of youth-led organizations.
- International fellowship programme and platform for volunteering and youth professional growth.
- Knowledge sharing platform on young people’s empowerment in the area of SRHR.
- Documentation and dissemination of regional and national best practices.
- Acting as a “broker”, linking the needs of young people to the know-how of networks of trainers, experts, researchers and collaborators.
- Technical assistance in planning of national and regional programmes on adolescents and youth SRHR and CSE.
- Development of new education programmes, methods, manuals and guides, using innovative approaches based on the identified needs.
- Initiation of distance learning trainings and e-learning center.
- Maintenance the PETRI team’s capacity at the cutting edge.
PETRI Trainings

- Peer Education Training of Trainers (TOT) in the Area of SRHR
- Advanced TOT in the Area of SRHR
- HIV Community Outreach Prevention for Vulnerable Youth and Young Key Populations
- Design of Advocacy Projects
- Theater-Based Techniques for Peer Education
- Leadership Skills
- Project Development and Management
- Advocacy for SRHR of Young People
- Fundraising and Resource Mobilization
- Peacebuilding
- Gender Equality
Research and Innovation

- Needs assessments and surveys, initiate and participate in collaborative regional researches and analyses.
- Desk reviews of existing publications, global, regional and national reports, online journals, databases and electronic resources.
- Use and promote innovative approaches and tools for data collection and visualization.
- Ensure access to research-based information and data for policy makers, advocates and other key partners.
- Develop publications along with partners, envisioning possibilities of joint reports on young people’s situation in EECA region.
- Establish working partnerships and cooperation with other regional and international research organizations.
Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality Assurance

- Promote the national adherence to the peer education standards, developed by the International Y-PEER Network.
- Assist youth leaders and partners in conducting monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Backing a web-based system for monitoring and evaluation of the work of the International Y-PEER network.
- Participate in review and reporting on the implementation of SDGs in youth-related areas.
Evidence Based Policy Development and Technical Assistance

- Facilitate provision of technical assistance for policy formulation and implementation.
- Promote youth participation by creating opportunities to engage young people in policy design.
- Organize workshops and trainings for policy makers and researchers in collaboration with other partners.
- Support the monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs.
- Develop recommendations, based on pilot studies/projects and lessons learnt.
Networking, Partnerships and Advocacy

- Mapping of partners, events and activities with potential for advocacy and networking.
- Reinforce collaboration between governments, CSO, academia and media.
- Engage into regional and global policy dialogue on youth development.
- Ensure visibility of adolescents and youth SRHR issues via media and internet-based platforms.
- Strengthen the partnerships between youth networks in the region and encourage the interaction of young people globally.
- Support advocacy activities of youth networks and organizations.
- Provide evidence-informed advocacy tools to catalyze governments’ commitments and actions.
- Engage vulnerable youth and young key populations in advocacy efforts in the EECA region and beyond.
Resource Mobilization

- Assist young people and partners in local, national and international resource mobilization efforts.
- Identify new partners and support the development of the existing network of the Institute.
- Donors mapping and scanning funding opportunities.
- Assist Y-PEER and the other youth networks in the EECA Region in development of resource mobilization strategies.
“Being a PETRI fellow was an eye-opening experience for me.”

Jelena Pavlovic, Serbia, PETRI fellow, June-October 2008

“Now I would say my greatest achievement was the self-confidence, leadership skills and empowerment gained during the fellowship period. I felt I contributed a lot with the knowledge and skills I had but I also learned a lot, I gained new ones and I identified a path I want to follow. I had the trust and support of a great team and I learned what youth-adult partnership really means and this is something I still value to this day.”

Ana Rizescu, Romania, former Y-PEER International Coordinator, October 2008-January 2009

“Experience in PETRI is a life changing experience with global taste and Y-PEER energy.”

Mohamed Esameldin Refaat, Egypt, PETRI fellow, December 2015-February 2016

“Staying in Sofia opened a new door in my life, and I saw a wonderful, friendly and adventurous atmosphere there. I felt the power of international initiatives because PETRI and Y-PEER connect various cultures and people to each other, but all of us unite for one same goal. This is the main lesson which I have learned: that the power of unity is the most productive and influential.”

Ana Mosiashvili, Georgia, PETRI fellow, April-July 2016