

OBJECTIVE 02

To promote human rights and democracy, involving citizens in policy dialogue, design and monitoring

CESAREAN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

BIRTH FORWARD



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Translation of the Birth Forwards' website into Greek and Turkish.

From November 2017 to January 2018: production and publication of six video interviews of the "Birth Forward Live" with experts from around the world, with subtitles in Greek and Turkish.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Cyprus to form a national committee on natural birth.

Stakeholders mapping and creation of a database.

ABOUT BIRTH FORWARD

Birth Forward stands as an ambassador for parents wishing to make autonomous choices about their own and their family's welfare throughout the full cycle of creating a family. The organisation aims to provide advocacy, support and education for families and professionals in regard to the various stages of planning, creating and growing a family in Cyprus.

STORY OF THE ACTION

Birth Forward has been informing and supporting expecting mothers, highlighting that women have been delivering babies naturally for millennia, and underlining the many unknown benefits of a natural, unmedicated birth.

According to Birth Forward, Cyprus has one of the highest rates of cesarean birth worldwide, highlighting the need to address the subject in the political agenda. Through the action, they aimed to inform people about their rights to a natural birth, make information and local services more accessible, support families to access and demand the needed facilities and have better health outcomes.



"We wanted to raise awareness about the subject of cesarean birth, as Cyprus has one of the highest rate of cesarean birth worldwide. Putting it on the political agenda will hopefully bring it to the attention of the policymakers, which has not been the case until now. We also aimed to have an island-wide awareness-raising campaign so we could reach out to Turkish speaking volunteers to form a more solid base of volunteers from both communities."

Ioli Orphanides



Through the action, Birth Forward has translated its English website into Turkish and Greek and made six video interviews with experts from around the world that had subtitles in both languages. The organization also developed an island-wide stakeholders' database in order to increase its outreach during the cesarean awareness campaign that aimed at impacting the quality of services provided to birthing mothers and to encourage more midwife-led births.



"Using a midwife-led model in births has been proven to reduce the number of interventions, improve the overall birth experience and reduce prematurely born babies and cesarean sections. We aimed to highlight the matter to the wider public, which remains largely unaware of their options during childbirth. Women who are pregnant for the second time and had a cesarean for their first birth, have also been informed of the possibility to opt for a vaginal birth after cesarean through the information on the website, the interviews and the video that were widely disseminated. We could also see an increase in educational services being offered by the institutions on birthing, as well as an increase of pregnant couples coming to existing classes."

Ioli Orphanides



Photo Credit: "Birth Forward Live" video



The campaign enabled Birth Forward to act as a focal point where people could access information and support on the subject of birth. Throughout the action, they have received many individual requests from all over the island and have supported them in finding the right services or in self-advocating for their rights regarding the services they were already using.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The action was focused on promoting human rights and democracy, including citizens' involvement in policy dialogue, design, and monitoring. The campaign triggered a discussion within the parliament health committee of the Republic of Cyprus, where Birth Forward representatives were heard for the first time. Another important aspect of the action was to bring public and private health professionals, as well as parents, together around the subject of birth for the first time.

Through the action, Birth Forward reached out to more Turkish speaking volunteers and formed a more solid base of volunteers from both communities. By also targeting an island-wide campaign, they effectively represented the Turkish Cypriot community. They have built up a diverse bi-communal scientific advisory board, including most of the academic researchers around the island. The caesarean campaign fully contributed to strengthen their roles.

Photo Credit: "Birth Forward Live" video



WHAT'S NEXT?

The Birth Forward team will make the informative and evidence-based material from the campaign available online. They are also planning to add more videos to their platform. They would like to add an after-birth webapp in Greek, Turkish, English, Russian and Arabic to support parents who just had a baby.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

birthforward
 www.birthforward.com



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