

International Executive Board

Diego Trolese

Chairperson Professional Commission

Chair-PC@ieb-ipa.org

To All National Sections

Date: 12 January 2026

Subject: #SHEisIPA Empowering Female Leaders in the IPA and Beyond – April 2026

Dear Friends,

As Chairperson of the International Professional Commission (PC) of the International Police Association (IPA), I am delighted to invite each section to nominate a suitable person to attend a seminar at IBZ Gimborn.

This seminar is titled “**Empowering Female Leaders in the IPA and Beyond**”. It is part of an ongoing and exciting project within the Professional Commission. My objective through this project is to:

- increase the visibility of women within IPA
- make IPA visible to women in the wider policing family
- provide professionally relevant seminars to support female leaders in policing and the IPA

To this end, my team is conducting events and activities online and in person. This seminar is a fantastic opportunity for all sections to be involved in my vision for the future of IPA and builds on the previous successful #SHEisIPA seminars held in 2025. This seminar will take place from the **12th to the 17th April 2026**.

The programme is attached. Completed registration forms should be received by the IAC on or before **Friday 13th March 2026**. One delegate per section. Seminar capacity is 25 delegates

The cost (including accommodation and food) is €200 per person (plus flights). I look forward to meeting your nominee in IBZ Gimborn.

Servo Per Amikeco

Diego Trolese

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diego Trolese', with a stylized, cursive script.

CHAIRPERSON PC

Seminar Programme

Seminar-Nr. 26 | 06

SHEisIPA **Empowering Female Leaders – in the IPA and Beyond**

12.04. 2026 – 17.04.2026



Das IBZ Schloss Gimborn ist Mitglied der

Content

The #SHEisIPA team are delighted to deliver the 'Empowering Female Leaders - in the IPA and Beyond' seminar, which will focus on the role of 'leadership' from both an International Police Association, academic and practitioner perspective, with contributions from leadership professionals across the world.

Target group:

Women who are already in leadership positions or want to become leaders, whether in law enforcement or in the IPA; those who want to work on their own professional development.

Objectives of the event:

At the end of this seminar, you will feel confident enough to apply for the position you want to have.

- You will understand different leadership styles and applications in the workplace
- You will be aware of current academic research which helps shape the way leadership roles are undertaken
- You will learn soft skills about personal presence and confidence
- You will understand the basics about how the IPA is structured and the leadership roles within it.

Besides interesting and professionally relevant presentations provided by experienced leaders, the seminar will have practical exercises to enable you to work with colleagues to improve skills. The seminar program will include current topics like the New Work concept, mental health, Inclusive Leadership, and digital leadership. After every input there will be a practical workshop.

Seminar Chair: Karen Duckworth, President IPA UK, #SHEisIPA PROJECT. Project Lead -

IEB subsidised fee for first delegate nominated by National Board – **119 euros**.

Additional delegates from a Section: IPA Members 369 €

For further information regarding the seminar, and the terms and conditions please visit our website:
www.ibz-gimborn.de

International President



Martin Hoffmann began his career at the age of 15 as an apprentice police officer in Vienna. After 16 years of service with the Vienna Police, he transitioned to the Austrian prison system, where he has made significant contributions over the years.

Current Professional Role:

Martin currently serves as the Head of the Department of Basic Education at the Austrian Prison Service Academy, holding the rank of Colonel. In this capacity, he is responsible for overseeing the foundational training and education of new recruits, as well as the ongoing training and development of the entire prison staff within the Austrian prison system.

International Police Association (IPA) Involvement:

Martin has been an active member of the International Police Association (IPA) for over 37 years. His extensive involvement within the IPA has seen him serve in various key roles, including International Treasurer for Social Affairs, President of the IPA Austria Section, General Secretary of the IPA Austria Section, and Head of the Krems/Wachau-Horn-Zwettl Branch. In 2023, Martin was elected as the International President of the IPA, a position he will hold until 2027.

Under Martin's leadership, the IPA Strategy for 2024-2027 focuses on several key areas:

Growth and Inclusivity: The strategy aims to significantly increase IPA membership across existing sections and expand into new countries. A new Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Adviser will be appointed to ensure a welcoming environment for all members.

Professional Development: The IPA will enhance its educational offerings, expanding beyond the Gimborn seminars and incorporating online and hybrid learning opportunities. Collaborations with police HR departments will be sought to officially recognise IPA training.

Sustainability: The IPA is committed to integrating sustainable practices into its operations, including environmental projects such as tree planting and promoting eco-friendly initiatives.

International Collaboration: Efforts will be strengthened to enhance cooperation with international organisations such as the United Nations, Council of Europe, Interpol, and Europol, aiming to increase the IPA's global influence.

Technological Advancement: The strategy includes the development of modern tools and platforms, such as a mobile app, to improve member connectivity and operational efficiency.

Marketing and Promotion: A global marketing team will be established to promote the IPA brand, focusing on social media, digital content, and international visibility.

This strategy reflects a commitment to evolving, adapting, and growing the IPA, ensuring it remains at the forefront of international law enforcement collaboration.

Meet the Presenters



Karen Duckworth President Section UK; Professional Commission Project Lead – SHEisIPA

Karen joined the Metropolitan Police Service in 1988 and went on to have a 31-year career across a range of operational uniform responsibilities.

As a keen sportswomen and public order trained officer, major events provided a natural policing home for Karen over a number of years, during which time she oversee the police planning for, and was part of the strategic command team for international rugby events at the Rugby Football Unions stadium in Twickenham, as well as part of the local planning team and community bronze for the London 2012 Olympic cycling events taking part on the Borough of Richmond.

Karen spent several phases of her career in Neighbourhood Policing, retiring in 2019 from the Neighbourhood Policing Strand of Central BCU (Westminster). After the police, Karen took up the role as Lead for International Partnerships for the London Policing College. During this time (and the Covid pandemic), Karen completed her Masters in Policing at University of West London.

A relative newcomer to the IPA, Karen has enjoyed working closely with IBZ Gimborn as the Section UK IBZ Gimborn Lead, as well as being elected to the National Executive Board in June 2023 as the Vice President Social and Culture. During this time, through the friendships she has made in the IPA, she became actively involved in the Women in the IPA project (now known as #sheisipa) and has been selected to Lead this project forward over the next four years.



Meike Ahlers began her professional career as a nurse before studying health management and sports sociology, subsequently specialising in occupational health management. Since 2023, she has been working at the Oldenburg Police Department, where she is responsible for promoting mental and physical health as well as improving working conditions for police staff.

In addition to her operational responsibilities, she delivers training courses on healthy leadership and serves as a peer in crisis intervention. Meike Ahlers leads a multidisciplinary team of 40 colleagues who collectively address the full range of health-related concerns affecting approximately 4,000 employees. These include support for chronic illnesses, team and workplace conflicts, and issues related to work equipment and organisational conditions.



Alan Fenton – Detective Inspector – Police Service of Northern Ireland

Alan has been a Police Officer for over 11 years now. Working in a variety of challenging roles throughout his career, he is currently a Detective Inspector in Serious Crime Branch, where he deals with serious and complex cases. Alan has a forward-looking mindset, seeing wellbeing and inclusion as challenges for the future of Policing and the IPA, and is a HeForShe champion in PSNI. In his spare time, he can be found in the countryside walking his dog, Piper.



Silke Paul Detective Chief Superintendent and Head of the Criminal Investigation Department 5 at the Cologne Police Headquarters, has long supported the shooting-related IPA seminars as well as the work of the International Training Centre IBZ Schloss Gimborn.

Through her engagement within IPA Cologne and #SHEisIPA, she actively promotes professional exchange, international cooperation, and strong female leadership in policing.



Aneta Sobieraj

joined the Polish Police Force in 2005, beginning her career in patrol service. She subsequently spent four years combating juvenile crime in the city of Łódź before transferring to the Police Headquarters in Łódź, where she worked in the fight against organised crime and vehicle theft.

In 2008, she became a member of the International Police Association (IPA). Her commitment and leadership were soon recognised: in 2010 she was elected Deputy Secretary General of the Polish Section of the IPA, and in 2013 she became Vice President, a position she held for ten years. For many years, she was the only woman serving on the Management Board of IBZ Schloss Gimborn.

Since 2012, Aneta Sobieraj has been serving as Police Spokeswoman for the Łódź Province. In this role, she is responsible not only for official police communications but also for shaping the public image of the police in the region. A key element of her work is training police officers from various departments in effective cooperation with the media.

Throughout her career, she has actively participated in numerous police training programmes organised by the Polish Police and European IPA sections, including in the Czech Republic and Ireland. In 2011, she represented IPA Poland at the 1st World Seminar for Young Police Officers, and in 2015 she was among the organisers of the third edition of this international seminar. She also served on the commission responsible for selecting Polish police officers for specialised training programmes in Germany and took part in a professional placement programme in Chicago, USA, in 2014.

Currently, Aneta Sobieraj is President of the Łódź Provincial Group of the IPA. Over the years, she has organised numerous training courses, sporting events, and social initiatives aimed at strengthening cohesion and integration within the police community. As one of the few women in leadership roles, she has consistently brought new perspectives to decision-making processes, promoted innovation, and highlighted the challenges faced by women in policing and in society at large.



Katarina Tomašević President European Network of Policewomen.

Born in Belgrade in 1977, she graduated from the University of Belgrade Law Faculty with a focus on International Public Law and later completed the Diplomatic Academy, becoming the first MOI representative to earn the title of attaché.

She began her career in 2001 in the MOI's organized crime units and, since 2009, has worked in the General Police Directorate as a coordinator for international and operational cooperation with organizations such as INTERPOL, EUROPOL, OSCE, SELEC, and others.

She has played a key role in major regional security initiatives, serving on the Steering Committees of IPA 2017 and IPA 2019 projects combating serious and organized crime in the Western Balkans, and contributes to Serbia's EU accession process through Chapter 24.

She is actively engaged in gender, peace, and security programs, including work on implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and is Secretary of the Network of Women in the Police. She speaks fluent English, with intermediate Russian and B1 Italian.



Magda Raducu: "In over 25 years' experience as a police officer and training and communications specialist, I have learnt how important the role of women in policing is. But also, this role is not appreciated at its true value. #Sheisipa is a project born out of a desire to make a difference, to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace, to raise awareness of existing barriers and stereotypes and to work together to eliminate them.

IPA is one big family and the role and contribution of women in IPA is truly significant and irreplaceable. #sheisipa is the voice of women in IPA. Join us and we will be stronger! "



Ulrike Neuhoff (Programme Director, IBZ Schloss Gimborn) has been working at the International Training Centre IBZ Schloss Gimborn for more than ten years and serves as Head of Education. Throughout most of her career, she has been deeply involved in police training and international professional education.

Ulrike is strongly committed to building diverse, inclusive, and professional police forces that are dedicated to keeping people safe, protecting fundamental rights, and upholding human rights. She is actively involved in the #SHEisIPA initiatives and plays a key role in developing and supporting international training programmes that empower women in policing and foster global exchange.

Seminar Programme

Seminar-Nr. 26 | 06

SHEisIPA

Empowering Female Leaders – in the IPA and Beyond

12.04.2026 – 17.04.2026

Sunday

until 18:00	Arrival
	Buffet in the Castle Entrance Hall

Monday

08:00	Breakfast	
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome by the conference center management to Gimborn	IBZ Team
09:15 – 10:00	Delegate Introduction	Karen Duckworth
10:00 – 10:30	Introduction to Gimborn	Ulrike Neuhoff
10:45 – 11:15	SHEisIPA Project	Karen Duckworth
11:30 – 12:30	IPA Fundamentals	Mariana Raducu
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 14:30	IEB Update	Martin Hoffmann
14:30 – 15:30	UN Women Project - HeForShe	Alan Fenton
15:30 – 15:45	Break	
15:45 – 16:15	Community Empowerment Project	Ivana Pavlovic
16:15 - 19:00	<i>Networking</i>	
19:00 - 19:45	Evening meal	

Tuesday

08:00 - 08:45	Breakfast	
09:00 – 10:00	Ethical Leadership – what does it mean	Mariana Raducu
10:15 – 11:00	Leadership Challenges – Cultural Change in the IPA	Silke Paul & Karen Duckworth
11:00 – 11:30	Break	
11:30 – 12:30	Public Speaking and Communication Skills for Law Enforcement Officers	Aneta Sobieraj
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 17:00	Authentic Leadership / presence in male dominated fields and why mutual empowerment is important	Meike Ahlers
13:30 – 17:00	Soft Skills Workshop	Meike Ahlers
17:00 - 19:00	<i>Free time: sports activities, discussions</i>	
19:00 - 19:45	Evening meal	
Turmbar Cultural Evening & Auction		

Wednesday

08:00 - 08:45	Breakfast	
09:00 – 12:30	World Café Exercise	Meike Ahlers
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 – 16:00	How to Build Meaningful Networks and Stakeholder Relationships	Katarina Tomasevic
16:30 – 18:00	Close of seminar / rounding up next steps and expectations	Karen Duckworth

Thursday

08:00 - 08:45	Breakfast
09:00 - 10:00	Departure for St. Augustin, Federal Police
10:00 - 12:30	Excursion
12:30	Departure for Cologne
13:30 - 18:00	Free time
18:00	Return to Gimborn
19:00 - 19:45	Evening Meal

Friday

08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast and Check-Out
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