

Statement in support of the nomination for IPSO Vice President Elect for the European Region

Dear IPSO Friends and Colleagues,

I'm excited and honored to write to you about my nomination for Vice President Elect for the European Region. I want to thank all of you for the meaningful IPSO experiences we've shared so far, and I'm looking forward to many more as we continue our work together. Psychoanalysis has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I still vividly recall the thrill of discovering Freud's ideas about the unconscious as a teenager—an eye-opening moment that made me think, "So that's what's been going on with me!" What started as a fascination quickly grew into a deep passion, shaping both my intellectual and professional life.

I began my training in my hometown, at the Kharkiv Society for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, and later continued my psychoanalytic psychotherapy training with the Ukrainian Association of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapies (a member of EFPP). Moving toward the IPA, I was fortunate to be part of the first generation of candidates in the UPS study group, learning from Ukrainian psychoanalysts. It's been a privilege to be part of a growing community and contribute to the development of psychoanalysis in Ukraine. In 2020, I became the IPSO Ukraine representative, starting a Ukrainian journey in it. My role started as a way of exploring the international psychoanalytic network and the value of intercultural dialogue. Many of us had to leave the country in these dark time but we are continuing to work together and explore how psychoanalysis and being candidates in this time means for us. Deciding to run for Vice President Elect for Europe is something deeply personal. I've seen firsthand how transformative IPSO can be for a candidate. When the war broke out on February 24, 2022, my world was turned upside down. Like many, I faced uncertainty about my future, both personally and professionally. UPS continued, allowing me to keep going with my studies and giving me hope when I needed it most. And IPSO—this incredible community—showed its strength, with colleagues from around the world offering support, connection, and solidarity. Through IPSO, I had the opportunity to organize two impactful conferences—IPSO Study Days Ukraine 2023 and 2024. The 2023 conference was a milestone, bringing Ukrainian candidates together in person, as well as reaching 150 online participants. But it was more than just a space for discussion—it was a moment of unity and resilience. Our 2024 conference, with over 180 participants from 39 countries, featuring speakers like John Steiner and Paul Williams, emphasized the importance of addressing

trauma in the analytic space. It was a dream becoming true to see how many of you accepted to work in these events from all over the world - Japan, USA, Israel, Portuguese, Italy, Great Britain, Poland, Turkey, Brazil to name but a few - to try to think about what is so violent and unthinkable and how we can put our strengths together. As psychoanalysts-in-training, we need to engage with the real-world issues that affect our work and our clients. The world is changing fast, and psychoanalysis can't afford to stay on the sidelines.

One of IPSO's greatest strengths is the diversity of its members—from different backgrounds, cultures, and training paths. We all face unique challenges on the way to becoming analysts, but we share a strong commitment to psychoanalysis. My experience has shown me how vital our community is - not just for professional development, but for personal survival. What started as my own training journey has turned me into an organizer. I now lead the Kharkiv Society for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, where I've set up several study groups. As the IPSO Ukraine representative, I also created a theoretical group for Ukrainian members and moderated the IPA Thinking Lab. I've also had the privilege of participating in the COWAP group, where we discussed the challenges faced by women candidates and young mothers in war, an experience that deeply impacted me and strengthened my commitment to both psychoanalysis and global solidarity. Living through war while pursuing psychoanalytic training is an unimaginable challenge, but it's made me realize the incredible value of connection. Communication between candidates, and between candidates and IPA analysts, is what nurtures and sustains our professional identities. IPSO offers incredible opportunities, and I'm eager to help expand and strengthen its reach, making sure all candidates can benefit from everything it has to offer. To build on IPSO's strengths, I'd like to propose a few ideas that could further enhance our community:

1. **Strengthening International Connections:** Let's organize regular international conferences or workshops—not just to present research but to encourage intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue that can enrich our training, helping us deal with contemporary challenges we face as clinicians and candidates.

2. **Trauma-Focused Research and Initiatives:** Given the growing need to address real-world trauma in psychoanalysis, I'd propose forming research groups focused on how psychoanalysis can engage with global crises like war, migration, and natural disasters. Collaborations with other organizations and academic institutions could also be part of this.

3. **Thematic Study Groups:** I'd love to see more specialized study groups focusing on specific topics—like trauma or how psychoanalysis can integrate with other disciplines.

These would allow candidates to dive deeper into clinically relevant subjects and contribute to the evolution of psychoanalysis.

IPSO thrives on the involvement and collaboration of its members, and together, we can make it even stronger, and more vibrant. Let's continue building bridges, fostering dialogue, and ensuring each of us candidate feels supported and empowered. Your participation, your voice, and your vote are so important today as they are in the psychoanalytic community we are becoming part of and we are in IPSO. Thank you for having read my statement today independently from how you feel about it,

With gratitude, passion, and commitment,

Kateryna Alpatova
Poltava, Ukraine, 25th February 2025