

WomCom

Women's Communication for Solidarity



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Women's Communication for Solidarity

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The project coordinator

***Culture Center Grocka - the cultural institution of the Grocka municipality/
Belgrade, Serbia***

Partner organizations

The Association of woman Sandglass– Kruševac, Serbia

***TRIM VRBOSKA-Udruga za promicanje održivog razvoja na otoku –
Jelsa/Hvar, Croatia***

GEA - Societa Cooperativa Sociale – Padova, Italy

***ASSOCIATION DES AGENCES DE LA DEMOCRATIE LOCALE –
Strasbourg, France***

Udruženje Agencija Lokalne Demokratije – Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- *Culture Center Grocka – Grocka/Belgrade, Serbia*
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ERASMUS+ PROGRAM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Description of the project

Young women in the rural areas of the Western Balkans are faced with different forms of discrimination. In rural areas, strong patriarchal values and gender inequality are often dominated. Opportunities for communication, exchange and solidarity between young women from these areas and peers from urban areas of the EU are often poor. Improving specific communication skills and opportunities to learn and share experiences and good practices among women from different countries and areas can enhance self-confidence and self-representation of women in rural areas of the WB. The development of assertive and artistic communication skills enables active participation in society, international solidarity and the well-being of young women in the Western Balkans. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of young women about EU policies on social inclusion and women's rights is also an expected impact of the project.

General aim

- Increasing the capacity of young women in the rural areas of the Western Balkans to achieve progress in equal opportunities.

Specific objectives

- Build international solidarity between young women from - Creating international solidarity among young women from rural communities in the Western Balkans and European urban communities through connecting and networking.
- Increase the capacity of youth workers to facilitate and support the social communication of young women.
- Developed assertive and artistic communication skills of young women to express their opinions and create an active influence in their communities
- Increased interest and knowledge among young women in WB rural areas on European policies on gender equality and inclusion
- The celebration of the UN International Day of Rural Women in the communities involved in the project is established.

The Project consisted of 4 main activities

- 1. Mobility of youth workers - Training “Communication”, Grocka/Belgrade, Serbia; 6-13/10/2017**
- 2. Youth exchange - Workshop “Solidarity”, Jelsa-Hvar, Croatia; 18-27/05/2018**
- 3. Information and awareness campaign, in all partner communities; October 2018**
- 4. International Conference, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina; 03-06/02/2019**

Results

The main results of the project are 6 short videos on the assertive communication (5min.) and 6 murals (20m2) painted in the public space in each partner local community.

Activities

MOBILITY OF YOUTH WORKERS TRAINING “COMMUNICATION”

GROCKA/BELGRADE, SERBIA
6-13/10/2017

The first activity within the project was training on assertive communication. The training is accredited by the Institute for the Promotion of Education of Serbia. The training was realized in the municipality hall of Grocka and was led by psychologist Verica Gutalj-Zivkovic.

The activity started with a welcoming concert that was organized and performed by the women's music group VRELO.

The aim of the 8-day long training was to improve the communication skills of youth workers that work with young women from rural and marginalized communities.

The main topics were: communication, communication types, assertive rights, obstructive beliefs, psychological roles, assertive techniques for defense against manipulation, assertive criticism, constructive conflict resolutions.

There were 36 participants from 6 organizations and 5 countries and they were all from different professional, cultural and social background and as well as of a different age, which was a good basis for the exchanging of experience and knowledge.



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YOUTH EXCHANGE WORKSHOP" SOLIDARITY"

VRBOSKA-HVAR/CROATIA
18-27/05/2018

Second activity within the project was YE workshop that lasted for 10 days. The YE gathered 30 young girls, 5 sent from each partner's organization. The main topic was the art of the murals with women's solidarity as the main theme of the murals.

During the workshop, the participants of youth exchange worked in the international teams on defining messages and visual solutions for the 6 murals that were painted later in local communities within the awareness campaign. Participants had the opportunity to learn, research, communicate, collaborate, create, debate, make decisions together, exchange their experiences and knowledge, and network on a European level. They also had enough time for informal gathering and enjoy in the beauty of the island Hvar.

The first phase of the workshop divided participants into a few international groups to discuss the messages of each mural. The second phase included dividing groups again to decide on the visual solution of the defined message. At the end of the workshop, these visual solutions were presented and discussed with the local community in the final public event.





INFORMATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN ALL PARTNER COMMUNITIES 01/10/2018 - 31/01/2019

Campaigns were organized as the 3rd activity within the project. Each partner produced a short video guide for assertive communication (5min.) and mural (20m2) painted on a public wall in the local community. Six short films and 6 murals in total. Murals were painted in Grocka/Belgrade and Aleksandrovac, Serbia; Strasbourg, France; Jelsa/Hvar, Croatia; Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Padova, Italy. In the realization of murals, professional visual artists and youth workers guided young people. Most of the murals were opened on 15th October as a part of the celebration of UN International day of rural women. Few days before the event, every partner organized a press conference to present the project and announce the revealing of the murals with a music concert. A few days later, every partner organized a public debate in their local community about Women's Solidarity on which murals and short films were presented.





Murals







JELSA, HVAR

„BE BRAVE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIT IN!“

„Be brave, you don't have to fit in“ mural is located in the center of Jelsa, which has 3,500 inhabitants. Jelsa is a famous tourist destination, and is located in the central part of the island of Hvar. Whenever tourists are traveling by catamaran from Split or Brac island, mural is certainly one of the first things that will be noticed at the entrance to Jelsa. The area of the city beach is designed to provide a place for swimming, rest and sunbathing during the day, and during the night the circular plateau in front of the murals provides space for various events such as smaller concerts, gigs, dance or simply gathering young people under the clear sky. The message on the mural is written in English and Croatian so it can be accessible and understandable for tourists as well as local people.

The island of Hvar has always been a conservative environment, sometimes far more than now, but there is still gender inequality. This is mostly attributed to a powerful patriarchal order and the great influence of the Catholic Church that penetrates into the society, and of course physical separation from the land, and thus lesser education and awareness of one's own rights.

The vast majority of local women and girls will say that patriarchy is no longer present and that they are considered equal in relation to men on the island.

Analyzing the situation of the island society (at the Youth Exchange in WomCom), we came to the conclusion that many women moved to the island of Hvar from other parts of Croatia or other Balkan countries and started their own families.

Many of them felt pressure to fit in the family and society, to accept various social norms, traditions or patterns of behavior, although this is obviously in violation of their feelings, needs and rights as human beings and as women.

The result of this is a mix of unpleasant emotions such as confusion, anger and the frustration of women who are transmitting them to their daughters, to other women and so on. That is why we need solidarity among women.

The mural was painted by Andrea Resner from Split, a visual artist who is present in the street-art scene for over a decade. With this mural we tried to send a simple message to all women - you do not have to fit in by accepting what humiliates, offends and limits you. Be brave to make a step forward and fight for what you know that belongs to you and that are equal rights, opportunities and status in a society in relation to men. Visually, the mural shows black and white birds made in relief that are filled with “typical female objects” such as cutlery, and a big white bird in the middle that finally spreads its wings and disallows all the burdens that don't belong to her. There are mirrors in birds' eyes that allow them to see themselves in one another. This whole story would not be possible if there were no brave, independent, strong and fearless women who encouraged and achieved female solidarity on the island.

Makjanić from Jelsa at the opening of the mural read a song she wrote in a local dialect, inspired by this mural.





NEĆU

Pok ako san greštva,
bi ću zrilija,
ako san injula,
bi ću obilatija.

Ili neću, ili neću...

Ako san nepametna,
bi ću pametnija,
ako san nenaučna,
bi ću naučnija.

Ili neću, ili neću...

Čini ću ča mi drogo,
ča me voja,
bi ću digod boja,
a digod i gora,
ma bi ću svoja.

Ili neću, ili neću...

Došlo je vreme
za kalat brime,
za čapat kuraja
i odmolat se od kraja,
za feramat snit
i son počet živit,
podmazat krila i poletit.

Pok ako san dura
bi ću žveltija,
ako san musna
bi ću veselija.

Ili neću, ili neću...

Bi ću somo drugačija.

Ili neću, ili neću...

I WILL NOT

So even if I'm immature,
I will grow,
if I'm weak,
I will get stronger though

Or not, or not...

So even if I'm unwise,
I'll learn,
if I'm not rich
I will earn

Or not, or not...

What ever I want,
I will do
listening just to my inner voice
not them, not you

Or not, or not...

The time is perfect
The time is right
To stand up, to stand out
To take off, to fight

Or not, or not...

Wings are there
for you to use,
you just have to choose.

So even if I'm slow,
I will run,
if I'm grouchy
I'll still have fun.

Or not, or not..

I will just be,
be me...
Or not, or not...

PADOVA

**"I AM NOT FREE WHILE ANY WOMAN IS UNFREE, EVEN WHEN
HER SHACKLES ARE VERY DIFFERENT FROM MY OWN."**



The condition of women expresses the peculiarities of a culture and defines the civilization that characterizes it. In the last century, this condition has changed and has revolutionized this world, but is the work really finished? Taking inspiration from the quote by Audre Lord, an American writer who defied sexism, racism and homophobia, the mural wants to underline how the challenge for concrete equality cannot just consist in apparent and personal freedom: indeed, it must be shared. The freedom of the individual is ephemeral if not suitable to compare lifestyles and values that once were geographically separated or divided by economic and social barriers. The mural soon realized, will recall this key concept using different types of women linked to each other by chains that will be broken by themselves, in order to emphasize that freedom should be shared in order to be real and powerful.

The mural is the work of the artist Ilaria Brotto and it's located in Padua in the city center, in the university area "Portello". The wall where the mural was painted is a part of the municipality public house for old people. There are widows who initially disagreed on the mural. Then slowly they saw how it was painted they were happy and excited about the artwork on the wall of their house. Now they are proud and defend it.

People didn't trust what we were painting at first. Then they slowly began to get curious and ask what our mural meant. Now the people who live in that house are proud of the mural, they defend

it and they say that all those who pass by are fascinated. During the presentation conference, everyone was enthusiastic and wanted to know more about the WomCom Project. Only a one journalist commented negatively saying that among the women was not represented an "Italian" woman.

Starting from the left and moving to the right: the wall sees an accumulation of spiral-shaped clouds in violet and blue tones from which the black silhouette of a girl with a megaphone in her hand emerges; from the megaphone, a black writing stems: "I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own." The fantasy is then developed by partially incorporating a first female figure in clothes typical of the rural Balkans, with chains on their hands and with a terrified expression. This represents the first stage of female captivity. Continuing we meet two other female figures, one in Islamic and the other typically African costumes, which take a concentrated and conscious expression of their conditions and begin to rebel. As a matter of fact, the chains block just one of the two hands of each woman. As the story progresses, the background becomes clear and bright. Moving further to the right we find a last female figure, with a fluctuating dress and an expression of freedom with raised hands that finally break the chain that immobilized the 4 figures along the wall. Turning the corner, we find the EU flag with the logo of the initiative, the symbol of GEA and a dove, signifying peace and freedom found in the female universe.





ALEKSANDROVAC
“SOLIDARITY AMONG WOMEN IS IMPORTANT -
SUPPORT EACH OTHER”



As an Association that seeks to empower women and advocate gender equality, and whose beneficiaries are very often women who are victims of violence, representatives of the Sandglass Association expressed their wish to choose, out of the many ways in which women can be solidary among themselves, the one way that concerns this very aspect, violence against women. In the essence of the idea, there are two women. One of them on the ground - supported by one hand, while the other stands opposite and offers the first one a hand, which she accepts. The moment of their interaction with one another is the moment of their mutual communication and understanding. The one who is upright offers a hand, lifts up, encourages and empowers the other who is down (the possible causes are assumed by the inscriptions in her hair - violence, prejudice, discrimination). Both female figures have closed eyes, we emphasize the sense of touch, not the vision. Starting from the fact that we feel the problems of others and we do not always have to see them, that we do not have to see violence in order to make it clear to us that it is happening, we wanted to further emphasize the moment of touching, providing and accepting hand, lifting, as an essential moment support and action.

The mural was realized in a small town near Krusevac - Aleksandrovac, which has about 6500 inhabitants. In conversations with the representatives of the Women's Network of the Rasina District from Aleksandrovac, we concluded that the figurative mural is much more receptive to the population of this rural environment and that the message will be communicated in this way, literally, but it will reach more people. In order to complement the mural and make it easier to interpret, the messages in the Serbian language are also displayed in its basis because English is spoken by a small part of the population. “We support each other” and “Solidarity among women is important” are the two basic messages that we

wanted to convey, while there are also the names of the most important conventions and documents that are authoritative for improving the position of women.

The wall on which the mural is painted is a facade of a multi-story on the promenade, the main pedestrian street in Aleksandrovac. The dimensions of the mural are 4x5m. Its lowest point is at 3.5m from the asphalt, which was important to us in order to avoid vandalization of the mural and ensure the longevity of our message. The height at which the mural was painted brought a number of technical difficulties, because it was necessary to hire a vehicle with a basket for elevation works, the only one there is in Aleksandrovac.

As Aleksandrovac is a small place, and the painting of the mural took place at the central promenade, there were plenty of reactions and comments. The fact that at the time of painting I was in the final stage of my pregnancy was particularly interesting looking through the prism of empowering women. Several young women from the neighborhood came to me and said they liked the mural and expressed their satisfaction with the messages on display. One morning a large group of men gathered and took interest in how much it would cost to paint another mural, the one that would promote male solidarity, on the very same facade, just above the existing one. On their way to school, children stopped and watched in amazement, both the vehicle and myself painting. As they walk with their children, mothers would stop by and discuss the situation with their children, clarifying the story. This has awakened new trace of hope for me, the hope our message will be passed on to future generations, to these children open minded enough to comprehend the message of solidarity and equality, the children who are still unaffected by the patriarchy. The most admirable and respectful, however, was the moment in which I would leave the basket, or enter it, or the moment in which the inhabitants of Aleksandrovac realize that I am pregnant, but still not afraid to



go into the basket all the way up high and paint. This new situation that was going on was quickly noticed and has brought a lot of reactions, mostly about me being a “silly”, “brave” and “crazy” woman. The idea that women during pregnancy can work and can earn seemed like a complete novelty for the environment. To my surprise, most of the respectful comments came from elderly men who told me the stories of their mothers who walked up to 7 km to the hospital to give birth, or gave birth at home or in the field, at work, as well as from young women whose main reactions would be “Great job, I would never dare do that!”, “Are you not scared up there?”, “What does your husband say? Does he really let you climb up there?” etc. I was particularly content to demonstrate against the common prejudice of women as weak and fragile beings, I felt joy working hard for hours. Certain comments, always by males, were addressing the appearance of the female figures in the mural. “Is that a man

or a woman?” for one of them, or “This one looks good, not bad at all!” or “Why is she so muscular?”, “Why don’t you paint the skirt shorter so we can see more of her legs?”. Other comments were addressing the written messages. “How about male solidarity?”, “You, girls, have everything, but still you complain.”, “Who’s paying for this?” etc. Abbreviations such as CEDAW, the inscriptions like European Court of Human Rights and the Istanbul Convention, all in English due to the international character this project has had, made confusion among the observers, so there were frequent questions “What does CEDAW mean?”, “What is the Istanbul Convention? ”, “Are Turks financing this?”.

The possible result of this confusion could also be the interest to look these up at home, on the Internet, which will be a step forward in the education of inhabitants and residents of Aleksandrovac.





STRASBOURG “WOMEN OBSERVE, MEN REASON”

On September 29th and 30th, a dozen of young women spent two days painting a mural on the building “Le Portique” at the University of Strasbourg (France).

The idea for the mural of Strasbourg, which was decided at the Youth Exchange in Croatia, was to paint a quote from Rousseau “Women observe, men reason” and, on top of it, to write names of women that have had an important role in history and nowadays. As the names of brilliant women were covering the phrase, it showed the disagreement of the painters with the quote from Rousseau. Next to it, a phrase that delivers a positive message about women: “A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle”, by Gloria Steinem. Under and around the quote, more names of feminist women. Some of the women that have been represented on the wall

are: Simone de Beauvoir, Frida Kahlo, Angela Davis, bell hooks, Rupī Kaur... During the whole process, the participants were helped by professionals from the association L’Atelier du Club, and assisted by ALDA staff.

The mural triggered a lot of reactions, especially on social media (Facebook group Université de Strasbourg), where there were exchanges between users about the meaning of the mural and their opinion about it. A quite striking reaction was the quote that someone wrote on the mural: “SEXIST! The woman reasoned & observed!”. This proves that at the beginning the message of the mural was not clear. Thus, ALDA and L’Atelier du Club decided to install an explanatory plaque. Moreover, Pokaa, a local online newspaper, published an article about the mural and WOM-COM on its website.







LA FEMME
OBSERVE ET
L'HOMME
RAISONNE

J.J. ROUSSEAU

ANGELA DAVIS
OLYMPIE DE GUGES
MARQUERITE PEREY
AURELIA LUCHER
KATIA KRADT
MALA ZAV
BLOOMER

*A woman without a man
is like a fish
without a bicycle*

Gloria Steinem

GROCKA

“WOMEN OF SERBIAN HISTORY, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND ART”



During the autumn of 2018 an unusual mural emerged on the atrium wall of the elementary school „Ilija Garašanin“ in Grocka. Main characters in the mural were significant women from Serbian history, science, culture and art, that are presented in the form of fairytale so they would be adjusted for younger kids. These women are Katarina Ivanovic, painter, Milunka Savic, heroine, Isidora Sekulic, writer, Mileva Marić, scientist, Draga Ljocic, doctor etc. These women also, in their own field of work, greatly contributed to the empowerment of women and paved the way for their education and their fight for gaining civil rights.

The mural is painted within the European project, which is led by the Cultural Center of Grocka, the cultural institution of the city municipality of Grocka. The municipality of Grocka is one of the 17 municipalities that constitutes the city of Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. It is a particular 16th-century old town with agricultural character and with population that is engaged in fruit growing.

The mural was painted by remarkable Serbian painter Marion Dedić from Grocka, a single mother of two and the member of the ULUS (Association of Visual Artists of Serbia).

She has prepared a sketch of the mural together with kids - participants of the art workshop, who actively participated in the formation of the final solution.

Each illustration that represents a women has inscription with her name and surname as well as a code for mobile application that leads you to their biography in Wikipedia.

Since the mural was positioned in a busy and prominent place in school space, and since it was created during school days, pupils, parents and teachers had the opportunity follow all the stages of its creation.

They were curious to find out what is this mural all about, they praised the idea of the project, commented on the details, gave suggestions etc.

The school principal expressed her wish that the painting continues in other free wall surfaces of the school.

The gray concrete area of the school's atrium, which is attended by around 700 pupils and which is intended for playing and socializing for younger kids is now refined with thematic mural and bright colors.

Painted heroines that write, paint, fly, learn, experiment are taking children's attention - inviting them to explore and follow their own interests.





MOSTAR

“YOU DON’T HAVE TO PLAY BY THE RULES!”



Mural in Mostar was created during the Street Arts Festival Mostar in 2018 in collaboration between two artists, TKV - Queen Villa from Belgrade and Sunita Fišić from Sarajevo. TKV is one of the most noticeable and affirmed street artists in the region. Her work is recognizable by female portraits done with spray and stencils. Sunita is young artist and illustrator that is making progress from year to year. Collaboration with TKV has strengthened and motivated her to persist in her artistic career that is in front of her. Their mural shows two female portraits, one of which is an imaginary figure painted by Sunita and the other represents Marijana Cigic a young female artist from Mostar, painted by TKV. An entirely coincidental encounter between the two artists (Marijana and TKV) was inspiration for TKV to paint her on one of the walls in Mostar. That character is very important for this mural,

because it represents a young female that radiates freedom, creativity and sympathy, even though facing the world around her is tough and at some point she would prefer to avoid the adult world and remain a child. She doesn't seem to care about the limitations, she explores herself and the world around her not playing by the rules. The message of this joint artwork is to persist in searching for the meaning without considering the limitations imposed by the society and it is directed to all the young women of the world.

Mural was painted in the central area of the city on the building which is still under construction and with a lot of ruins around it. They enhance that part of the city and give it a particular energy, since there are still a lot of marks from the war in that area. Reactions of the local people as well as tourists are great, they take photos and selfies by the mural and post them on social networks.





Short movies

THE LETTER

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2tEEiGKQA8&t=33s>



THE FIRST DAY OF WORK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFLB7V3d2Ws&t=2s>



GRADUATION

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wABNkS_RZMM&t=51s



HOME

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQsINPeSsPY&t=2s>



MANSPLAINING

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N76KBvA_uIs&t=11s



REMEMBER

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFrZXX3YF_U



**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
“WOMEN’S COMMUNICATION FOR SOLIDARITY”**

**MOSTAR, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
03-06/02/2019**

The International Conference was organized as the 4th and final activity within the “WomCom” project and was realized at Centar za kulturu Mostar. It included five panel discussions. Each panel lasted for 90 minutes, had a one moderator and 5 speakers (one from each participating organization). The panel discussions were intended to be interactive. Each partner organization delegated up to five participants for the conference. Out of these participants, one was in charge of moderating the panel, while the remaining four served as speakers on the other panels. This gave us a total of thirty participants, five moderators and twenty-five speakers.

Therefore, each partner organization had a participant on every panel, ensuring proper representation. This conference was primarily intended for young women.

Every participant was obligated to prepare a text that correlates with the topic of the panel on which they participated.

Participants on the panel “European Union in the eyes of young women from EU and WB countries” were an exception. Their preparation consisted of a presentation of photographs that correlate to the topic of the panel.



5 PANELS

“WOMEN’S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS”

This panel was devoted to the analysis and discussion of the different and specific social positions of young women in urban and rural areas.



“SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS”

The panel topics were communication, understanding and support between young women from rural and urban areas at the local, regional, national and European level. What are the key values on which the young women can build their international solidarity?



“PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN’S ACTIVISM TODAY”

Over the past century, women’s activism has achieved many significant, lasting and essential social changes in gender roles and relationships. Of course, there is still a lot to be done. What are the key areas of society which contemporary female activism should focus on while striving to achieve greater humanity, freedom and social justice?



“ART AND WOMEN’S ACTIVISM”

This panel aims to present inspiring examples of female activist practices through art, with a special emphasis on visual and street art. The panellists will showcase the best of such practices from their countries and local communities.



“EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES”

Are young women supportive of the EU? What are their doubts? What are the possible causes of suspicion and resistance? In this panel, we will discuss the opportunities that the European Union offers to young women (and the best ways they can seize them).



WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

FRENCH POLITICS AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EMPOWERING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN LIVING IN RURAL AREAS 2014-2020.

Nadia El Khamlichi - I'm French and currently living in Strasbourg. Nevertheless, I consider myself as a world citizen and thus feel driven to take interest into issues faced by others countries. I am indeed a French, Moroccan and Swiss national, and have had the opportunity to spend my childhood in Egypt, and also to live in Turkey, Morocco, Spain and Germany. I've been involved in a French Feminist association for a few years (« STOP street harassment »). I have studied sociology and urbanism and done an internship working on the implementation of social and technical infrastructures in French villages.

Introduction

When taking into account structural social issues French women may face, it is important to consider the territorial dimension whilst debating towards women's rights and empowerment. Specific socio-political orientations are to be taken accordingly to the territorial context. The implementation of strategies in order to tackle social issues encountered by women in rural areas thus relay on specific parameters. Ever since 2014, The political realm went on producing studies related to this topic, and these past few months, there has been many events organized and supported by the ministries (agriculture, woman-men equality...) and European funds. France is one the biggest food producer in Europe. The whole range of change that rural France experienced in since the 60' impacted the rural women's situation by the way it shaped the social and administrative landscape regarding their condition.

European level

Women-Men equality is mandatory in European programs politics. The FEADER (European Agricultural Funds for Rural areas) was also driven to take these inequalities into account. The FEADER is the mainstay of the PAC (managed by the ministry of agriculture). Strategy for the use of the funds are determined at regional level. The 2020 European Strategies for intelligent, inclusive and durable growth allocated 28 billion euros for the 2014-2020 period of time.

The French National Context

The main Issues faced by rural women are the following: Today, the activity dropdown threatens populations living in farming households and working primarily in the agriculture branch, as the economic recession undermines often precarious financial stability. Farms are often family businesses, which relies on participation of both people in the couple. For instance, farmer's wives legally gained rights in the farm management in 1980, and only 25% of today French exploitations are owned by women. Women in farmer couples are often the first driven to look for another source of income. Moreover, Living in the country in France, implies for women that they will be more likely to earn less: 40% of employed women in France rural areas have a part-time work, that's 10 % more compared to the cities, which participates to the endemic poverty. In rural areas, 60% of under 25 years old unemployed persons are women. When It comes to daily routine, the average kindergarten is 30 minutes far from the house place, which adds the

transport issue to the family management that endorses most women. As a consequence, there isn't much time left for a full-time job. There is often a lack of transportation infrastructures, and working in the municipality is rarely an option due to the lack of in-site opportunities. Thus it is difficult for woman to launch their own business, notwithstanding these obstacles empowering opportunities could be fostered by state backing.

Over kind of issues are to be mentioned, such as the lack of specialized doctors and health infrastructures in remote areas keep women from healthcare.

In rural areas, the use of pesticides lead to disabilities and sickness, no sufficient studies on the specific medical problems faced by women because of prolonged use of pesticides and herbicides.

We can also mention that more traditional environment often implies a bad repartition of housekeeping tasks Access to information and acknowledgement of empowering possibilities, perspectives, lack of facilities dedicated to interaction between women and with organization is missing. Rural and Urban women are equally facing lack of safety compared to men living in the same areas, but rural women's isolation tend to make it worst Men feel two times safer... This situation underpins the emergency to prevent as well as to fight domestic as well as public violence against women.

A range of different solutions have been implemented recently at a national level.

A Hot topic in 2018-2019

In 2018, in France, many actions have been taken at a political level to foster conditions for the reinforcement of Women-Men right equality in rural areas such as research programs and panels, as well as governmental studies. I will underline a number of actions implemented by national administration towards an improvement of rural woman life quality.

French government actions

The High council for equality between Women and Men had already published an expertise in 2014, EGALITER « Fight as soon as possible sexist, social and inequalities, in sensible neighborhood and rural areas ». In the realms of National politics and expertise, the global agenda is to present the roadmap for the coming years (2018-2020). The State answers were to set up a few strategies from which one may elaborate a toolkit of actions.

“Réseau Rural Français”

Actions such as workshops of the “Réseau Rural Français” (French Rural Network) flourished. The 1st Interregional Workshop about Women-Men equality in rural areas has taken place April 5th (2018), addressing such issues as brakes and levers in rural territories, and sharing examples of European initiatives toward the same goals. These workshops aim at discussing concrete actions implementation, reviewing the existing ones and consider new possibilities. With the support of the FEADER, these programs implement European, national and regional cooperation in order to enable French rural networks to exchange good-practices, and put in relation stakeholders and the target population. Staff bus were implemented to meet up with women in rural areas and inform them on their rights and their situation. “Women's houses” were also opened in remote areas by organizations such as WECF France, to offer a permanent place to harness collaboration and help with job access providing targeted school counselling. Special Kindergarten, aimed at families or single mothers looking for jobs, with wider opening hours were installed. An app, “My stork” was developed in order to help people find close kindergarten for punctual access alongside regional development programs in the center of France. Those programs underline the importance of education and formation and target teenagers and young adults while focus on enlarging the access to general and technical formation among the girls who are more likely to drop-off of schools.

The CGET (“Commissariat Général à l'Égalité des Territoires”) - which tackles territorial inequalities- published the same year a study titled “Know better to fight better Women-Men inequalities in rural territories” on march 8th 2016.

On March 2018, the CGET also analyzed the reasons why rural women undergo a higher unemployment rate than men and focused on the employment issues. The CGET has written a report underlining the actions that should be taken in order to help more rural women be part of the labor market. The rate of 3 inhabitants for one job makes it more difficult for rural women to find a job. Moreover, the main work fields in rural areas, agriculture and industries, is one where women are less represented. A counselling program for young people could help, as well as actions to support entrepreneurship (just 30% pf women) being limited indirectly the lack of infrastructure. Socio-fiscal aspects and lack of communication contrive women's entrepreneurship and this should be taken into account. However as claims the report, there are levers: Women are very attached to their territory, they are willing to promote local know-how. Launching a company is a solution worth the implementation, since it is a solution in an un-employability context. Finding a full-time job occurs to be more difficult than starting-up with some help. These women have to work outside their municipality, because of scarce job opportunities on the spot. Low cost transportation and increased infrastructures might help. A solution might also be to promote professional skills enabling tele-working for women in rural areas, and promote work in the green economic field. Ecological matters are related to agriculture, valorization of bio products, circular economy or « green tourism » are fields in which women might be inclined to commit to.

France is the country the most supported by FEADER funds as well as by the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy). This is an important parameter, which underpins the fact that even with this backup many things are still to be made in order to enhance rural women's life quality and equality in France. It stresses out to which extent many other European countries are facing difficulties regarding rural woman's life quality, without the benefit of such a support. A quarter of the Human population are rural woman, so there is a lot to be done in Europe in general, and worldwide.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

THE RIGHTS AND ROLES OF WOMEN IN MODERN BIH SOCIETY

The position of a woman in contemporary society has changed over the last decades. Women have fought through history and are still struggling for equality and emancipation. The fact is that the millennial exploitation of women around the world is decreasing, but even today in many countries women do not exercise the same rights as men. The first example is lower wages for the same work as men and the fact that after eight hours of working, women are expected to continue to do housework at home.

Now try to position a woman in the BiH society, which is recovering from the effects of war, is in transition, and is exposed to all the risks of today's society. The question of where and what rights women from urban areas have, and which ones women from rural areas have quickly assert themselves. Recent surveys from an international portal, Paylab.com, which included 13 countries, together with the largest payroll research portal in Bosnia and Herzegovina www.plata.ba, behind which is the Collective (Posao.ba), show that there is a significant difference in the salaries of women and men who do the same job in the private sector and that only 6 per cent of all employed women are among the best-paid employees, compared to 13 per cent of men. The results of the survey also showed that women are limited by the choice of profession (they choose "female" jobs) and they often avoid managerial positions that are best paid because they require overtime and are difficult to combine with family life. Women today have the opportunity to make life decisions themselves. An urban woman has made a step forward but remains fragile and eas-

Edita Pajić - Master of Educational Sciences and a Systematic Family Psychotherapist, born and raised in the previous century. Although traditional values are deeply incorporated into my system of values, through education and therapeutic work I attempt to change myself, as well as to fight for the rights of women in my own family and community in which I live in and work.

ily giving up her needs and dreams in order to satisfy established social and family norms. This can be easily recognized in BH political life. Although for the period 2014-2018, 21 per cent of women were elected to the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of the female representatives and politicians were most often silent or rarely expressed their opinion.

Particular attention should be paid to the situation of women in rural areas. There are important topics that need to be addressed in the media. These are the education of young women, retraining, employment, health and social protection, as well as the problem of domestic violence. Women who have lived and worked throughout their life in the household and in agriculture, in most cases, do not have a pension or income. In their older age, they are no longer capable of laboring and are at the highest risk of extreme poverty and the problem of inadequate provision of health services and health care. Women in the countryside are "invisible" in official employment statistics. Rural poverty is a particularly significant problem when it comes to domestic violence. Poverty

contributes greatly to increased family stress and limits the victim's ability to leave a violent partner, that is, a family member.

State institutions have regulated the rights of Bosnian women according to numerous Conventions, Agreements, Laws and Declarations. The most important of these are The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ("Official Gazette of BiH" No. 15/13); The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (A / RES / 48/104, 20.12.1993); United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 - Women, Peace and Security "; The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995; The Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the Recommendation of the Council of Europe Rec (2002) 5. On 8 December 2008, the Council of the European Union adopted the European Union Guidelines on combating violence and all forms of discrimination against women and girls. The Law on Gender Equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted in 2003, regulates the issue of employment, work and access to all forms of resources. The law prohibits discrimination based on sex in work and work relations. The law prohibits withholding of equal pay for work of equal value for both sexes, disabling career advancement under equal conditions, disabling equal conditions for education, uneven adaptation of work and auxiliary work facilities to the needs of persons of both sexes, different treatment due to pregnancy, childbirth or the use of rights on maternity leave, any unfavorable treatment of parents or guardians in the reconciliation of professional and family life obligations or any other act or action that represents some form of: direct or indirect discrimination, as defined in Article 4, paragraphs (1) and (2) of the consolidated text Of the Law on Gender Equality in BiH.

I would conclude that there is no doubt that a legal framework that protects the woman, regard-

less of whether it is from an urban or rural area, exists, but that legal norms are not respected, and that disrespect of the current legislation is sadly still a reality. However, I believe that the biggest responsibility is on us. We, women need to free ourselves from the thought that someone will come and solve all of our problems. We are the ones who must talk about all that we do not like, as well as promoting the idea that women from rural and urban areas should work together in the proper execution and exercise of the above-mentioned legislation and laws.

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WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

WOMEN'S LIFE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE - PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Laws should apply equally to all, regardless of the sex, national identity, religious affiliation or sexual orientation... on the other hand... women from rural areas are one of the most marginalized groups in Serbian society.

Formally equal but disenfranchised, unlike women from urban areas, women from rural areas are exposed to various discriminations. Without political influence, ownership over their own property, access to information, often without social and health insurance, women from rural areas can't be compared to any other social group.

Day-to-day obligations are supposed to be their main task and responsibility, and the secondary importance is for everything else, beginning with property, income, and decision making.

For decades, the biggest culprit that has survived until today in rural communities, despite the modern technology era, is tradition, or the patriarchal way of living. Although migrations towards urban areas are rising, the villages are becoming more and more deserted, traditional way of living is not lost. Ownership over real estates is still left into the heritage of the sons, and it is often that because of the inherited "principle" sisters give up their family assets for the benefit of their brothers and the mother for the benefit of their sons.

Women in rural areas, despite all-day work, are mostly with unemployed status and therefore do not have health or pension insurance. Even a small number of women employed in the registered

Maja Konstantinović - graduated lawyer, employed at the Association of Women Sandglass. She is engaged in legal jobs within the association as well as for providing legal support within the SOS helpline for women victims of domestic violence. She also deals with public advocacy on issues related to the situation of women, violence against women and gender equality.

agricultural household has no right to use paid sick leave, days for risk pregnancy maintenance or maternity leave. The problem is that the hospitals are tens of kilometres away, the roads are in bad condition and there is no public transport.

It's primarily expected of women in rural areas to be housewives, to work in the house and to go to the fields, to take care of domestic animals, to take care of the children because there is no kindergarten, to take care of the parents ... to be available 24 hours to the needs of a household.

In addition to everyday activities, preservation of the traditional way of living and the organization of traditional cultural events, are as well an obligation of these women. In most cases, all cultural events in the villages are initiated by women - from exhibitions and traditional heritage events to humanitarian actions.

Family violence is a very big problem because, from the point of many years of experience that our organization has with women victims of

domestic violence, we have concluded that this type of violence against women in rural areas is very widespread. In the village, there are no “safe houses” or other forms of social support where they can report the abuser, and at the same time, for them to be protected. Led by the tradition of women who are victims of domestic violence, they usually don't speak about violence to not disgrace their family.

In Serbia, there is a very small number of women in “high politics”, in the Government or in the seats of the National Assembly, and even fewer in the local self-government. Very few women have decision-making positions in local communities. And when some women decide to run for such places, they are mostly withdrawn, due to the influence of their community and tradition.

Despite all the difficulties that life in the village brings, there are more and more self-aware women in different types of associations which is pointing out on various initiatives to local authorities. In many rural communities, women are the ones pushing through initiatives for street lighting, asphalt, roads, providing access to schools, for public transport routes, and more often participate in various manifestations in a state level and appear in media.

However, in order to make the situation of women in rural areas easier, many things need to be changed in the legislation of the Republic of Serbia. In the alternative report to the CEDEW Committee, there are recommendations that are given for improving the position of women in rural areas.

At the first place, roles and regulations should be changed so that women working in agriculture in rural areas can have legal rights to a paid sick leave, pregnancy maintenance leave and maternity leave.

It is necessary to improve health care, education, better access to information, to introduce

education programs for the economic and social empowerment of women in rural areas.

It is very important to introduce quotas for the number of women in decision-making bodies at the local level because the state of women's progress will be reflected on the state of the whole society's progress.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

SIMILAR PROBLEMS WOMEN FACE IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

In today's modern world women have more opportunities to become important factors in building better lives for everybody. They are eager to contribute and change the world and their own lives for the better. But girls and young women still face many problems because of their gender. There are many obstacles they must overpass in order to achieve their goals.

The problems women usually face in today's society include poverty, lack of educational opportunities, domestic violence, job discrimination, lack of women in leadership, lack of health care, etc. Which of these problems women face depends on the area they live in. Women who live in rural areas face different problems than those who live in urban areas.

According to the census of population in Serbia from 2011. 51,3% of the population are women and 30% of the total number of women live in rural areas.

These women face many different problems and challenges. Most of them work in agriculture in order to support their families. They usually work hard from early mornings till late nights and they are not paid properly and also have no labour rights. This is why these women are among the people most likely to be poor. Women living in rural areas lack access to education, health care, they do not participate in decision making and they have limited access to income and property. They live traditional and patriarchal lives, take care of the children and do the housework.

The land is mostly owned by men and women are usually not even aware of the possibility to own it. 88% of houses in rural areas are owned by men, and only 16% of women own agricultural land.

Bojana Bogdanovic – an English language teacher working in Secondary school in Grocka, Serbia. I graduated from the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade, English language and literature department. I have been working with children for 18 years now. I find working with children amusing, challenging, fulfilling and rewarding.

Among other things, I like travelling, meeting new people, learning about different cultures and learning languages.

Sanja Nikolić - a Serbian language and literature teacher, graduated from the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade. Employed in Grammar School in Grocka, chairman of the school board and coordinator of electronic school register book.

On the other hand, in urban areas women have more opportunities to engage in paid employment. Paid work makes women independent and able to care for themselves. Anyway, urban environments also provide challenges, problems and insecurities for women. Gender inequalities are seen in many areas of everyday life. Women are usually less paid than men even though they have the same positions and do the same jobs. In urban environments, women tend to be positioned at the less preferred occupations, which are underpaid or difficult. They are double burdened because their work doesn't finish when they leave the office, the factory or the company they work for, there is usually a family to care for.

Women in urban areas are better informed about their labour rights, legal rights concerning house property owning, health insurance rights,

education opportunities, etc.

Education is one of the main problems women in rural areas face even today. Education is important for women in all areas because it can affect all other aspects of life: health care, income-generating opportunities, quality of life, social awareness, understanding of many common things, etc.

An educated woman can educate her children, improve the lifestyle of her family, make the family healthier, increase the level of understanding among the family members and even react differently to violence. According to the studies, an extra year of education increases wages by 10%. Education encourages girls to marry later, have children later and have fewer children.

However, rural women face limited or no access to education. Main reasons for this are lack of financial resources, lack of infrastructure in rural areas, family matters, etc. In villages in Serbia, there are only primary schools so if a girl wants to continue her education, the costs become higher. They have to commute to school every day which brings forward the problems of bad infrastructure, lack of bus lines, the cost of transport, etc. Costs additionally increase for higher education, which is available in bigger towns only. The family thus decides to educate only male members. Results in Serbia show that 18% of rural women did not complete high school because of the pressures by the family to stay and work in the household or on the farm, 26% because of the attitude of the family that women do not need higher education, 18% because of a lack of financial resources, and 10% because of early marriage and family care.

Urban environments provide advantages for education compared to rural areas, but there are barriers particularly for girls from poor urban households. Educating girls is a low priority, especially when help is needed at home or for income generating. In such families, girls tend to start working before graduating from high schools.

In Serbia, only primary school education is obligatory so many girls start working after

finishing primary school in order to help the family. This will be changed because secondary education will soon become obligatory in Serbia in both rural and urban areas.

Health care is more accessible in urban than in rural areas. Women in rural areas often don't have health insurance because they have the status of supporting household members working in agriculture, health care institutions are not established in villages, villages are far away from towns and there are also problems with infrastructure, irregular bus lines, transport costs, etc. In some villages, there is only one doctor who comes to the village from time to time, once or twice a week. This does not provide adequate healthcare.

When it comes to health care, women in urban areas are in a better position. They usually have adequate health insurance, are informed about their rights and are aware of the importance of preventive medical examinations. The whole range of health care institutions is available for them at any time. The problem still exists in poor urban areas.

Violence against women is not only a problem in small countries, but it is actually a global problem. Gender-based violence is a form of discrimination against women. It is widespread in Serbia both in rural and urban areas of the country. However, rural women suffer more from violence than women from urban areas. This is because they are not financially independent, they are not educated and they have nowhere to go. Social institutions are not supportive or do not exist in villages. Also, women are not informed about existing mechanisms of protection against violence and assistance to victims. Women are usually ashamed to report violence, non-reporting is influenced by their traditional upbringing and poverty, low level of education, fear of the perpetrators, etc. Some women even believe it is justified for a husband to beat his wife. Many cases of domestic violence end up tragically.

Violence is not unknown to women living in urban areas, on the contrary. Violence is present in urban areas as well. Anyway, violence against women by their partner is less common in urban areas, but gender-based violence by a non-partner is more common in cities. Women in urban areas are more aware of the existing mechanisms of protection and

they cope better with violence through official institutions.

Women in urban areas are often subjected to discrimination at work. They are usually given less paid jobs, do not get promotions when they are better qualified or they do not get jobs just because they are female and can get pregnant. Many women say that their gender has made it harder to get ahead at work.

According to a UNICEF survey from 2014, 10% of child marriages happen in rural areas of Serbia. Child marriages have devastated consequences, they affect their health, psychological and physical development, education and job opportunities, etc. Girls are very often forced into marriage by their families mainly because of poverty. It is common in rural areas of Serbia that the girl's family chooses a husband for her and often the husband is an adult. It is important to mention that child marriage occurs predominantly among the Roma population. Girl child spouses are also vulnerable to domestic violence and sexual abuse. Child marriages in urban areas are less common than in rural areas. Girls from poor urban areas are at risk to marry very early. The practice, however, is noticeably present in Roma communities, where, according to UNICEF, more than half of all girls are married before turning 18.

Serbian law allows a woman to keep her maiden surname upon marriage. It is also possible for a woman to add her husband's surname to her maiden surname. Most women in rural areas take their husband's surname. It is found inappropriate and shameful for a rural woman to keep her maiden surname. By taking her husband's surname a woman shows respect to her husband and his family. This is also a kind of discrimination because girls in rural area are deprived of the possibility to choose their surnames.

Urban women are more likely to keep their surnames or to add a husband's to their own. This number is increasing every year.

First of all, women in Serbia need to be educated about their rights. It is necessary to empower women both in rural and urban areas, train them in economic and social rights and gender

equality, and provide other training related to employment, self-employment, and associations. Women should be supported to be more independent, to enable them to find employment or to be self-employed. It is also necessary to enable them to be more active in their communities through different organisations, cultural and humanitarian, and various other associations. This cannot be done without the support of the Government and politicians. The support would be more significant if more women would be involved in politics. Anyway, female representation in national politics in Serbia is still low. Only 9,5% of women are in the Government of Serbia and 28,6% women members of the municipal assemblies. The number is increasing and there are strategies to increase this number. It is believed that the higher number of women in parliament can contribute to solving women's problems in all areas.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

PATRIARCHAL SOCIETIES

Srđan Sorić - He lectured as an assistant of the stage movement at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb, led theatre workshops in the Czech Republic, Sweden, Germany, Croatia and Great Britain. Since he lives in the UK, acting engagements include performances in theatrical, television, film, and radio productions. He worked as a translator/interpreter, on coordinating various projects related to the prevention of homelessness of marginalized young people in London. The Greenwich Shared Housing project was declared an example of success in the United Kingdom.

My presentation is not based on a detailed study connected to this subject. I will not present exact figures or facts based on a long professional social research. These are my observations and hopefully, my thoughts presented in this essay might open new points of view on the subject or at least a chance to discuss it.

I am an artist who spent most of his life in urban surroundings within various cultures (Croatia, Czech Republic, UK and Germany). For the last 30 years, I have worked and lived in London.

Almost a year ago, an opportunity was given to me to move to an island in Croatia. My current residence is in a village on the island whose population roughly counts 1500 inhabitants. The village is a place where I spent my summer vacations and where my mother was born.

The island resident's main source of income is through tourism and agriculture. The island's connection to mainland is through a ferry journey of 2 hours and for some residents quite an expensive form of travel. Once the summer

and tourist season ends, we could say that there is a strong feeling of isolation within my current surroundings.

I am trying to paint a picture here for you to understand the scale of change from my London residency. The move has been often observed amongst my peers as a platform for obvious self-destruction. The expectancy is, that for an urban person, the village set up should be a travel to the past.

So, coming back to our topic, this should mean that we could talk about women's rights on the island as something that is known to us urban only through history books.

My initial intention to talk about patriarchy has been criticised by women on the island, as something that does not exist anymore and is pointless to rise for a debate.

Changes have happened within the last 3 generations here, as everywhere else in Europe. New opportunities for communication have obviously had some positive influences within young people in rural areas. Women feel that they are certainly not treated the way their mothers or grandmothers were. Well, the definition of patriarchy does not fit the environment in such a transparent way.

During my grandparent's generation, the constitution allowed only sons to inherit land or property; women could rarely sit at a dinner table once men came back from work. My parent's generation changed, but a number of issues were still evident. The decision-making, the role within the household was still strictly defined. I could keep going on.

Women on the island today have important roles within public institutions; feel less trapped in

unhappy marriages and feel that they have a voice in choosing their path for independence.

So, I could give in and say that the gender differences within the EU cultures in the last three generations have narrowed. Patriarchy is no longer defined by law and is no longer so evidently obvious in the less developed areas. So, let's have a look at the definition of patriarchy.

"Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property. Some patriarchal societies are also patrilineal, meaning that property and title are inherited by the male lineage.

Patriarchy is associated with a set of ideas, a patriarchal ideology that acts to explain and justify this dominance and attributes it to inherent natural differences between men and women. Sociologists tend to see patriarchy as a social product and not as an outcome of innate differences between the sexes and they focus attention on the way that gender roles in a society affect power differentials between men and women.

Historically, patriarchy has manifested itself in the social, legal, political, religious, and economic organization of a range of different cultures.

Even if not explicitly defined to be by their own constitutions and laws, most contemporary societies are, in practice, patriarchal." (Quote from Wikipedia)

I would agree that the consequences of patriarchy still exist within the gender issues in the UK and Croatia. It affects our relationships and everyday life. We might not have the rules written in our constitutions anymore, we are not talking about a hundred years ago when women had no right to vote, but we cannot avoid the leftovers of the past. The fact that my mother did not have a male sibling or someone who should inherit the land, but only sisters, had her parents, her siblings, my cousins and myself paying for the mental wounds of their burden.

Sadly, we are seeing cultures where church and tradition suddenly have a growing influence and we are less likely to move on and continue

changing the gender norm. Any significant suggestion that a man could move out of the image of dominance, entitlement to be in charge, physical and emotional strength, might be viewed as a weakness, as feminine. He could be ostracized in his community. Of course, the small communities are more likely to do this. Women are still less likely to hold positions of power because the female gender is seen as less powerful or less credible and they need to assert masculine qualities in order to be respected in their positions.

What has been bugging me since I've moved to this rural area? Is it trying to avoid the subject of not going to church, recognising that in most of my male acquaintances there might be only two states of mood, anger or silence, avoiding any kind of reasoning? Articulating emotions in most cases would be a topic for losers. Why are women happy with the current state of affairs? Why should we talk about patriarchy when it is not as it used to be?

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

HARMONY THROUGH DIFFERENCE: A PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE URBAN AND RURAL CONTEXT

Stefano Giacci - I currently work as a EU project assistant for GEA-Cooperativa Sociale. As an open-minded, free citizen of the World, I strongly believe in equality, cooperation and breaking down of any kind of barrier. Call me a dreamer or naive...but I do dream in a better world, to build together, as equals in our diversity.

With no doubt whatsoever, the importance and crucially of the women's rights and the common struggle to be undertaken in order to enforce them has been gaining visibility and momentum, during the last decades. The dynamics of gender inequality are every day more explicit and incorporated in the common sense and culture and they comprise a dichotomy between men and women regarding multiple aspects of the social, economic and personal life of the individuals. And yet, even considering the macro-category of women, we would be wrong claiming that it is characterized by homogeneity and a common set of challenges and issues to tackle: belonging to different social, human and geographical contexts, women must deal with a complex set of discriminatory dynamics, characterized by a high degree of variability.

One dyad we feel would be important to consider is the one between rural and urban women. Their context of origin and everyday life can deeply determine not just the rights they will be able to enforce, but also the material chances of improving their position, their access to resources and opportunities and their role and position in the social tissue.

To start, it is interesting to single out some **relevant facts and data**, with a strong explanatory power about the rights of women in urban and rural areas: around 60% of undernourished people in the world are women and girls... and yet, they plough and harvest more than 50% of the world's food. They globally own less than the 2% of the land.

The rights (or lack of) of rural women

Before further deepening our analysis, it will be useful to single out what are the fundamental rights women, despite their context, are and must be entitled to. Nonetheless, we will see how much the dichotomy rural-urban creates a contradictory and problematic framework, in which this general set of rights is often overlooked, disregarded or completely not recognized. A first, gross categorization might comprise the rights to autonomous decision making, health care, autonomy and privacy, income-generation, social security, training and education, access to land and natural resources, gender violence, and equality in marriage.

This specific and yet general set of rights must be guaranteed and protected despite the geographical or social context (namely, rural or urban). And yet, the differences in the provision and actual persistence of these rights sharply changes in the rural background: the possibility of building up an autonomous life, characterized by privacy, free and spontaneous decision-making, can be undermined by the expectations of girls' contribution to household care work and income earning activities. The lack of effective family planning an early marriage and numerous pregnancies, typical of rural areas, is usually associated with a poorer health, a lack of power in the household and a lower quality in the

education and health for their children. Moreover, Homogeneity and limited exposure in rural areas can limit awareness of alternative gender roles discouraging contestation of gender norms and confidence in the possibility of social change, thus undermining the fundamental rights to social security, safety against gender violence, access to improved social positions and self-determination. Our list of examples could go on, but we do believe it is deep enough to understand a key concept: the rural context can curb the existence and enforcement of some fundamental women's rights. But it is crucial not to reckon that a change of context (from the rural to the urban background) is the only way to better of the condition of rural women. A new path must be undertaken in order to create the proper conditions for women to flourish and prosper in the rural context: rethinking and reshaping the rights of rural women might be a potential first step, in order for them to be more consistent with the issues they aim to solve: a wider access to rural credits and loans, the chance of spontaneous and cooperative association or any form of collective action, improved and specific healthcare structures, facilitated land ownership, and so on.

Urban women and their (dis)advantages

Women are becoming the majority in urban areas, and many people live in female-headed households. Women's experiences in urban areas vary. Women are progressively turning to be the majority in urban areas, gaining a growing prominence in the social tissue and in the single households. Moreover, it seems to be enhanced and more equal not only the access to certain rights, but also to improved services, better infrastructures, "a relaxation of sociocultural restrictions" and so on. Even though the general framework features a more favorable environment for the enforcement of women's rights, inequalities and disparities are still present and internal to the urban background itself: gender segmentation of the job market, time and organisational constraints linked to still present gender expectations, deep gap between different suburbs and related access to structures and services, etc.

Conclusions

In all their laws, policies and programs, states need to take into account the particular problems affecting women from rural and urban contexts, tackling them with adequate policy measure and relevant, substantial ad hoc actions. An instance could be the initiatives undertaken by specific organisations (such as UN Women) and the programmes they implement (i.e: "Promoting Gender-Responsive Policies in South East Europe and the Republic of Moldova" and other actions promoted in Western Balkans). Associationism, network building and collective participation should be encouraged and stimulated, together with a specific focus on special categories (adolescents/older women, single women, HIV positive or women affected by disabilities, LGBT women). Any measure taken must imply a wide and balanced community involvement, together with the inclusion of social categories directly or indirectly connected to the women taken in consideration.

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SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY: ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENCES

Majda Šehić is a psychologist and psychotherapist from Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is the deputy director of the Center for psychological support „Sensus“, a non-governmental organisation aimed at improving psychosocial development, providing support and providing education.

Solidarity is a unity of a group or class that is based on common interests and mutual support.

Solidarity can be theoretical or practical. Whether we talk about theoretical or practical solidarity, it can be said that solidarity is closely linked to moral standards.

Solidarity can be seen as an organic phenomenon, as according to Durkheim it is based on the fact that members of a certain group have solidarity because of common interest. But, ***normative solidarity*** occurs when a group has a moral or political obligation to fight against oppression. Out of this premise, the ***term political solidarity***, coined by Sally Scholz (2007.) emerged, describing a group that is gathered among a mutual interest against injustice or oppression. That means that this group has a common ethical or political project that unites them in a fight against injustice and oppression. Thus, solidarity revolves around moral standards.

Taking the above mentioned into account, where does women's solidarity stand? What does this term, generalized in the mainstream media in the past few years, mean? Where do we stand in transitional societies such as those in the Balkans? Talking about women's solidarity, the term can be interpreted in the following ways:

- ***The essential interpretation***, which is based on solidarity among all women on the basis of the biological fact that all women belong to the same sex. Although this interpretation focuses on patriarchy as the main factor for the unequal status of women, it does not consider the complex social differences that patriarchy creates such as class differences, national, religious, racial and any other identities.

- ***The critical interpretation*** tries to include all the complexity of patriarchy and recognize all the forms and mechanisms of domination and exploitation of the patriarchal system. By being involved with a specific woman (her real social and economic status), a critical understanding of women's solidarity acknowledges all sources of repression which one woman can experience (including repression based on class, ethnicity, religion, race, ethical and political convictions, sexual orientation) and tries to offer responses to each of those problems.

Starting from these interpretations, it seems necessary to being led by the critical interpretation in order to analyse solidarity among young women from urban and rural areas. Living in a certain area does not only represent geographical location but also represents class, gender roles, opportunities and various forms of oppression. It is necessary to perceive the issue of women solidarity among all of these lines.

But, what does it mean to be a woman from urban and a woman from a rural area? Are there differences? According to Pozarny (Gender roles and opportunities for women in urban environments, 2016.) following are key differences:

- Urban women, on the whole, have greater

access to services and infrastructure, more opportunities to engage in paid employment, and are subject to fewer sociocultural restrictions than women living in rural areas. However, they do not benefit equally with men in urban environments. They are disadvantaged in income poverty, asset poverty, time and power.

- Homogeneity and limited exposure in rural areas can limit awareness of alternative gender roles discouraging contestation of gender norms and confidence in the possibility of social change, e.g. in the division of labour. Urban heterogeneity fosters tolerance of differences and can erode existing assumptions of gender differences and cultivate support for equality (Evans, 2014; 2015b).
- Urban environments provide advantages for education compared to rural areas.
- Women can increase their empowerment and agency when they have accumulated more (and more diverse) assets and when supportive structural policies are in place.
- Gender-based violence is a core area of focus in analysing women's economic empowerment, and in urban settings, particularly, where gender norms may be challenged.
- Transformation of gender roles in urban contexts will require wider community involvement and in many contexts collective action to promote group interests and entitlements (Moser, 2016).

In relation with this, there seems to be a prevailing conception that living in urban areas in lower-income countries bring great benefit, opportunities and more independence for women. But, the fact is that gender inequality, such as accessing work opportunities and gender norms, are experienced in everyday life by women, in both urban and rural areas.

Still, women from urban and rural areas have different roles. The question is where solidarity lies between these roles. How can each contribute to better and different society from their role? How can solidarity be enhanced across differences?

Whether urban or rural areas, activism is the key to change. Feminism and its activists come from various backgrounds – geography, class, identity.

Activism must empower those most likely to be left behind. It must continue to increase the diversity and the number of people working on gender equality, bringing in individuals and groups to support and shape the agenda. This way, identification and solidarity will be possible.

A two-way communication between women from urban and rural areas needs to be established and continuous in order to create opportunities for communication and understanding. When it comes to states such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, a state burdened with differences, bonding is especially important.

Every member of the movement needs to have its voice. Acknowledging class differences, lack of opportunities, socio-economic status differences, allows establishing a basis for communication that will allow looking at ways to increase women's solidarity, especially among young women.

Having common activities, whether formal or informal, is a key to rising solidarity among young women. As in the interpretations of women's solidarity, it is not enough to share biological features. Comprehensive solidarity comes from understanding and acknowledging differences and sharing an interest in fighting oppression and injustice. Women from both, urban and rural areas, are facing inequality and oppression. Thus, a basis for normative, political, solidarity gathered among a mutual interest against injustice or oppression exists. It is on the activists and organisations to provide a field for taking this interest into practice. So, the question is not whether solidarity among young women from urban and rural areas is possible. But, the question is how to translate existing ideas into practice.

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SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

SOLIDARITY AMONG WOMAN WITHIN THE PROFESSION

Slavica Vlasisavljevic - I am from Serbia, from a little town called Grocka, which is situated near Belgrade. I work in a primary school, with children from 7 to 11 years of age. I am 49 years old, and I am a mother of a son. My son is my greatest success. During my 26 years of work experience, I have worked in several different types of schools and with so different types of children. I like to read, to walk and I like to hang out with positive people.

For the first time in my life, I am thinking about feminism very seriously. Feminism is a movement, ideology, personal conviction, a network of theoretical positions. I believe that feminism is a personal need to be a strong woman these days. From that personal need comes out the need to exchange activities, thoughts, fears and experience with women from rural and urban areas on the local, regional, national and European level. We can accomplish this through the institutions (in schools there are Rules and Regulations about mentoring and preparatory work, professional development in education and upbringing) or in social support (social networks, nongovernmental organizations, associations).

Stereotypes in my environment still are very strong and powerful. Father is the leading figure in most families. He decides about the most important things, especially about his daughter's life, education or marriage. So many women actually believe that it is the way it should be. There are differences between girls' and boys' education. A man, aged 20-50 still considers they should be differently educated. It is believed

that certain professions are exclusively reserved for women. For example: teachers, hairdressers, nurses, housewives, administrative workers, sellers, stewardess, models, singers... and there are certain professions exclusively reserved for men: doctors, principals, bosses, pilots, managers, miners, engineers, firemen... We have to fight that. More women have to be educated about feminism, about their rights and possibilities. Education is one of the main problems women face in rural areas.

At this moment, I work in two schools, primary school in my hometown and in the other primary school for adults. The other school is maybe more interesting bearing in mind this theme. There are young girls, teenagers, from the Roma population. In their world, patriarchal upbringing is very strong. The primary school is obligatory in Serbia, but even that doesn't obligate all parents to educate their children, especially daughters. Little research in both schools brings me these results :

Regular school (girls age of 15)

1. There are 2 or 3 children in the family
2. There are 2 daughters in the family
3. Mothers finished secondary or higher school
4. All mothers are employed
5. All of them have already decided what their future occupation will be
6. Most of girls aren't sure that the school they chose is the right for them
7. The decision about the future school they made by themselves
8. All of them see themselves in the future as employed women and mothers

Primary school for adults (girls age from 15 to 20)

1. There are 3 or more children in the family
2. There are 2-3 or more daughters in the family
3. Most mothers finished secondary school, but there are mothers without any education
4. Most mothers are employed
5. Most of them have already decided what their future occupation will be
6. Most of girls aren't sure that the school they chose is the right for them
7. Both parents influenced their decisions about the future school
8. Most of them see themselves in the future as employed women and mothers
9. They have left regular schooling for various reasons of poor grades, bad company or going abroad (seeking asylum)

The answers are not so different. Maybe the only difference between them is that parents influenced their decisions about their future lives. They went abroad with the family, they left regular schooling, they want to make decisions about their future occupation instead of their daughters. That is a great problem in rural areas.

During my 26 years of work experience, I have worked in several different types of schools and with very different types of children. There were typical village schools (with only a few pupils), but there were also typical schools in the centre of Belgrade. For me, as a beginner in the profession, it was not easy at all. More experienced colleagues, ladies with 30 years of experience, weren't very helpful. They were critical of my work, but they didn't help at all. Only one was so nice to me. She had cancer, I was her replacement. But, between the chemotherapy, she was so kind as to teach me how to understand children, how to estimate their work, how to prepare myself for teaching, how to act in some problem situations. She taught me almost everything she knew. She helped me unselfishly to learn many things I couldn't learn at college.

Today, I am a lady with almost 30 years of work experience. I work in the school where my parents were studying, I was studying there, so was my son. A few of my colleagues were my school friends. We have known each other for many years. We are full of respect to each other and respect other colleagues as well. We are trying to help young teachers as much as we can. We share our experience with them in person or on social networks.

We work with students too and help them with their exams or projects.

There are so many groups on social networks where we can find many ideas for teaching and share our own ideas. Also, we can ask and get some help about administration, school projects, etc. In my school, class teachers have their own Viber group for easier professional communication. But, we use that Viber group also for fun, birthday greetings, joyful moments and to support each other. Most colleagues are very satisfied with the support and solidarity in our school. I asked a few colleagues who work in the rural areas what they thought about the solidarity between women. Here are some of their thoughts:

- Four women work in a small school in the village of Drazanj. It belongs to the central school based in Umcari. Their school is a small district school, full of modern equipment. They are very satisfied with the atmosphere in their small collective. They do everything together: school activities, field trips, school events, workshops with student's parents etc. But, they aren't satisfied with communication to coworkers in the central school. In the central school, there are about 15 teachers. It follows from this more jealousy between women, more separation and bad communication too. Because of that, there is bad communication with small schools in the villages.

- Two women and one man work in the village of Brestovik. That district school belongs to my school. Although many think that working in a district school is a degradation, these women don't. On the contrary, it's very interesting to work there. Their little community works excellently. Like

the colleagues in the previous school, they do everything together: school activities, field trips, school events, workshops with student's parents etc. They are satisfied with communication to coworkers in the central school. In the central school, there are 15 women teachers. In this district school women believe that collegiality and, therefore, solidarity in our school is great, in professional and private life.

- Three women and one man work in the village of Zaklopaca. That district school also belongs to my school. But, they don't think the same as women in Brestovik. There are, first of all, mutual respect, mutual help and solidarity. As far as the collective is concerned, the different age groups are able to fit in, understand each other, share ideas and experiences with each other. If it comes to minor disagreements, there is a generational conflict when young people try to introduce some innovation in teaching, while older colleagues generally hold to some of their principles and proven ways of working. They think that in the organization of work, teaching, solving problems with pupils and parents, they are mainly directed towards each other and that collegiality and, therefore, solidarity in our school is bad. Unfortunately, this is a different point of view.

- In the end, I asked a young colleague, a true beginner, for her opinion. Here is her experience so far:

"As for my experience, I have had better cooperation with colleagues from the district schools so far. I worked for some time in the home school where the collective is bigger. There was a lot of insolvencies, which was particularly noticeable in larger ones. Somehow, the colleagues were divided into smaller groups and thus functioned. They were not exactly a kind of cooperation. Of course not all colleagues, but most are. While I was working in a district school, I found myself in more solidarity among my colleagues. They accepted me in a nice way, they helped me, they asked me for an opinion. They also agreed with each other, planned their activities, etc."

So, these are different experiences about solidarity between women, both in rural or urban areas. Women are different. Women are still not aware of how much they should stick together and develop sense of solidarity. They have to be aware that they have no obligation to feminism, but they have the responsibility to themselves, women have to understand their own needs and rights and they should work on their progress.

SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

ART AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN WOMEN FROM RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

In what is known as “intersectional feminism”, the feminist agenda has recently started to address different situations of vulnerability among women and to assess the intersectionality of various oppression forms that women face for being black, lesbian, Muslim, trans, disabled... Nevertheless, intersectional feminism has yet to focus on issues face by women coming from rural areas. Indeed, women from rural areas face many issues that are very specific to their conditions, issues that are however largely kept invisible in modern feminist fights. One could therefore wonder: is there no need for feminism to tackle issues related to living and/or working in the countryside as a woman. Are women from rural and urban areas alike in their concerns?

At the international level, the United Nations, through the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, seeks to raise awareness on the condition of women from rural areas. The Committee has delivered its general recommendation No 34 on the rights of rural women¹ in 2016, stating that women coming from rural areas are $\frac{1}{4}$ of the world population and stressing their special needs. In a report from 2018², it is also highlighted that women from rural areas suffer from gender-based violence and discrimination, often face situations of poverty and/or exclusion, are involved in unpaid and/or dangerous work and are less covered by social protection. To counter this, NGOs projects focusing on this target group have developed in the last years - e.g a project by Oxfam focusing on the empowerment of women farmers³. However,

Solène Falk - Born in Brussels, grown in Marrakesh and living in Strasbourg, Solène Falk is a project manager for ALDA, the Association for Local Democracy Agencies. She graduated in Science and Technology Studies and in Political Sciences and is driven by any topic related to the articulation of science, technologies, and modern societies, as well as feminism and women rights. She also likes to play music and to advocate for Belgian accent.

this international focus tends to emphasize the situation of women in developing countries and regions (namely Latin America, Africa and Asia), which is problematic on more aspects than in developed countries (human trafficking, lack of access to hospitals, lack of infrastructures...)

What happens then with the women in rural Europe? Are rural and urban areas as close as we might think as a result of the wider access to internet and to public transportation, and should we consider that specific issues relating to rural areas have vanished in the process?

At the European level, a study commissioned by the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development⁴ questions the efficiency of European laws tackling issues for women from rural areas, by stating that “*while gender mainstreaming is integral to the Rural Development Regulation, there is evidence to suggest it has not been rigorously implemented to date.*” Indeed, when taking a look at the European Network for Rural Development website⁵, a solid

work on gender perspective seems absent; or, when these networks are addressing directly the needs of women, the topics are mostly about business and entrepreneurship. For example, the sharing practice guide on Inspirational Rural Women⁶, which focuses on the stories of women entrepreneurs. These are valuable initiatives to assure the economic empowerment and independency of women and therefore the economic development of rural regions themselves; indeed, the economic issues, especially in France, relating to the statute of farmer can be very heavy on women's shoulders. However, addressing the economic situation of these women still represents an isolated take on the matter, when a more holistic one would be needed.

As such, a few issues relating to the situation of women in rural areas require a comprehensive approach of their needs. For example, the idea that rural areas would be free of phytosanitary risks is widely spread as a predominant narrative about "living in the countryside", while it's been largely demonstrated that farmers are more exposed to various diseases (cancers, contamination, Alzheimer's disease...) through the use of pesticides, and people living in rural areas as well through long-term exposure to these chemicals. Moreover, diseases developed by women in this context have been underestimated and were not as widely studied as diseases affecting men; meaning that in the same context, women tend to have a less rapid diagnosis and a less efficient treatment, because the diseases that women develop are specific and therefore would need to be studied as such⁷. Such exposure to pesticides and chemicals can also have a real impact on maternity and pregnancy-related issues⁸. Rural areas could then hardly be described as safer or "greener" than urban areas, despite the narratives surrounding them, and particularly for women.

Likewise, women from rural areas can have trouble in finding a partner, in meeting new

persons or in facing stereotypes in "small societies" such as villages in rural areas. For instance, LGBTQI+ persons can have a hard time asserting and defending their rights in a rural context, whereas these features are generally more accepted in urban areas⁹. These considerations also apply for other types of discrimination: racism, validism, islamophobia... Lastly, women from rural areas can have the feeling to be left apart from the most recent and engaged feminist discussions and strategic issues: not being able to meet people with the same mindset, having different daily concerns, and not having the possibility to go to events, meet-ups and conferences (especially in the case of young women who are often limited in their travels), can be a real source of frustration.

How can we beat the loneliness and the feeling of women coming from rural places of being leftovers from the feminist agenda? Apart from economic empowerment, women from rural areas need to be at the focus of European policies, especially in the agricultural ones. The European Network for Rural Development acknowledged that *"to keep things moving and to revitalise rural communities through social inclusion, there is a need for more targeted support and funding with a focus on social inclusion within the RDPs [Rural Development Programmes]"*¹⁰

If women from rural areas were acknowledged legally and institutionally, more projects addressing this issue could be funded. Plus, formal recognition is a way towards achieving social recognition as well.

At a more informal level, equality and inclusion also mean solidarity, connection, identity. Solidarity could be found, among other possibilities, in the development of stronger links between communities of women from urban and rural areas, which often have a lot in common and are eager to exchange about their differences and share their experiences. But how can one foster these initiatives, and through which channel? Art has been proven to be a way towards solidarity, dialogue and understanding. Why not use it as a tool also to support solidarity between urban and rural women? For example, a project in the United States¹¹, focused on the facilitation and production of artistic work for gender equality, aimed to show that girls who live in rural areas, in comparison of those

that live in urban areas, tend to limit their professional careers to those that have been traditionally considered stereotypical female roles. An example from Europe is a project on the facilitation and production of artistic work for gender equality by the ENRD¹², supporting art teaching that promotes gender equality for children in rural areas.

Art can be used as well a way of self-expression, change the narrative of a community, and therefore serve as a way for women to express themselves and tell their own stories, but also to create new stories about urban and rural women tackling issues together. If Europe is silencing rural women, we cannot have feedback from them, or we only hear a third-party version of their concerns, issues and needs. This is why allowing women from rural areas to gain narrative power, through art, militancy, eco-feminism and other forms of assertiveness, awareness-raising processes and protests is so important, and why it is a responsibility for women from urban areas to reach to them.

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SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

SUSTAINABLE URBAN SOLIDARITY

Petra Galinović - I was born in Pučišća on island Brač, Croatia. I graduated from a school for graphic design and, after that, continued to study and practice to become a therapist. Now when I'm successful in that field, I'm working on becoming a business owner to help men and women in their needs and to promote sustainable business development for women on the island of Brač.

It's a common thing to see a resemblance between women from the same town, but when you put women from different areas in the same place, that's also a different pair of shoes. In most cases, you can feel and hear the difference between them and mostly not in a good way. We are constantly talking how this kind of problems shouldn't even exist in the 21st century so, if we draw the parallel, we really need to ask ourselves why the old views are still pretty much alive?! The truth is, women from urban areas usually underestimate those from rural places; looking them as unsophisticated villagers. When, on the other hand, those from rural areas usually stick together, not allowing others to even come near them while thinking they will just judge them. Objective viewer will easily conclude that this is actually reaction born from elder perspective, to be more precise, from our parents and grandparents. But why allowing old-fashioned views to make the same barriers today?

I'm aware of this issue because I'm coming from a rural place. I went to high school in a bigger city that was already a big deal for me, but I wasn't expecting that I will ever experience this mainly

because of my age. I have never had any prejudice towards citizens especially towards people my age so hearing something like "Where did she find that shirt? Next to the garbage bin?!" or "Look at her. She should stay in the village. She doesn't belong here." got me thinking is that my fault?!

It took me a long time to figure out that it wasn't my fault neither theirs. To fix a problem you should go back to its roots, but sometimes it can cause more issues. Therefore, in my opinion, we don't need to go back to the beginnings so that we could easily point a finger at someone but try to erase the stigma walls and build the new, fresh path for generations to come and us.

That means to talk to our parents and grandparents that things they experienced may never happen again and probably things won't be the same for us as it was for them.

To be open-minded which means not to approach to someone new with contempt and criticism but with the will to understand and appreciate the difference between us. Also, major thing will be to direct young women that look is not everything you can offer and judge by it; to consider others as a human being not as an object and to spread solidarity because it's not the place we're born in that determines who we are but the amount of understanding and compassion for each other that we are obviously lack of.

I am very confident and positive about this because I can see, year after year, young people, particularly women are more involved in projects made for helping others and facilitating similar issues.

The most important task which is the same for everyone to realize is spreading the voice, meaning we are here, we see and hear everything, but we want to turn that into something positive not constantly being oriented on the past.

Communication, open-minded approach and positive point of view can do wonders. It's the key for solidarity, compassion and ultimate respect for each other.

Alone, you're probably won't be able to do major things when we are talking about these topics, so we need to stick together and be brave, loud, sometimes unapologetic so that resolution, could be applied into everyday life. Eventually, this won't be an issue; this will be past tense but to arrange that we need to start now!

Not just talking about it but making first steps so that future generations and we can walk towards something we used to call utopia.

SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

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Ilaria Brotto - I'm a naturalist, an artist, a lover. I studied Art and Natural Science in Padova, Italy. I love to make "art" in every situation I find, share with people everything could be positive and enriching, including knowledge, feelings, information and stories. I like to know new places and of course people. I like hear and learn from them. I hope to be much coherent as possible in my life, firstly about my style of life, my ecological footprint and my relationships.

"I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own."

The milestone to build up an effective solidarity between rural and urban women consists in recognizing the differences and the common points among them: as a matter of fact, it is only through a mutual knowledge and awareness about the respective conditions that a fruitful path of appreciation and enhancement of their qualities and experiences. The scarcity of systematic academic contributions about the topic is a first clue of the insufficient attention and actions dedicated to the topic.

As a first, crucial step, we must reflect upon the basis onto which a true and effective solidarity can be built. The very first milestone is represented by the actual interests which women share, as members of the same gender: this is the most explicit basis for women solidarity and collective action, as it is due to dynamics of explicit or implicit discrimination that women find a common battleground and, therefore, a common cause to "fight for".

Another important pillar consists in the

awareness that, despite aiming at the same general goal (be free from any kind of gender-based dynamic of discrimination), the contexts, personal and social positions, background and necessities might vary deeply among all the members of the feminine universe. A woman coming from a rural Serbian village has not much in common with a woman born and breed in the suburban area of Berlin; and yet, they potentially might feel a strong common sense of inequality and, therefore, the vocation towards a similar path of struggle and empowerment.

What emerges from this brief analysis is the necessity of connecting women belonging from different contexts, even the most different and distant ones: the rural and urban backgrounds. How to do so?

One basis for women's solidarity is the concrete interests which women, as a gender, do share. Male violence and coercive forms of heterosexuality leading to violence, rape and wife-battering and issues surrounding reproduction and mothering (eg. abortion, contraception, maternal and child health care, child care provision) provide women with an explicit basis for gender solidarity.

Women may also have common interests in relation to patriarchal kinship groups; the short discussion in this paper is taken from a longer unpublished manuscript on "Conflict and consensus models in the analysis of gender relations". (Hayward, 2015) The role these play in oppressive forms of the marriage institution, those in which there are marriage payments, no choice of partner, no choice of remaining single, treatment of widows, right to divorce etc.

A further basis to women's solidarity may lie in

aspects of their relation to the state, eg. on issues of franchise, emancipation, property ownership, and legal rights.

Furthermore, the much discussed issue of rural-urban divisions is obviously relevant to women and it is significant to understand the situation women are living in the different rural and urban context. Since 2010, the European Commission has classified regions as either predominantly urban, intermediate or predominantly rural based on population density. It is important to underline that rural regions across Europe do not represent a uniform group, there is considerable economic and social diversity among rural areas, influencing singular characteristics of women of those areas. Levels of educational attainment, income, employment and social exclusion, as well as rates of risk of poverty, can vary significantly from one Member State to another. It is possible to identify economic and social trends within macro-regions (Eastern Europe, North-Western Europe, and Mediterranean Europe), and to observe differences between older and newer EU Member States. These factors have an impact on their levels of rural isolation for example representing an important issue mostly for women living in those areas.

Although economic and employment policies are highly significant, certain other less obvious differences should be borne in mind. In particular, the whole relation of family, household and kinship structures to the forms of production, the nature of the economy and the work of biological and social reproduction may differ so markedly that ideological and legal reforms relating to these institutions, which may be quite emancipatory to urban women, may not have the same effects in rural areas.

So rural development policy seldom must be addressed to real women's needs and priorities, but several studies and researches reflect a situation of about ten or even more years ago. In the meanwhile political interest in the situation of rural women has increased. This may be witnessed at least so at the level of the European

Commission given the explicit and repeated mentioning of gender equality and attention to the disadvantaged position of rural women.

Conclusions

As the paper has stressed in different points the milestone to build up an effective solidarity between rural and urban women consists in understanding the differences and the common points they share: as a matter of fact, it is only through a mutual recognition and awareness about the respective conditions that a fruitful path of appreciation and enhancement of their qualities and experiences.

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SOLIDARITY AMONG YOUNG WOMEN FROM URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

WHAT IS WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY?

Tina Ćirić - graduated communicologist, employed in the feminist NGO Association of Women Sandglass, in public relations jobs and arrange social networks. She is also a consultant at the SOS helpline for women victims of domestic violence.

Women's solidarity can be interpreted in two ways:

Essentialist interpretation calls for solidarity with all women based on the simple biological fact that we all belong to the female gender. From this understanding, the solidarity of women leads to action that, on the one hand, "empowers women" (psycho-social support) and, on the other hand, focuses on the state legal system, requiring equal legal treatment for both sexes.

Although this interpretation signifies the patriarchy responsible for the unequal status of women, most often it does not take into account the complex social reality created by the modern patriarchy; our class differences; and national, religious and racial identities, which are centuries of excuses for repression and warfare. Not to take into account all our differences, but only those mechanisms patriarchy uses to control women (as well as men). The essentialist interpretation of women's solidarity has no means of criticizing the capitalist patriarchy. It has no power to create solidarity that would destroy the complex patriarchal system.

Critical interpretation attempts to comprehend all the complexity of the patriarchy and recognize all forms and mechanisms of domination and exploitation of the patriarchal system. By engaging in a specific woman (her actual social

and economic status, and also symbolic sources, including the current system of values in which a woman lives), a critical understanding of "women's solidarity" recognizes all the sources of repression that a woman can experience (including class-based repression, ethnicity, religion, race, ethical and political beliefs and sexual orientation) and tries to offer answers to each of these problems. Engagement based on such an understanding of women's solidarity does not begin with the requirement for institutional recognition of the equality of women and men. On the contrary, critical approach criticizes institutions (the state) and the system of dominant values based on competition and violence (society).¹

In addition to all the changes in socialist development, "and especially after the effort to create unity between the village and the city within the commune, the difference between two forms of social organization of the space remains visible. In the economic farm based on private land ownership, the economic dependence of women is large, and patriarchal relations are common and have deeper roots than in the city. Under such conditions, significant differences between the needs and, therefore, the attitudes of women in the city and the village could be expected. In addition to this, data on the high illiteracy of women's population, still a result of the big influence of outdated customs, traditions, and religious misconceptions.

Tradition and patriarchy have a great influence on the life of a woman. Women from the village are especially vulnerable. From the earliest childhood they are preparing for traditional female roles, to be good wives and mothers. Nobody asks them what their wishes are, whether they want to go to school,

travel, be the owner of the household, or perhaps develop their own business.

In urban areas, the pressure of the patriarchy is lower, so women's organizations strive to help those from the rural environment. Women from cities have gone through similar, agonizing struggles to fight for their petty freedoms, so they are ready to stand side by side with women from rural areas.

Young women in the country face huge social pressures. They keep on fighting on multiple fronts. They must meet established social stereotypes. From the early age they are taught to serve a man, father, brother, husband, to give up on everything, even themselves, for them.

For these reasons, women from the cities decided to provide support, to organize workshops to inform their associates from the rural areas, to exert pressure on the state, to make women from the village more visible, to write projects aimed at empowering women from the village, to talk about it in the media.

Women are strong by themselves, as individuals. But they are much stronger when they get / join together.

That is why solidarity between women is important.

¹ Some parts are taken from the text: Women's solidarity: Good Experiences and Difficulties. Women in Black, Serbia http://zeneucnom.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=351&Itemid=104&lang=en

PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY

WHERE IS WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY?

Snežana Jakovljević - initiated and was one of the establishers of the Association of Women "Sandglass", which empowers women and advocates the improvement of gender equality. Created and coordinated the different projects in the mentioned field. As the expert in the issue of women's rights, she participated in making the number of national and local documents about the different aspects of women's rights including security and safety of women, and in a lot of events in the country, and abroad. She graduated from Faculty of the political sciences, Belgrade. In the period 2006-2009, attended and successfully finished The Development School in Hungary validated as MA in London Metropolitan University. She is the author of 4 novels.

Men rule in absolutely all social spheres ... When you watch them in the newspapers, on television, when you listen to them for years "occupying" your space, telling you how to live, what's best for you, what you feel and what you need to feel - it's it becomes overwhelming in time ... We are constantly exposed to the masculine perspective, male biology, male reason, male speech, male culture, male values, masculine thought, which is without shame being presented as universalistic, as best for all of us.

Dubravka Ugresic, writer¹

Many people could say that what Dubravka Ugresic said in an interview she gave to Pescanik is excessive because women today have more rights than ever before in history. They could say that the level of gender equality was never higher.

States have signed conventions, passed laws, established bodies and institutions for gender equality. True, no state has done so without pressures and demands from women who paid these conventions and laws, policies and good practices costly with kilometres of marching, with sleepless nights, debates, closings, with excommunications from their families and communities, divorce, staying without children, but a lot of that has been done. Then why we don't publish the end of the patriarchy? Where does this power come from that makes it restore always and over again, just when we think it's over with it?

I attended the situation once in the immediate environment. The boy and the girl were playing in the yard. The boy struck a girl; the mother heard exclamation and crying, turned to her and asked: *Why did he hit you?* So the mother did not dare to address the boy, even though it was logical, but to her daughter implying that there was a reason why she was struck by her brother and that she probably did something wrong and earned it.

It is said that the world can be a peaceful place only if people, individuals feel peaceful and safe in the communities in which they live. Women feel the least secure where they live, in the family, in the environment where they go out with their friends or their children, at the workplace. There are countless examples of this. The case of brother and sister is just one of them.

Authoritarianism and the lack of democracy in the governing, the widespread prevalence of gender prejudices, the lack of balance between the partic-

ipation of women and men in decision-making, corruption, the influence of political parties in all areas, including employment, media reporting and judiciary, non-sanctioned hate speech, nationalistic statements by senior state officials and the louder “communication noise” among the countries in the region, only two decades after the war in this region, economic poverty ... It is difficult to create and distinguish an atmosphere where women will be more effectively protected from partner and domestic violence, and other aspects of discrimination.

Professor Liz Kelly from the London Metropolitan University recently, when she was the guest in a Conference on the Protection of Women from Violence, in Belgrade, to the question where feminism is today said that one of the answers could be that feminism is everywhere where women are. In this sense, activism could be everywhere where women take different steps to survive in the world, as Dubravka Ugresic describes it.

What is, in that world, that women’s activism needs? All that it was needed for feminist activists, for example, two centuries earlier: new knowledge, solidarity and mutual understanding, courage and fidelity, networking with one another and with other progressive actors in society. But we must not forget that all that is available to us is also used by the patriarchy. So we have to stay awake.

¹ Dubravka Ugresic (27. mart 1949) is a Yugoslav, Croatian and Dutch writer. In the early nineties he wrote essays against nationalism, war and ethnic hatred (later collected in the collection of Lies Culture), which is why the Croatian media and the Croatian public proclaimed her a “traitor”, a “national enemy” and a “witch”. In 1993, Dubravka Ugresic left Croatia and has been living abroad since then (most often staying in the Netherlands), where she writes, teaches at American and European universities, and works in European newspapers and magazines. The most famous literary works: *Štefica Cvek* in the ranks of life, with the subtitle Patchwork novel (Rajko Grlić recorded the film with the same name according to the book I), *Forcing the novel of the river*, *Forbidden for reading*, *American fiction*. She has won many awards and honours.

PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY

ONE WAR, COUNTLESS BATTLEFIELDS

Anja Koprivšek is a political scientist, angry feminist, and a highly sentimental observer of the unusual. You'll find her applying for a masters in film directing, which she plans on using to artistically vent about things that make her angry.

This is one possible way of describing the situation in which women's activism finds itself - not just today, but throughout history. The war we are fighting is against patriarchy - the system of oppression which subjugates women based on their gender, placing them as the outcasts, the others of society, working through the automatism of social conditioning. But it's also important to note that women aren't just female - they belong to social groups which can either give them certain privileges or deepen the disadvantages of their gender. A woman coming from a rural area has fewer opportunities than one coming from the city; a female worker in a textile factory has fewer rights and free time than a manager, a student whose parents finance her studies has more time for education than her counterpart who has to work to sustain herself. In short, patriarchy is a complicated enemy - one that has many faces, and never works alone. Economic inequality, racism and nationalism are its allies, that need to be taken just as seriously. So, what are the battlefields? Are they places, like countries, regions, cities? Are they institutions, such as schools, universities, prisons, parliaments? Are they areas of creation and being like art, work, childcare, or sex? The answer to all these questions is a resounding "yes". And this "yes" leads to more

questions. How can we be at all these frontlines simultaneously? What kind of strategy do we need for this kind of fight? These are some of the things we need to think about when considering the perspectives of women's activism today.

While the fight for an emancipated world has remained constant, the context in which it is occurring today is new in many ways. We have new tools that we can use to our advantage; the advance of the Internet and other technologies have stimulated both communication and solidarity. Using the online as a shared space has facilitated the quick reaction system and enabled us to get better acquainted with each other's work and struggles. The #MeToo movement is one important example that shows how digital activism can produce important consequences in the non-digital realm. We are also living in a time where it can be said that the concepts of feminism and women's struggle have been "popularized" - institutions and organizations that shape the international order, such as the UN and EU, all recognize gender equality as an integral part of development. Feminism has expanded into the sphere of popular culture with influential artists claiming the label and in turn encouraging their fan bases to do the same. Major international companies appear to embrace body positivity and female empowerment, be it through commercials or the sale of "This is what a feminist looks like" T-shirts. Feminism is, seemingly, all around, and the future is, as some like to say, female. But is it?

The present is far from unequivocally positive or progressive. The strides being made are simultane-

ously threatened by the resurgence of fascist and conservative forces. There has been a new push-back on women's rights, and it has been produced by the contradictions and fluctuations of the times we live in, or more precisely, by traditionalist, conservative reactions to these new uncertainties. And while the hit on women's rights in the USA features most prominently in popularised media, the 'war on women' is ongoing in different yet similar forms elsewhere. When it comes to Europe, the Eurozone and world economic crisis has fuelled euro-scepticism and encouraged the resurgence of the right, which brings with it regressive policies that leave women in some European states struggling to preserve the rights which previous generations of women's activists had managed to secure. The decline of the social mission of the EU, paired with neoliberal capitalism and hardline individualism has eroded solidarity and left activists in a difficult position. Their mission is one of simultaneously fighting to preserve previously hard-won rights while trying to expand upon them at the same time. How can we advance in our demands if we are forced to fight for the basics all over again?

All of the world's societies, regardless of the differences between them, still exhibit patriarchal patterns, to a greater or lesser extent. The way these manifest themselves is specific, coloured by local and regional characteristics. These particularities are important. On one hand, we need international solidarity because of the international characteristics of the struggle, but on the other hand, in order to move forward, firstly we need strong, locally, nationally and regionally based movements that can gather information on the specific difficulties women are facing. In a way, we need a global focus while working locally, on the ground, since everybody's terrain has its own specific problems. In this sense, today I will be focusing on the perspectives of women's activism in the Balkans.

"Several parallels can be drawn between the descriptions of the Balkans and the Balkan male; the Balkan male serves as a metaphor for all the negative characteristics which have made the Balkans wild,

backwards and primitive. In this way, the aggressiveness and primitivism of the Balkan male are linked to war, whilst hypersexuality, domination over women and a lack of emotional intelligence are correlated to the conservative, patriarchal society and the disadvantageous position of women within it. Women in the Balkans are doomed to play a secondary role; they are passive, defining themselves either through men or their own beauty. The conclusion is that the Balkans are, almost without exception, a male space". The Balkans, as Cvetan Miranovic and, more importantly, Marina Todorova claim, have a distinctly male image. This can be thought about in several different ways; we can examine how that image of the Balkans as an inherently primitive, warrior male space, has been used as an excuse for external "civilization" of the region, or how this is related to neocolonialism and certain problematic policies. However, in spite of this "negative" use of the Balkan masculine image to assure its primitivism, it is impossible to deny its deeply traditional societies.

Several important factors shape the Balkan patriarchal scene, so to speak, and the resistance to it; on one hand, we are not immune to world trends and on the other, the context has been shaped by some events and historical issues that are exclusive to this region. Firstly, the struggle for gender equality in the Balkans isn't new - there is a long history of the autonomous struggle for women's rights. Regardless of certain errors that the communist regime committed throughout its existence, the antifascist struggle, civil war and its aftermath saw a drastic rise in the rights and status of women throughout former Yugoslavia, pioneering both legal rights such as the right to vote and the right to own property, as well as placing women in the workforce and enforcing their education. Throughout the Communist period, women played an important role in the crafting of a better, more emancipated society, that didn't only involve female concerns but also those of workers and the oppressed. However, this was tainted by the regime's insistence on the

“bourgeois” characteristics of female issues and a crackdown on the AFŽ as an autonomous female organization, in addition to the national and ethnic disparities that would escalate in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Our societies were set back drastically on the track to emancipation during the nation-building process of the nineties, which renewed the position of women as mothers and homemakers, ascribing their value to the birthing of new national heroes. Those that resisted, those that were involved in the anti-war, anti-nationalist and peace campaigns were labelled as traitors and were made to suffer for it. The legacy of the wars and the injuries they have left, the horrors committed against women and the refusal of the new national states to acknowledge them strongly shape the issues of today’s struggle. Another aspect which puts the Balkan states in a unique position is the transition from Communism and its consequences.

Lingering nationalism, reworked to address the issues of states in transition, is a barrier to female solidarity across the Balkans, something that feminist groups which operate throughout our countries are aware of. Working on the fringe, lack of funds and rejection by the mainstream discourse are obstacles that all activists here face. To further illustrate what patriarchy in the Balkans means today, I will reflect upon a series of interviews that the portal Kosovo 2.0 conducted in 2018, with some of the most prominent activists from Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia. This will help illustrate the characteristics of our battle, and our battlefields, today.

PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY

SOCIAL CHANGE REQUIRES AN INDIVIDUAL CHANGE

When thinking about the key areas of society that contemporary female activism should focus on, I can think of all aspects of life. There is no area of life which does not touch women's life. In order to answer the question of this conference, I talked to many women to define the crucial fields in which action needs to be taken to remain strong in achieving a better community, freedom and social justice. I came up with three very important directions: women have to be involved in politics, have to take more responsibility in changing policies, in formal and informal education, and to work on self-development.

In her text "Nothing says misogyny like defining feminism as equality for all" Marcie Bianco underlines: "In order to succeed, feminism needs to work within the very systems woman want to change". In other words, Bianco says that women must take more responsibility and be political, take power, not only resist and expect someone to change policies, but be involved in the system and work on the changes from the inside.

Initially, Feminism's aim was to ensure women's legal rights, known as the first-wave feminism. The Movement continued to respond to the needs of the time and therefore the focus changed throughout history. The focus of the second-wave feminism was on cultural and political inequalities, while the third wave fought for racial and gender equality.

Fourth wave feminism is defined as a movement that "combines politics, psychology, and spirituality in an overarching vision of change", according to researcher Diana Diamond. Kira Cochrane noticed the importance of technology for sharing different stories and spreading awareness about

Marjana Tomaš - Born in Mostar, during golden '80s. Mostarian, Herzegovinian woman and Psychologist - likes challenges, growth, development, moving and is enthusiastic about social and a personal change.

many cases where not only women's rights but those of different races, migrants and others, were endangered or were subject to abuse. Fourth-wave feminism, together with technology, has good foundations to transform mere protesting and resisting into a leading, taking action and direct involvement in politics/social events/social change. While marches, protests and activism are important in order to point out inequality and raise awareness, changing policies that address unconscious bias is a more systematic tactic which would work more on prevention of harassment. There would be no need to react when abuse has already been committed and is followed by the necessary work with the victim. Nurturing an attitude of self-respect in every person and encouraging people to work actively in making a change where necessary is a more effective approach which brings results.

One good example of this would be the "Everyday Sexism project" which shared more than 6000 stories that describe harassment and helped women to raise awareness on how inequality affects them. Stories of this project were used to train 2000 policeman in London and the result of the project was that it soared a number of reported harassments in public transportation. This project encouraged women to report, and above all, it supported them in recognizing that their action is

necessary for change to happen, that revolution is a thing that happens in daily life. Most of all, it gave them a feeling of self-worth.

Further on Bianco mentions Ngozi Adichie's thoughts on how historical conditioning affects the psychology of the mind and expounds upon social conditioning of women by saying: "We teach girls to shrink themselves." "Like Beauvoir and feminists before her, she locates the solution in breaking the chain of oppression in the mind and specifically through a re-training of the mind. Adichie contends in her elaboration of how gender has been inscribed as morality that "what matters even more is our attitude, our mindset," and that "the problem with gender is that it prescribes how we *should* be rather than recognizing who we are".

Feminism has to take the lead and closely work with education, formal and informal, in order to break the chain of a traditional approach to women and oppression, to work with both at the same time: men and women. In our society, raising children does not mean raising a free person and following the child's development - it means fighting against the child's character and limiting them by traditional roles, which among other things, include gender shapes. We are teaching our children, as we are taught, not to express themselves as they are.

The Second thing that feminism has to implement is encouraging women to get into the system and change it from the inside. Successful projects, as the "Everyday Sexism Project" are a good starting point to create other projects which could change policies. But women must get involved in politics more massively and be there to accept and implement it.

This is where we come to the third point which defines what we should be focusing on.

As Bianco says: "Feminism as a politics is a movement among people, but as ethics, it begins as a movement within the self. I think this is where we have to begin: within the self. Social pressure and conformity are not qualities of independent thinking but dangerous omens

of fascism and cultural decline. Instead of taking the definition of feminism as truth, we need to question what it is and what feminism means in this new century. We need to question the meaning of empowerment and seek power rather than work to corrode it in others. We need to question equality, and whether we shouldn't replace this desired ideal with that of freedom. We need to question the impulse to de-center women. We need to imagine what feminism looks like in action, in policy, and in society. And, then, we need to develop the strategies to achieve those ends."

I am working as a psychotherapist practitioner and have the opportunity to meet many women who feel that they are not secure, that they are not able to protect themselves and who feel worthless. Throughout their lives, they have been taught, many times in cruel ways, that they need to be subjected to the system, to men, to an employer, to a boyfriend. Often times, I see them not being able to come up with what they want and how they want to solve their situation. Changing this mindset, even though it is a hard and big job for all of us, is a small, individual revolution which, when happening at the same time in several places, creates a wave of breaking the chain. Changing our mindset is a crucial change which has to happen and to be one of the most important things that we should all be responsible for. Every day.

Resources:

1. "The future of Feminism: Nothing says misogyny like defining feminism as equality for all", By Marcie Bianco, March 29, 2017. Quartz
2. "The Fourth Wave of Feminism: meet the rebel women", by Kira Cochrane, December 10, 2013. The Guardian
3. Wikipedia

PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

New forms of political representation of women's interests have significantly changed the system of gender relations. This transformation has far-reaching consequences, both on the position of women and on social and class relations in society¹. A group of ideology and political movements aimed at improving the position of women in society is defined as **feminism** – understood as “belief in social, economic and political gender equality”². It is a movement that has a major impact on everyday life, language, education, legislation and theory. But it would be wrong to claim that it is a unique and homogenous social movement - there is a division of feminism into the first, second and third wave or post-feminism³.

Mihaljević analyzes this division and their individual accomplishments⁴:

- 1) *The first wave of feminism* took place in the late 19th and early 20th century, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics. The transition to an industrial society has profoundly changed the everyday lives of people and their points of view. First of all, it was focused on the right to vote, the right for education, employment rights and right to own property. But, although women got legal

Antonia Popić was born in 1994 in the city of Split, Croatia. She gained academic title Master of Sociology in 2017 at the Faculty of Philosophy and was awarded with the Dean's Award for outstanding success achieved during the study. Declares herself as feminist and activist. A member of the association “Domine” which continually promotes women's rights, equality, the fight against misogyny and all forms of discrimination.

equality, it did not mean that they had equality in the real world. It was very difficult to change old social norms and socially constructed gender roles of women.

- 2) *The second wave of feminism* is usually demarcated from the 1960s to the late 1980s. It was focused on sexuality, reproductive rights, and the wage gap. Through that time period problems related to marital and family relationships, such as divorce, marital violence, physical and psychological abuse, insult, humiliation, have evolved into a public problem. De Beauvoir's ideas on the social construction of femininity have been adopted as well as key differences between sex as a biological category and gender as social construction conditioned by culture, tradition and social relationships.
- 3) *The third wave of feminism* emerges in the '80s and '90s of the twentieth century as a reaction to what the feminists considered as the shortage of the second wave. It's about the essentialist approach of a woman with whom only white women, heterosexual educated women of the

1 Walby, S. (2005). *Rodne preobrazbe*. Zagreb: Ženska infoteka

2 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism>

3 Adamović, M. (2010). *Žene i društvena moć: sociološka obilježja žena na upravljačkim položajima u kulturi i kulturnim industrijama*. Doktorska disertacija. Zagreb: M. Adamović.

4 Mihaljević, D. (2016). *Feminizam – Što je ostvario?*. *Mostariensia*, 20 (1-2), 149-169.

middle class could identify. However, the paradigmatic image of a woman, in reality, is very heterogeneous. Hence, deeper reflections on gender and other social relations came to light.

Third wavers inherited a foothold of institutional power created by second wavers, including women's studies programs at universities, long-standing feminist organizations, and well-established publishing outlets. Although women benefitted significantly from the legal rights and protections that had been obtained by first and second wave feminists, they also critiqued what they felt was their unfinished work. These women grew up with the expectation of achievement and examples of female success as well with the awareness of the barriers presented by sexism, racism, and classism. They chose to battle such obstacles by inverting sexist, racist, and classist symbols, fighting patriarchy with irony, answering violence with stories of survival, and battle exclusion with grassroots activism. Rather than becoming part of the "machine", third wavers began both sabotaging and rebuilding the machine itself.⁵

Today questions are raised about the relationships between language and social life, including connections between linguistic change and other forms of social change. The use of language perpetuates the stereotypes for both genders. Analyses reveal different expectations of women and men embedded in the language and show how we internalize and reinforce gender differences, as we read, write and speak. Critics claim that feminism deals with trivial things such as language, due to the lack of real problems, implying that feminism is no longer needed today. But that certainly is not a trivial issue – language has tremendous power to shape attitudes and influence behavior⁶. The

media structure of modern society is changing ways of subordinating and underestimating women, especially in the direction of symbolic subordination. Objectification of women is realized through the media by imposing the ideal of beauty and now it's generally accepted that a beautiful, young woman is desirable, good, necessary and accepted. Emphasized sexualizing of women in the media shows that society has not evolved a lot. The aggressive aspect of such contents states that feminism is a process of a constant fight and not a concrete victory⁷.

Contemporary female movements do not generally have a single central organization or unified direction. Rather, the structure of any general, broad-based social movement is more diffuse-composed of a number of relatively independent organizations that differ in ideology, structure, goals, and tactics. A social movement is characterized by decentralized leadership; it is loosely connected by multiple and overlapping memberships and by friendship networks that work toward common goals. The diversity of feminist organizational forms reflects both ideological differences and the movement's diverse membership base⁸. On the territory of the former Yugoslavia, as elsewhere in the world, it has been shown that women are not a unique category, that their attitudes and decisions are not only influenced by sex and gender, but also by belonging to other social categories such as class, race and nation. In the late eighties and nineties, with great global transitions, neither feminists nor feminism proved to be homogeneous and unambiguous categories and worldviews⁹.

Feminists are pushing for the end of oppression and creating equality for everyone, but it is surprising how much we can be different in that aspiration.

5 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism/The-third-wave-of-feminism>

6 Laurel Richardson (1987). Gender stereotyping in the English language. In *Feminist Frontiers* 5th edition, Verta Taylor, Laurel Richardson and Nancy Whittier, (Eds.). McGraw-Hill. 120-124.

7 Vrcelj, S. i Mušanović, M. (2011). *Kome još (ne) treba feministička pedagogija?!*. Rijeka: Hrvatsko Futurološko Društvo

8 Taylor, Whittier, & Pelak, (2001). The women's movement: Persistence through transformation. In *Feminist Frontiers* 5th edition, Verta Taylor, Laurel Richardson and Nancy Whittier, (Eds.). McGraw-Hill. 559-572.

9 <http://www.women-war-memory.org/index.php/hr/povijest/raskol-zenske-scene>

This division is also reflected in the existence of different approaches to detecting the causes of the unequal position of women resulting in various directions of feminism, strategies and tactics. This raises the question of whether gender equality can be ensured in such circumstances. Some of the forms of feminism today are Socialist feminism (*caught up in the challenges of capitalism and male supremacy and patriarchy*); Radical feminism (*seeks to exterminate the traditional patriarchal power system, education is seen as a powerful generator of sex stereotypes and need to be radically altered*); Liberal feminism (*seeks to achieve equality in society with political and legal reform, and explain inequality by stereotyped upbringing*); Black feminism (*it has emerged as a reaction to white feminism, putting the experiences and perspectives of a black woman at the centre*); Eco-feminism (*domination over nature and women is the product of the same socio-economic mechanism*); Conservative feminism (*they are committed to change, however, their belief that changes can only be achieved in the existing system is predominant*); Cultural feminism (*exploring socio-cultural conditions that favor a man, and put women in a subordinate position*)¹⁰.

As we can see, feminism has several waves and directions; it also keeps evolving and becomes even more fragmented. Disagreements among feminists are not just theoretical but also present a challenge to the future of feminism itself. It is common for feminists of the Third Wave sometimes to decide not to call themselves feminists, but simply the fighters for women's human rights. The main reasons are disagreements with differently-oriented feminist groups. A global consensus is far from absolute - there remains polarization around issues such as lesbian rights, abortion, and sex work. Some theorists even claim that, unlike the first and second wave, there is a lack of a clearly defined common goal. But, considering that women constitute half of the

population - of course, our ideas vary wildly about what a representative movement should be. It's time to learn lessons that are now decades old, and have been faced by many other political movements. We need to understand that womanhood means very diverse things to the billions of women on this planet. We must work against perpetuating the same inequalities we fight against. And we need to do that not in competition with each other, but with the shared goal of improving the movement and world. We need to do it with the recognition that no perspective or solution will be universal, and no single woman will be anywhere near a perfect feminist¹¹.

The complexity of social reality creates space for different types of conflict, which ultimately leads to division within the movement itself. Feminists of the third wave, therefore, face the challenges posed by less privileged women and learn how to defend their attitudes in this process, how to deal constructively with the conflict. Critical interventions around race, re-thinking of much feminist theory and practice shouldn't destroy the women's movement; it needs to become stronger. Passion and deep concern for a social movement represent strength. It is important to note the fact that participants in the feminist movement could face critique and challenge while still remaining wholeheartedly committed to a vision of justice, of liberation. That is a testament to the movement's strength and power and it shows us that no matter how misguided feminist thinkers have been in the past, the will to change, the will to create the context for struggle and liberation, remains stronger than the need to hold on to wrong beliefs and assumptions¹².

11 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/may/02/feminism-trashing-shulamith-firestone>

12 Hooks, Bell, (1952). *Feminism Is for Everybody : Passionate Politics*. Cambridge, MA :South End Press, 2000. Print..

10 Vrcelj, S., Mušanović, M. (2011) *Kome još (ne)treba feministička pedagogija?!*. Rijeka: Hrvatsko Futurološko Društvo.

PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY

INTERSECTIONALITY AND DE-COLONIAL FEMINISMS AS THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

Cristina Rodríguez Alonso is a 26-year-old, after having studied Law in Spain, has decided to focus on international cooperation. This path has driven her to live in different cities in Senegal and in France. Now in Strasbourg, she works on projects related to gender equality, migration, youth and democracy. She spends her free time enjoying the opportunities that the city has to offer, preparing her next trip, talking for hours, reading books and daydreaming.

These last few years feminism has become more popular among public opinion, as a result of the fusion between traditional activism (striking and demonstrating) plus new activism (using the power of social media), achieving positive results in the fight for women's rights. More people call themselves feminists without fear, many books and articles on the topic have been published, personal and governmental actions have been taken. Some recent well-known movements are the following: #metoo, which benefits from the role of social media in our globalised societies; the Polish Black Friday, which has managed to stop a Law that would damage women's reproductive rights in Poland; the Spanish strike that protested against a sexist judicial resolution on the case La Manada, managing to provoke a public discussion demanding the modification of the article concerning rape in the national Criminal Code.

However, most of these mainstreamed movements have one thing in common: they are leaded by Western middle-class white women, who have a privileged position (economic and

political). They don't face the specific discrimination that women suffer from if they are poor, disabled, black, indigenous, lesbian, transsexual or trafficked, or if they come from disadvantaged countries. For instance, a study made in 2017 by the World Bank showed that between the age of 20 and 34 years, women are more likely to be poor than men, and the Economic Policy Institute has shared that the pay gap between white women and black women in the US is the fastest growing wage gap. Another example of special discrimination is the recently discovered case of indigenous women in Canada that have suffered from coerced sterilizations until the present day.

Award-winning author and political activist Arundhati Roy has addressed this problematic when talking about the gang rape that took place in Delhi (India) in 2012 which provoked outrage around the world. Roy said that if this horrible crime was creating such a shock, is because they were poor men assaulting a middle-class girl, whereas when it is privileged men raping poor women, as it happens everyday in India, it is actually not even punished. Activists such as Mona Eltahawy (Egyptian-American journalist) and Nana Darkoa Sekyiamah (Ghanaian member of a women's rights NGO), have criticised the fact that the #metoo stories that have had the most dissemination are those related to women from Hollywood, even though it has eventually become a worldwide movement. They have pointed out as well the strong individualism and lack of acknowledgment of community-led efforts of the #metoo movement, despite the fact that it was created by Tarana Burke, an Afro American civil rights activist and community organizer.

Taking into account the experiences of all the multi-layered facets that women from all backgrounds face when campaigning for women's rights has been called intersectionality, which is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989: *The view that women experience oppression in varying configurations and in varying degrees of intensity. Cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated, but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society. Examples of this include race, gender, class, ability, and ethnicity.*

Some of these specific characteristics are related to the consequences of a colonialist context in certain societies, and have led to the development of their own feminist movements. When the general public thinks about the defense of the rights of Muslim or African women, they may think about international development NGOs. What might come to their minds is the traditional aid projects that want to help "poor, helpless" women. Others might know about the new approach which consists on women empowerment programs, that can be noticed in how the NGOs present themselves : the main picture of Oxfam's campaign on women's rights is a group of African women holding megaphones, which wants to communicate the idea that it is these women who are fighting for their own rights with the help of the international organisation. Even though these development projects are important, as we cannot deny the inequality that women suffer from in under developed societies and the lack of economic resources of these countries, they are still leaded by Western fundings. We need as well to hear the women themselves and stop ignoring or treating them with a patronising approach.

Activist and theorist women coming from these former colonised backgrounds have shaped what could be called decolonial feminisms, such as African, Islamic and indigenous. What they all have in common is their desire to achieve gender equality without following the path of Western/ white feminism, to create strategies that take into

consideration their own context and characteristics, and the will to talk for themselves and be heard. African feminism challenges male dominance, but also other types of oppression related to Africa and based on ethnicity, culture, colonisation and globalisation. Some important African feminists are Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Mariama Bâ, Minna Salami and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. Islamic feminism is concerned with developing a reading of the bases of Islam that contributes to gender equality, as muslim women feel sometimes excluded from the mainstreaming feminist movement, which usually does not consider religion. Amina Wadud, Asma Lamrabet or Sherin Khanka have contributed to its development. Indigenous feminism in Latin America values the ideas of community and nature, and fights the colonialist oppression. Some well-known women in the movement are Aura Cumes, Julieta Paredes and Sylvia Marcos. Apart from decolonial feminisms, there are movements led by the women that directly suffer from a specific vulnerability or discrimination, such as lesbian organisations, migrant women networks or platforms of prostitution survivors.

Women rights are in danger, as the arising of the positive conversation on feminism has provoked the rise of the reject towards this word as well. The number of far-right governments is increasing, and one of their priorities is the fight against the gender equality movement. Feminism must respond with the solidarity between every women as a priority. When feminists say that the focus should be just on women and they do not take into account the specific characteristic of diverse women that are most unfairly held back by society, they are therefore just focusing on Western, privileged women. We must not ask them to wait their turn. We must not only include the various groups of women in the mainstream feminist agenda, but also listen, support and give visibility to their own movements. Fighting for gender equality means fighting for all women.

PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM TODAY

WOMEN'S ACTIVISM AND ITS FUTURE

Pedro Lapuerta Cañada - I have a degree in International Studies from the Autónoma University of Madrid. Gender studies was one of the main areas of studies and call my attention due the little amount of knowledge we have about it. I applied gender studies into international actuality to promote a wider vision and to explain economic, political and social realities and the adversities the feminist movement is facing and that will have to face.

Over the past century, women's activism has achieved many significant, lasting and essential social changes in gender roles and relationships. Of course, there is still a lot to be done. What are the key areas of society which contemporary female activism should focus on, while striving to achieve greater humanity, freedom and social justice?

Introduction

There are many people today who see that modern society is heading toward disaster in one way or another and who recognize feminism as a way for a more just and a free society and those who see feminism as a direct threat to their power. The normative role that women play in a given society is always altered by the economic and political events of the moment. The gender system not only shapes our identity but also contributes to the organization of the world's system and socioeconomic structures. In today's society we can define Gender as a "social and cultural construction of the categories of masculinity and femininity" that determines a different attribution of personal traits, attitudes,

feelings, qualities, behaviors and activities to the male and female like weakness and strength, delicate and brave. The action of feminism has evidenced gender inequality and brought people into debate.

1º we have those who see how the system accentuate the gender roles and want to do something against it. Here we find the 1º problem of feminist, the different discourses and the will of people to impose their personal goals that leads to the lack of collective action.

2º we have those who see feminism as a direct threat to their power and social position within the system.

Characteristic of gender and work

Capitalism creates, strengthens and legitimizes a sexual division of labor that devalues and invisibles the reproductive work of women without which it is not possible to understand the functioning of the capitalist system.

Globalization and the neoliberal policies of market liberalization have allowed multinationals to seek "higher productivity at the lowest cost", which has led to the feminization of labor and the "intensification of gender segregation and feminization of work".

The triple working day (political, labor and domestic) versus the double (labor and political) of men, the occupational segregation that implies the lack of access of women to places where the top economic and political system is recruited.

Climate change as social change

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a special report on the impacts of global warming at 1.5°C, finding that limiting global warming to this level will require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes at all levels of society.

Gender implication practices related to climate change adaption. For example, mitigate climate change through promoting ecosystem services to avoid deforestation, pollution, overexploitation, etc. This would help to guarantee the resources for a longer-rate period and promote a change of consciousness.

Violent conflict effects on women

Today due to armed conflicts: 68.5 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes. Among them there are almost 25.4 million refugees, more than half under the age of 18. In terms of gender: Europe, 39% of the refugees are women; in Africa they represent 51% of the total; Middle East and North Africa they represent 50%; Asia and the Pacific, they represent 48%; in the Americas they represent 47%.

This figures evidence the high probability of sexual violence women can experience during this conflicts.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence, including sexual slavery, sterilization and forced marriage are now treated as one of the most serious violations against international humanitarian law.

If we focus at European level we find that Germany, United Kingdom and Italy have the highest numbers of femicide by the partner on 2017. Gender violence in Europe 2014.

Effects of colonization

Colonization and westernization. In an interview to Mercedes Olivera, a Mexican feminist anthropologist in Chiapas, declares: "Indigenous feminism does not separate itself from the social movement. The main problem that indigenous women have is hunger, and we see that poverty is part of the subordination of gender, class, ethnicity, together, that cannot be separated. We need to articulate our struggles, but the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous is very difficult. The approaches and claims of one and the other are totally different... Through the school penetrates Western culture, which is not a form of women's liberation, but a

space where women have the possibility of knowing another culture".

This declaration might evidence the difference between; Western feminism, which tends to be liberal and individualistic and Indigenous feminism in their majority.

Rebels against democracy

For example, Claudia Koonz's, *Mothers in the Fatherland* (1988) have made clear, the possibility of women being "rebels against democracy". Studies of women in labor unions and suffrage struggles, but also research on right-wing women activists, the complex political message of fundamentalist women, or groups like Femen and Pussy Riot. Some feminist groups can experience hypersensitivity and anxiety to prove that women are as strong and as capable as men, they are nagged by a fear that women may NOT be as capable and as strong as men. Self-hatred of feminist through intentionally provoke police, racist, male chauvinists, etc.

Feminism on fight (Western Europe and USA?)

The second issue concerns the democratic forms of women's activism. Today's female activists have embraced a three-pronged strategy pioneered by their foremothers that stresses modern communications, office-seeking and voter turnout.

1. Harness modern media

Today's organizers are savvy Twitter, Facebook and Instagram users. A century ago, female activists excelled at using the latest communications technologies of their day – radio broadcasts, telephones and glossy magazines.

2. Run for office

In the 1920s, women began to run for school boards, local treasurer and clerk positions, state legislatures and even for Congress. Only 3.6% of heads of state or government presidents are women. In some cases they have taken advantage of their family ties with illustrious men to gain power (Indira Gandhi in India, Cory Aquino in the Philippines or Benhasir Brutto in Pakistan).

3. Get out the vote

Then, like now, female activists realized that voting matters. Feminist organizations call the population to demonstrate to “close the way to fascism”, January 15. A series of rallies and mobilizations are convened in the different Andalusian capitals and almost all of Spain, thousands of people take to the streets to protest against the right-wing party’s proposals to repeal laws and regulations that protect women’s rights. Feminism has to select specific objectives and with irreversible consequences for it to be a permanent change and must do so in the fastest possible way.

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ART AND WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

WOMEN POWER IN ART MANAGEMENT

Since 2012, I am active in Mostar's social community, my activism has started in the Youth Center Abrasevic and the Youth Council of Mostar. I am one of the founders of the Street Arts Festival in Mostar and I leading this festival last 7 years with a group of women artists and activists. Through that festival, we managed to enhance the public space, give it a new visual identity and create a new dynamic on the streets of the city. Numerous ruins, abandoned spaces, areas in construction, buildings, schools, public and cultural institutions were painted. There are over 100 murals in Mostar in different parts of the city. Through this festival, our team is strengthened year after year. We come up with new knowledge, we are professionally upgrading, and most importantly, we are building a very strong cultural platform that brings young people from different generations, cultures and artists from all over the world.

When it comes to focus on women in art and activism, though in Street Art we are mostly represented and prominent men, we strive to animate as many young women as possible in this art concept. We also welcome female artists from other cities and countries that can be an example of active artists in the field of street art.

Last year during the festival, in cooperation with our partners Local Democracy Agency, we had an interesting collaboration between the mentioned artists: TKV from Belgrade and Sunita Fišić from Sarajevo. We think that it is really important to create possibilities where artist from different countries can collaborate and empower each other.

Marina Đapić - also known as Marina Mimoza, is a journalist, PR and a cultural manager. She was born in Kupres but now she is settled in Mostar. For 7 years she has been engaged in the realization of the Street Art Festival in the city on Neretva. As a youth activist, she has led the Youth Council of Mostar on behalf of Youth Cultural Center "Abrašević", where she started working on her first cultural projects.

We also organize the first independent exhibitions for young people, and in this way, we want to encourage them to even more create, exhibit and affirm. We notice that young talented women in Mostar are mostly shy and they don't have lot of confidence to share with public their talents, art, and music, and because of that, we decide to motivate them through Street Art Festival to exhibit and show people what they create.

Last year we realized an interesting empowering project that came from the Street Arts Festival and it was focused on women in art and activism. We call it WomEmpower Festival and it was realized in September 2018. The whole story about that idea began in Berlin. I was in a private visit and met with the artists I met at the Street Arts Festival in Mostar. We began to talk about the fact that behind the Street Arts Festival are women, and that was very interesting to them, and they suggest that we try to realize some exchange between women from Bosnia and Herzegovina and German. After we wrote a project who was supported in Germany and we realize artist exchange in Berlin and Mostar. We

gathered 10 female artists and activists from Mostar, Sarajevo and Banja Luka, with whom we collaborated on the Street Arts Festival and travelled to Berlin where 10 artists and activists host us. We met with their work, the city and our participants had the opportunity to work and create in Berlin. This was a good opportunity to get to know a new culture and to make them a stimulus for further creativity. Before the exchange in Berlin, we also work hard on the idea of Women Empower festival in Mostar and get support for his realisation. When we back from Berlin we host here in artist from Berlin, region and other cities from Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is the first time in Mostar that such a project has happened that has gathered in one place more than 30 female artist and activists.

We organise art colony, exhibitions, dialogue events, music events ...

The topic of our art colony was women of course, and we want to motivate participants to exchange their opinion about the position of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before they start painting they talk with a social worker and activist Aldijana Trbonja Tule who last 10 years work with women in a safe house in Mostar.

Initiatives and projects like this are just a start for something bigger and for more solidarity between women and people generally.

Art is a powerful tool to helps us build a better society and bring new ideas to expression.

ART AND WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

HAVE THERE REALLY BEEN “NO GREAT WOMEN ARTISTS”? FEMINIST RESPONSES, AND WOMEN ARTIVISM TODAY.

Warning: Although it is not its main focus, this paper mentions sexual assault (no details).

The subject is vast so I will focus here on the absence of recognition for women in visual arts, and the feminist response to this situation, in the western context and more specifically in France.

To begin with, let's talk about the place of women in art institutions, or lack thereof. The vast majority of renowned artists are men. In visual arts, women are present as models or muses, meaning they are often represented, but rarely recognized as artists themselves. As in so many other fields, we are considered as objects, and not as subjects.

In the past, this could be explained by the difficulty for women to study, and even more to access artistic training. (As a reminder, for a long time, the idea of women studying anatomy was scandalous, because it meant they would see naked bodies. Most of art schools were open strictly to men, for example “les Beaux-Arts”, the School of Fines Arts of Paris, was not open to women until 1900. Then, women could be admitted as students, but only in some specific, “exclusively female” workshops.)

Though, we know there have been some successful women artists, as for example Sofonisba Anguissola, an Italian painter who lived and worked during the “Renaissance” in the late XVI and early XVII century, and became the official painter of the Spanish Court. You also probably know the famous Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, who is now considered as a feminist icon, but people are usually more familiar with her face and her mono brow than her work. In her paintings, she addresses gender identity, beauty standards,

Melusine Brillant - I'm a student, a feminist activist and a lesbian living in Paris with my girlfriend and our cat. I graduated in visual arts, and I'm currently working on my master degree in gender studies. My research interests include women's and feminist art, lesbian and queer history, sexual norms, fetishes, and sex workers' art, narratives and politics.

and some difficult feminine experiences such as miscarriage, which she experienced herself.

However, other women artists developed strategies to work anyway, but they are not as well known. Some of them used men pseudonyms, as the French lesbian couple Lucy Schwob (best known as Claude Cahun), and her partner Marcel Moore (Suzanne Malherbes of her real name) who worked in the late XIX and early XX century. There also have been – and sadly, still are – straight couples who worked together, but the public only know the name of the man (for example, the famous contemporary Bulgarian artist Christo, known for wrapping monuments with fabric, actually worked with his French wife Jeanne-Claude Denat, but they started to sign both of their names only a few years before she died.

Have there really been “no great women artists”?

Nowadays a large majority of art students are women, however, this imbalance remains. So *why have there been no great women artists?* This is the question asked by the American art historian Linda Nochlin, in her eponym essay published in 1971. Are women so much less talented than men? According to her, the answer is elsewhere:

First, there is the influence of language: the way we talk about art reflects a masculine conception of the field. The expressions “masterpiece” or “old masters” are typical examples. In response to this observation, two British art historians, Roszika Parker and Griselda Pollock published a book called *“Old Mistresses”*, in 1981. The title questions the absence of women in art history dominant narratives, but also the sexual connotation of the term “mistress”, reflecting the way in which language reproduces sexist inequalities.

The criteria on which we judge artworks are also male-centered. So-called “feminine” techniques (such as ceramic, crochet or embroidery) are not traditionally considered as “fine art”. Just as women’s knowledge and beliefs (as for example witchcraft, midwifery or fortune telling) have been systematically discredited through history. On that base, women’s legacy is often forgotten, and we probably lost a great number of artworks as well.

Feminist responses and women’s activism today

As a response to this systematic oversight, women artists developed various strategies to affirm their presence, and to deliver a feminist message.

The Guerrilla Girls are a US-based group of anonymous women artists, created in 1985 and self-proclaimed “conscience of the art world”. Still active, they denounce the sexism of the art institutions through giant posters, displayed in public space. They do not hesitate to give names, attacking famous galleries directly. They also include statistics, which they keep up-to-date by re-editing their posters, to follow eventual progress, or lack thereof. They preserve their anonymity by wearing gorilla masks, because they want people to pay attention to their message rather than their identities. This is also a way to cultivate the idea that a member of the group could be present at any artistic event to denounce sexist curating practices. Their best

known slogan is “Do women have to be naked to enter the MET museum?”.

The same strategy is used by two other American artists: Jenny Holzer, who projects or paints her messages on buildings all over the world, and Barbara Kruger, who reuses and diverts advertising images, associating them with her own slogans. One of her pieces, saying “Your body is a battleground”, was even used as a flyer for the March for abortion and birth control in Washington, in 1989.

This kind of practices are referred to as “artivism”, which is a contraction of the terms “art” and “activism”. Feminist activism main concerns include self-representation, archive practices, reclaiming women’s techniques and knowledge, and intersectionality.

Self-representation

Self-representation quickly emerge as a strategic feminist issue : a necessary response to the stereotypical and passive image of women in art. To overcome this supposed passivity, the French artist Niki de Saint Phalle started to use guns in her action, and she literally shot the symbolic figure of patriarchy, in her work *The death of the patriarch* (1962).

The Austrian artist Valie Export, as well, uses weapons to demonstrate women’s strength. In her action *Genital Panik* (1969), she enters an art cinema during a film festival, and faces the audience while holding a gun, and wearing cut out pants which show her genital. This is an aggressive exhibition of her body, by her own initiative and conditions.

Other artists, as Japanese Yoko Ono and Serbian Marina Abramovic, use passivity as a way to confront people to their own personal, and collective responsibility. In her performance *Cut Piece* (1964/2003), Yoko Ono sits still in front of her audience, and invites people to cut her clothes.

As for Marina Abramovic, her performance *Rythm 0* (1974), is in the same vein, except for the consequences. The setting is a bit more complex: she stands still in front of the audience, but behind her, on the wall, we can read the following message: “On the table there are 72 objects with which you can do what you want to me. Performance. I am an object. I take responsibility for everything that will happen in this

time frame. Duration: 6 hours.”

The objects are set in two categories: the objects of pleasure (feathers, bread, wine, etc.) , and the objects of destructions (whip, blades, shackles, and even a loaded gun.) Both artists chose willingly to stay passive, in order to show people how awkward and dangerous it could feel when women act in the way they are commonly represented. Sadly for Marina Abramovic, her experience started safely, but it quickly escalated, and she was sexually assaulted during her performance.

To continue to confront the idea of women as objects, let's talk about artists who chose to invite people to interact with their body, under determined circumstances, enlightening the notion of consent. In her performance *Tap and touch cinema* (1968), Valie Export wears a box equipped with curtains, through which she invite people to touch her breast. The volunteer can touch her, but only because she decided it, and following her conditions. She affirms that she is not an object, precisely by confronting the other person to her gaze, since they are face to face.

She uses her body as a tool to make consent visible, other push the idea even further and claim the right to profit from it. I'm thinking about Orlan, who provoked quite a scandal with her installation/performance *Le baiser de l'artiste* (*The artist's kiss*), in 1977. Visitors could chose to light a candle for “Saint Orlan” (a full scale photography of the artist dressed as a saint), or to pay 5 francs (the French money from before euros) to kiss her. She was standing behind a print of her bust, groomed as a slot machine. The collaborative performance group Feminist Art Workers, just as well, confronts the normative division of women between the antagonist figures of the saint and the whore, with the performance *Pieta, Afloat*, in 1978.

Other artists make more literal profit from their bodies, as for example Annie Sprinkle, who is both an artist, a sex educator, and a porn performer. Her action *Public Cervix Announcement* (1990) was a milestone in the feminist movement, because it was about consent and sex education at the same time. She sat on a chair, placed a speculum

in her vagina, and invited her audience to look at her cervix. By using her own body to show people something that is usually invisible, she participated to educate them about sex and anatomy, and she encouraged women to explore their own bodies.

Speaking of bodies, another stake of women self representation concerns normative beauty standards. In her show *La belle indifférence* (*the beautiful indifference*), the choreographer and sex worker Gaelle Bourges replicates typical postures and attributes from academic nude paintings, and show how they are similar to the ones used by sex-workers to arouse their clients. By doing that, she demonstrates how normativity affects our desires.

Feminist artivisms aims to confront normalized beauty standards, and numerous artworks were produced in that way. For example, Ana Mendieta's performance *Facial hair transplants* (1972), or more recently Maïc Batman's serigraphies *Rapunzel is a hairy tale*, and *Self portrait in king* actively blur the limits between genders, reminding us of drag shows, and practices of gender hacking in queer communities. In parallel, *Les trois Grâces*, (*The three Graces*) by Niki de Saint Phalle, and the series *Gluteus Maximus* by the photographer Linda Trime are working to destroy the idea that all bodies should be slim and white, by featuring a variety of morphologies and skin colors. Nadège Grebmeier Forget's performance *La Chandeleur* (*Candlemas*) goes in the same way. The artist mixes the ingredients to make pancake batter in her tight, then she rubs the mixture on her thighs, alongside her legs, and collects it in a hot pan. She finally makes a pancake, which she decorates with flowers and glitters.

Memorial practices

The problem of archives has revealed itself crucial to face the recurrent loss of women's cultural legacy. In response to this situation, artists are now working to preserve women's memory, but also the history of the feminist movement.

The Guerrilla Girls, for example, maintain their anonymity by borrowing the names of famous

feminist art figures, making sure at the same time they are not forgotten. The American artist Judy Chicago, as well, produced one of the most emblematic pieces of feminist art: *The Dinner Party*, in 1979. It is an installation realised by a group of women, directed by the artist. It featured a triangular banquet table, with 39 elaborate place settings for 39 mythical and historical famous women. Many plates depict brightly colored vulva forms. On the floor, we can see the names of 999 important women historical figures.

Another memorial practice is called “reenactment”: when an artist reactivates a performance from the past. It can be the same artist reenacting her own piece, as Yoko Ono did with her second representation of *Cut Piece* in 2003, adding the issue of her aging body to the ones she did already address. But it can also be another person reenacting an artist’s performance as a tribute and/or new interpretation, as in the three following examples:

First, let’s talk about Camille Dejean’s *Reenactment of Ana Mendieta, Untitled (Facial hair transplants)* (2016). The French artist ensures Mendieta’s work survives in our memories, by recreating it quite faithfully, showing concerns about gender normativity and beauty standards are still relevant today.

We can also mention *Mirror Box* (2017), by the Swiss artist and model Milo Moiré. This is a reenactment of Valie Export’s 1968 *Tap and Touch Cinema*. Milo Moiré’s version is an homage, as well as a renewed interpretation: she performs two variations of the original piece, keeping the same device, but covering the box with mirrors, confronting people to their own image when they come to touch her. In her second version, the box is placed on the lower part of her body, as a skirt, and she invites the public to touch her genitals, in an attempt to push the original point even further. It led her to several arrestations.

There is also *Rythm 2.0* (2018), by the french artist Sophie Nguyen. It is a tribute to Marina Abramovic’s *Rythm 0* (1974). This version is a free adaptation of the original work. The setting is the same, but the context is different: the action takes

place in Strasbourg, France, during the “Ladiy”, a feminist festival, rather than in a gallery or an art fair. Moreover, the artist changed the text behind her. This time, the public can read: “I am not an object. You have at your disposal these objects. Everything happening during this time period will be your responsibility.” She gives back the responsibility to the public, summing people to be conscious of their actions on her body. The objects, as well, are not exactly the same. This time, there are items referring to gender expression (such as make up or a tie), and to the artist’s Vietnamese origin. Therefore, Sophie Nguyen introduces questions about racism and the exotisation of Asian women. Last but not least, *Le baiser de la pute (the whore’s kiss)*, a free interpretation of Orlan’s *The Artist’s kiss*, by LNI, a Greek artist and sex-worker based in Paris. Her version still deals with the hypocritical division of the feminine image into either a saint or a whore, but it also suggests that the whore’s kiss is much more expensive. (The sign says the Virgin Mary kisses for 2 euros, while the whore asks 5). This is an invitation to de-stigmatize sex work and people who choose to gain from their bodies.

On the actual French feminist scene, I wanted to mention the photographer Linda Trime, whose work questions the criteria on which we determine what should be remembered or not, by documenting her own life experiences, as well as the Parisian lesbian and queer nightlife (*Diary, The room behind my head*). She also addresses other feminist’s issues, such as the father/daughter relationship (in her video *Daddy’s girl*), abortion (*Watching the blood run pink*), or domestic work and depression, in her self-portraits.

Revaluation of women’s knowledge

Another function of feminist activism is to revalue feminine techniques and knowledge, which are usually disregarded both by science and art institutions. For example: Olek, a polish artist based in New York, produced exclusively crocheted artworks. Here, we see the giant portrait she made of Susan B. Anthony, a figure of the feminist

movement in the US. The image is entirely made of crochet, and is mainly pink, as most of Olek's works.

Joana Vasconcelos, a Portuguese artist actually exhibited in Paris, is another fervent defendress of feminine techniques and aesthetic, as we can see in her monumental textile sculpture *Material Girl*, which is made of bright pink fabric, fake fur, beads, glitter, etc. Objects of everyday life associated with femininity are also recurrent in her work. She actually seems quite cynical : *Marilyn (AP)* is a giant pair of heels made of pans ; *A Bride*, an enormous chandelier made of tampons, and the very poetic title *Flowers of my desires* actually refers to a penetrable structure of feather dusters.

The Canadian street artist Shelley Miller also uses traditionally "feminine" techniques, as suggests the title of her series

Sugarcoating, which refers to pastry ornament.

Apart from techniques, feminist artists are working to commemorate, preserve and transmit women's knowledge. Maïc Batmane's serigraphies *Queer Sabbat* (2018), and *Hysteria – the hyena and the witch* (2018) explore the aesthetic of witchcraft, the first one featuring the well-known feminist slogan "We are the grand daughters of the witches you couldn't burn". In Parallel, Loup Oyarzun's *Queer Tarot – The Hero-in-es* is reinterpreting divination and fortune telling by integrating subtle references as the lgbt, queer and feminist cultures.

Last but not least, Cynthia Monthier's video installation, *Mise en pli (Setting)*, presented for the first time in Paris this winter, offers to the view the work of those we never see: hotel maids. And as Jenny Holzer wrote it in one of her works : *every one's work is equally important*.

Intersectionality

In conclusion I would like to mention another important concern in feminist movements, and therefore in feminist art: intersectionality. We need to consider the crossings between diverse forms of inequalities, in order to fight them. We cannot defeat patriarchy without addressing racism,

homophobia, ableism, transphobia, etc.

About race, we saw earlier that Sophie Nguyen addresses this issue in her performance *Rhythm 2.0*. If we pay attention, the three *Graces* by Niki de Saint Phalle have three different skin colors. But one very clever proposition is the work of the African American artist Adrian Piper: *My Calling (Card)*, which she distributed in parties, to people who made racist or sexist comments, from 1986 to 1990.

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ART AND WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

ACTIVIST ART

Kaća Dimitrijević - Graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts at the University of Arts in Belgrade, so now I have the title master painter. I am currently working as a coordinator of the program for the Alternative cultural center "The Nest" in Kruševac, Serbia, which involves management of the exhibition space at the gallery, management of various workshops and art classes, conceptualization of annual program focus. I am a member of the artistic collective "Fakirs from the South".

Activism in the broadest possible sense refers to the use of direct action (act - active - activism - action etymologically the same word) towards the achievement of predetermined goals, and it is opposed to appealing to other entities for achieving those goals. For instance, if a person removes the dangerous obstacle from the road he is an activist, which he/she would not be if he/she informed the local traffic safety inspections so that they could take action, or just driving around it and forgetting about it. In a more constricted and more frequently used sense, the word refers to political and social activism, taking action to achieve political and social goals and influence the social life of a community.

Art is a form of expression and communication, its purposes and intentions and methods evolved through history, starting from simple beautification and craftsmanship, crossing over the teaching and influencing people to finally focusing on the message itself and giving the artist complete freedom of choice in the matter of methods and artist intentions.

Activism art, therefore, is creativity in regards

to social and political issues taking direct action towards achieving political and social goals through creativity. It involves the artist and the work of art being in close and direct contact with a community (street art) and it also involves that community in the creative process. The works of activism art

Activism art must instigate dialogue about social and political issues, it must generate a response, it must provoke the viewers to readdress the system of values that are promoted by society. The difference between art activist and a social activist is mostly about that method of transferring the message, as social activists focus more on the consequences of their messages and art activists focus more on the messages themselves, and the methods by which those messages are created and communicated. Thus, the messages of art activists are more complex, cryptic and unique than those of social activists.

The Guerrilla Girls are famous feminist activist artists. Over 55 people have been members over the years, some for weeks, some for decades. Their anonymity keeps the focus on the issues, and away from who they might be. They wear gorilla masks in public and use facts, humour and outrageous visuals to expose gender and ethnic bias as well as corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture. They undermine the idea of a mainstream narrative by revealing the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair. They believe in an intersectional feminism that fights discrimination and supports human rights for all people and all genders. They have done over 100 street projects, posters and stickers all over

the world, including New York, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Mexico City, Istanbul, London, Bilbao, Rotterdam, and Shanghai, to name just a few.

Serbian woman activist artists:

TKV is Belgrade based street artist. After attending high school for graphic arts, department of photography, she pursued her formal education in media theory and has been awarded an MA in Culture of Global Media in 2012. She has been actively involved in her artistic practice since 2004, departing from street art and later pursuing different techniques and media—from furniture redesign to 3D printing.

In order to bring together public and gallery spaces, the artist creates and intervenes in public space. By leaving her own imprint on the appearance of the public space, she exercises her right to the city and opens a dialogue about who has right over public spaces and what kind of spaces allow changing. Dynamics of the city influences the art that emerges in a public space. Her works can be seen in the book *Women Street Artists: The Complete Guide*, by Xavier Tapies, which places her among the top 50 street artist worldwide today.

Jelena Šantić - The founder of the Group 484, was a ballerina vocalist, but she was one of the most important peace activists in Serbia and the countries of the former Yugoslavia. Since 1991, she has been the initiator of many peace demonstrations, numerous networks for the cooperation of non-governmental peacekeepers in the country and the region, and a leader in projects to help refugees and reconciliation among warring parties. She was a member of the Belgrade Circle, she participated in the establishment of the European Movement in Serbia and the Center for Antiwar Action. For her peacekeeping activities, in 1996, Pax Christi International awarded her an annual Peace Prize. As a prestigious ballet artist, she played the most important roles in a large number of

performances during her highly successful ballet career. She also created choreographies for a large number of drama shows and films.

Tanja Ostojić (born 19 August 1972 in Užice) is a feminist performance artist. Her work draws inspiration from her own experience as a non-European Union citizen, a traveller and female artist. She has lived in Serbia, Slovenia, France, and Germany, but refuses to claim any particular nationality. In 2005 she became well known in Europe as a result of her poster *After Courbet, L'Origine du monde*, also referred to informally as “*EU Panties*”, the work, a satire of French Realist *Gustave Courbet's 1866 painting L'Origine du monde*, was first displayed on billboards at the public exhibition *EuroPart* held in Vienna in December 2005-January 2006.[5] Her version displayed her own crotch, clothed in blue underwear complete with EU stars. The image was meant as an ironic suggestion that foreign women are only welcome in Europe when they drop their underwear. Her grand theme is the “arrogance of the EU” with regards to the integration of south-eastern Europe into the union. For south-east Europeans, and particularly women, becoming resident in the EU is often only possible through marriage, which she depicts as a form of prostitution.

ART AND WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

AVAILABLE TO ALL, UNDERSTANDABLE TO ALL - THE PURPOSE OF POLITICAL ART

Vanja Halupa - I finished primary and high ballet school Lujo Davico in Belgrade. Currently, I'm studying about feminism and feminist movement at the Center for women and gender studies. In future, I hope I could help another people through my art asking questions and searching for answers, and I hope I can change or question someone's point of view as feminist activist play *Three guineas* helped me realizing some crucial things about the feminist movement, patriarchy, politics, education, solidarity...

During my fourth and final year of ballet school, I had the opportunity to take part in various kinds of plays and performances. However, none of them shook me, shocked me, or caused me to reconsider everything I once believed in the way that the *Three Guineas*, a feminist play based on the essay by writer, pacifist and activist Virginia Woolf, did.

The difference between the plays that I had worked on before and the *Three Guineas* was that the former were not activist plays; they didn't have a political message that they wanted to get across, or if they did, it wasn't clear. The people participating in them also didn't seem to have strong political convictions. They were there for their pay or the status or the prestige or the professional experience. At the time, I wasn't aware of this lack of deeper purpose, because I didn't have any experience that would have helped me see it. At school, we were taught how to dance and look beautiful while doing it; we were taught that the point was for movement to look dramatic and interesting. We could know

what the idea behind those movements was, but it didn't matter if the audience did. And this was the problem.

My opinion is that, for something to be considered good art, it needs to communicate with the public and have a structure in its delivery. More often than not, we find ourselves preoccupied with the approval of the audience and applause, rather than with quality and sense to what it is that is being said. I consider art to be a good medium for the spreading of political attitudes, education, raising awareness, the development of critical thinking and opening discussions. Art is a way to fight for your beliefs and a way to impact the beliefs of others. Plays uninterested in important social issues, art that just stays in art and doesn't go further than pure aesthetic, is always missing something.

Working on the play, gaining insights into topics I hadn't previously thought about, topics that were given no weight in the everyday sense changed my perception of art. The principles we were learning through it started "intervening" in my life. All the masks of the patriarchy I hadn't noticed before suddenly fell away, along with behaviours and attitudes I'd been taught to view as normal. "If she's the professor, she's the one that speaks. If he's the choreographer, you'll dance as he says. It's normal." "If you're a girl, you have to dance on tiptoe and can't do male jumps. It's only natural". I started resenting the authoritarian divide that leaves the director/professor with all the rights, even when they are not right, while the student is forced to be submissive. These lacks of cooperation, this unwillingness to question the rules, are a big part

of the patriarchal system. Whenever you attempt to fight patriarchy, it will always fight back; this is what I learned when I started openly stating that I was a feminist; my professors laughed at my convictions. Some of my friends started using the label as an insult. Others, meaning well, tried to tell me that there was no need to choose sides, no need for what they labelled as extremism. But there is a need, and this was proven through the play, that changed us through the process of performing and adaptation.

The Guineas happened spontaneously, they are played spontaneously but always with a set goal; reaching the target public and sending a political message. It asks us to consider one main question - if women can prevent war and how, while asking us many more related questions about education, emancipation, female and also male oppression within the patriarchal system.

It is a play that touches on topics of faith, church, patriotism, class, and one that considers all of these aspects when considering the role of women.

Women's problems are addressed through three essays - three coins; three guineas.

The first part of the essay talks about women and education, the second problematizes professions while the third considers art and the church.

For each part, she asks for one coin; one coin to change the foundations of the patriarchal system.

The essay feels contemporary; it is easy to read and to understand, applicable to problems we are facing today. All the topics Woolf considered still haunt our public and private experiences, and through this play, we get to see the full absurdity of such attitudes, because they are being mocked in a critical way.

I would like to mention some important aspects of this play. Firstly, there is no hierarchy in the division of roles; the text is equally distributed and all roles hold equal importance; there is no main role and each attitude Woolf expresses reflects our own. This is something that I think

contributes to the success and longevity of this project.

Another characteristic of this play is that it's poor - it has a simple and functional scenography that serves its purpose. We don't care about spectacle or applause, since the message we're sending matters more than, to quote Woolf herself "glories and praise". This is an amateur play, and through this approach, it battles the professionalism that is criticized in the text itself; young girls interested in the topic of the play have been given a chance to participate, regardless of their (in)experience. The attitudes expressed in the text live in the very structure of the play.

Just as important as the play itself are the discussions that are conducted after it. They are always different, and it's not possible to give an objective commentary on whether it is better interpreted in rural or urban areas. It is especially interesting to see how young people react to these topics since for many of them this is their first time coming across such topics.

Because I know how this "forbidden knowledge" helped me to realize things that I hadn't thought about or heard of, I know the value of activist art and the influence it can have on young people. I truly believe that we have the power to change things, and this is something that I prove to myself every day.

ART AND WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

HAS THE HISTORY OF ART BEEN TOLD BY BOTH PARTS? AN ITALIAN PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN'S ACTIVISM IN ART

Vanessa Frison - I'm an Italian art's lover. I graduated in clinical psychology with a master thesis on stereotypes about women. I'm not a feminist, I'm a woman. We should not feel that we have to fight all the time, we should just live as assertive human beings.

Give voice. Voice to the other half of the moon. Create space. Space for dialogue and discussion. Those are among the aims that the Feminist art movement had, emerged in the late 1960s among the fervour of the rights movements. Until that moment the history of Art had been told by men. As in every field in which women tried to take their place, they entered not as a counterpart of men, but as a minority that hadn't talked so far. Considering the works of art made until that moment as universal, gives a biased vision because as Joan Snyder said: *"...women's experiences are very different from men's. As we grow up socially, psychologically and every other way, our experiences are just different. Therefore, our art is going to be different."* Unlike men, women felt the weight of using art not only as an object for aesthetical admiration, but mainly as part of their battle to raise their voice. As the artist Suzanne Lacy declared, the goal of Feminist art was to "influence cultural attitudes and transform stereotypes. "Feminist art created opportunities and spaces that previously did not exist for women and minority artists, as well as paved the path for the Identity art and Activist art of the 1980s.

The field of painting and sculpture was historically male-dominated, therefore feminist artists decided to use alternative materials and techniques to create their art works. Trying to differentiate themselves, women stressed the research for non-traditional means of expression, expanding the definition of fine art and incorporating a wider variety of artistic perspectives. In particular, they started to focus on Performance Art, Video Art, Conceptual Art and Body Art.

The department of visual art NABA published in 2017 a study entitled "Donne Artiste in Italia - Presenza e Rappresentazione", in which they analyses the percentage of presence of women among the Italian artists operatives in the year 2016-2017. What emerged shows that there is still a lot of work for women activists in art. Despite 67% of art students are women, only 18% of art works presents in art galleries belong to women. Furthermore, only 19% out of the total of personal exhibitions is reserved to a woman artist.

Some exponents of Feminist Art in Italy are:

Vanessa Beecroft (Genova, 1969): She worked a lot with the concept of "tableaux vivants". The subjects are almost naked women deprived of the possibility of dialogue and relationship, frozen behind an invisible barrier. Vanessa Beecroft wants to bring the attention on the theme of women as object of the gaze and desire of men and society.



Performance VB53 Tepidarium del Giardino dell'Orticultura, 2005

Ketty La Rocca (La Spezia, 1938 - Firenze, 1976): Contemporary avant-garde artist, Ketty La Rocca tried to respond to the information bombardment typical of the language of the new mass society with the same "weapons": slogans, billboards, stereotypical images, subversive visual-verbal collages created by cutting and pasting images from advertisings, road signs. Furthermore, in the famous series "Craniologia" La Rocca has superimposed her finger s over the ray-x image of her cranium. For example, in Craniologia 5 (1973), the position of the finger looks as if it is poised to shut up the woman.



Ketty La Rocca, Craniologia 5, 1973, 2 parts, overlapped, x-ray and handwriting on plexiglass, 70 x 50 cm. Courtesy: Amanda Wilkinson Gallery, London



Ketty La Rocca, Documentazione fotografica dell'azione Approdo, 1967.



Intellettuali in collegio
(1965-1966)

MP5 (Bologna): Illustrator and street artist widely known for her large and incisive black and white murals. In the last ten years, she has linked her works to feminist activism, showing her critical and politically engaged vision of reality.



Non Una Di Meno 2017



Manifestation 8 March



Non Una Di Meno 2018

ART AND WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

VLASTA DELIMAR AND SANJA IVEKOVIĆ

Performance is a medium that has marked the opus of Vlasta Delimar. She started her artistic work in the late 1970s and focused on the question of identity, own personality, relationships towards herself and her own relationship towards the outside world. She has been based on exposing and breaking the taboos related to the female body and its codification through stereotypical roles and expectation by choosing her own naked body as the primary medium of her work and provided an intimate view in her private life. The artist body has been the focal point of all her performances, happenings and photographic works. Delimar utilizes her own body as an object and artistic material and strictly features her naked, erotic body and self-portraits.

In her photographic collages Vlasta Delimar examines the woman status as a social and creative being and her multiple roles as a housewife, mother, artist and lover by expanding the range of her own sensibility and sensuality.

Sanja Iveković is a Croatian photographer, sculptor and installation artist. Her work is known to tackle such issues as female identity, media, consumerism, and political strife. Considered to be one of the leading artists from the former Yugoslavia, she continues to inspire many young artists. Iveković studied graphics at the Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts from 1968 to 1971. Her artistic career began during the Croatian Spring in the early 1970s when, together with other artists, she broke away from mainstream settings, pioneering video, conceptual photomontages and performance. Much of her work is centred on her own life and the place of women in today's society.

Tara Gamulin - lives and works in Jelsa on the island of Hvar as the leader of wine tasting for the brand "Huljić". She is a 10-year-old boy, besides being a daughter, sister, aunt, friend. Acting is occasionally engaged as a hobby. She loves science, psychology in particular. She enrol in online courses to constantly improve knowledge, in a free time. She believe in love and in a better world.

She was the first artist in Croatia to label herself a feminist artist. She has been a key player at the Centre for Women's Studies in Zagreb since it opened in 1994.

Iveković's activism extends beyond her art. She has founded or been engaged with Croatian women's organizations such as ELEKTRA-Women's Art Center, B.a.B.e., Autonomous Cultural Center—ATTACK!, Center for Women War Victims, and the Association of Feminists.

EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES

WOMEN IN MOTION

Camilla Baldini - I am an Italian Social Worker, who recently graduated from University of Padova with a master degree in Local Development. During my three years' degree in Social Work, I spent one year in Barcelona at the Fundació Pere Tarres, and during my master in Local Development one year in Montpellier at the Paul Valéry University as an Erasmus student which allowed me to enhance my academic and interpersonal skills. I actually work in Gea Cooperative as Social Service. Besides the academic life, I also enjoy the everyday life aspects, participating actively. I am a very charismatic and extrovert person, who possesses all the necessary skills to successfully engage with people. I enjoy travelling to other countries and experiencing new cultures.

All the pictures exposed on this panel provide glimpses of European projects attended by the author in the last few years, overall around the Western Balkans area. The frames show that the main characters of these projects are women, who travel, learn and grow, making their voices heard and bringing positive contributions.



Picture n.1

Looking at the horizon
Vlachia, Evia, Greece 2016

Portugal, Romania, Italy and Canada are the nationality of the five women looking at the horizon of possibilities they are building together. They are on that shore together thanks to a Youth Worker Mobility (K1) funded by the SUSTRARES (Sustainability, Transition and Resilience) Erasmus+ Programme, from the European Union.



Picture n.2

**Into the Blue
Durazzo, Albania 2016**

The image shows the group representing the Italian delegation during the European Project “The New Europeans – lights and shadows of the European Union’s future through the eyes of the present and future young citizens.

Picture n.3

**National History Museum
Tirana, Albania 2016**

The entrance of the National History Museum is a large mural mosaic titled “The Albanians”, which depicts ancient and modern figures from Albania’s history. The frame presents the story of Albanians fight against invasions and occupations throughout the centuries, during which armed men and women fought side by side.



EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES

MOJA KRAJINA

Teresa Suárez is an independent photographer, born in Oviedo, Spain. She lives in Paris since 2014, while she travels abroad the world to work on long-term topics and to testify about the daily stories of our time. Her work has been published in medias like 6 Mois, El Mundo, El Confidencial, La Chronique d'Amnesty or L'Humanité.

Avdiivka, Donetsk region, July 2017.

War zone, 9 kilometers away from the front line.

In February 2017, Avdiivka, a city that was very important for its industrial activity, was a victim of a hard crossfire between separatist and Ukrainian forces.

At minus 20 degrees, without any water, electricity or gas, its inhabitants had survived for weeks at these deplorable conditions.

A huge fresco with the face of Marina Marchenko, an Ukrainian teacher in the city, decorates one of the buildings assigned for the offensives.

Few months later, the echo of the explosions is still spreading in the streets, and the marks of fire remain visible on the buildings more exposed to the field of fire.

War is still alive.





Larisa Gilmanova Dimitrova

Paramilitary doctor. 33 Years.

“I think women should not be in the war, especially on the line of fire. I teach soldiers how to perform first aid, for example how to make a tourniquet, how to stop bleeding, how to make an amputation. I prefer to teach this type of things because sometimes I cannot access the places where they are. »

“When I’m on the line of fire, my only concern is my life, to be alive, it gives you a kind of adrenaline that stimulates your body and prevents you from getting sick. Everything changes when we go home. I feel like I’m 90 years old. I

get sick. I have pain everywhere, I have problems to adapt myself to “normal” life. If I hear a loud noise, my heart starts moving, my head goes back to the line of fire, under bullets and explosives ... I cannot understand that I’m not here, that I’m at home, safe, far from the front, far from the war.

Vera Vladimirovna

Berdyans’ke resident 15 km away from the front line. 67 years old.

“Before the war, Berdyanske was a calm village with a holiday center where people came to have fun. Nowadays, all of this is a memory. We resist, we survive thanks to NGOs and the food grown in the garden, prices have increased so much that we cannot buy any products in the store, with our retirement we cannot. The only thing I want is for the war to end as soon as possible so that we can go out again on the streets without fear. “



EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES

FATHER'S SON

Suzana Duljić - I come from Bosnia, from a little town called Gradiska. I work here as a nurse in the town hospital, but in my free time, I do photography. When it comes to photography I try to make my photos meaningful, so all of my photos have a background story and a message. Also in my free time, I love to travel, sing and meet new people.



Before I say something about each photo I will explain why this series of photos is called “Father’s Son”

A female child in my country very often has a nickname, a weird one, usually called by her father and it is SON. Even though this sounds disturbing, in my case it’s the opposite. My father calls me Son because he wanted to prove that it doesn’t matter what gender a child is, it is still worthy to be loved, cherished and respected. In my country, unfortunately for girls, it’s not like that. When a girl is born a lot of people show their disappointment. But, it is different in my case, my father once said to me “You are my son, because you can do everything like a man even better, you are capable and strong and I support you”. So in this series I’m going to show you a few women that I know who are strong, capable and worthy of our respect and to be called “Father’s Son”. In conclusion, I want to say that my women, me, we are capable of doing more than two jobs, managing our families and being a son daughter mother sister.

Picture 1 Suzana

As said in the title this is a self-portrait of the author so this is me. I had a rough life, my father got cancer few years ago so I had to do two jobs to manage to help my family. Nowadays I have a heart condition but I am optimistic and people say I am a strong person. Also, I am planning to move to Germany to work and live.



Picture 2 Natasa

Natasa is my old childhood friend, currently working as a scrub nurse. She had a hard child, taking care of her little brother and her ill father. Strong, emotional, beautiful woman, who is also planning to move to Germany to work and live.

Picture 3 Jelena

Jelena is the youngest of three of us. Jelena is amazing and special person, who one day decided that she doesn't want to be in a box and she wants to be herself so she cut her long blond hair. Jelena's life was not easy, her mother raised her and now she works in Sweden as a babysitter.



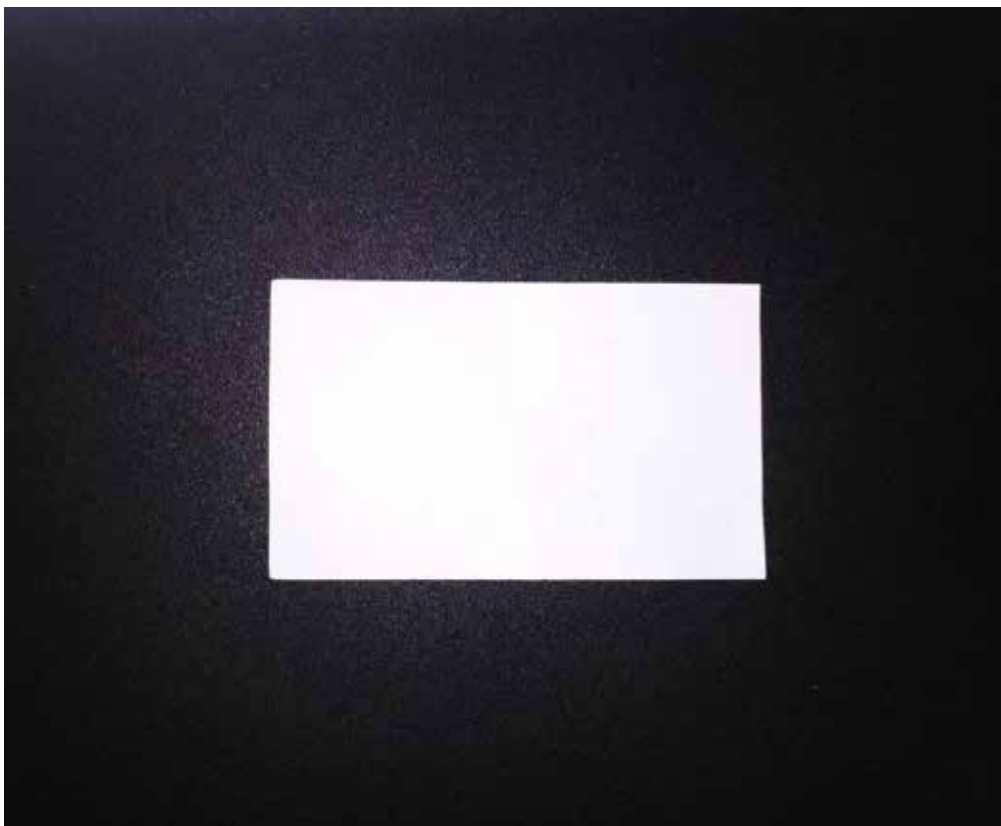
EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES

WHAT WE DON'T

Tena Mustač - Until my high school, I lived on the most beautiful island, the Island of Hvar. I finished high school for graphic design in Split and after that, I periodically live on both destinations with some trips around Europe every now and then. Truth is that I can't find myself living on island Hvar because of the poor mentality of people living there, and I can't find myself living in the town of Split because of the lack of clean sea and beautiful nature that is on island Hvar. Personally, my greatest passion is the art of making food and travelling around the world and in the deep sea of our minds.

BLANK

When I think about European union I go blank. To be honest, I don't think about it, mainly because I don't want to.





VIENNA

This picture is taken in Vienna and it is special to me because it combines the greatest art of all music with love for diversity.

The EU makes possible for young people to engage other cultures in their life while working and saving money at the same time which is pretty incredible and one of a few good things about it.

PRIDE

To me, the EU, on the one hand, represents the freedom of movement, more job opportunities, better healthcare, a society that fights against discrimination. But on the other hand, I don't like that they impose too many of their rules. They make a decree that the entire EU has to stick to and the member states have no choice but to listen to Brussels. It somehow seems to me that they keep them at bay and that all those benefits (jobs, easier migration etc.) come at a certain price.



EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES

MUTED VOICES

Danica Trajkovic (1988), born in Gnjilane, lives and works in Grocka, Serbia. She is currently on MA studies in Management. She has been actively engaged in photography for the past three years. With her work, she wants the observer to convey the moment, beauty and emotion seen through the lens. The biggest motivation for her is the people she meets, their energy and feelings. She is mostly interested in documentary and concert photography and is currently engaged in the research of conceptual art photography.

Mini photo series reflects a very personal view and attitude on today's state of modern society. The author tried to make a balance between positive and negative things. Topics were: emigrations, social life, dependency on money, man-woman relationships and reactions of officials to events they do not benefit, from the other side collage of ordinary people from different countries with same life goals.

Escape: Many people from WB see EU like a one-way opportunity for better work and life.





Bonds: In modern society, unfortunately, money became the only thing that holds people together.



GPS synergy: Some people do not have a chance to travel in real life but they can be on photos of their travel wishes.

EUROPEAN UNION IN THE EYES OF YOUNG WOMEN FROM EU AND WB COUNTRIES

WOMEN'S ACTIVISM IN THE RURAL AREA

Slavica Stanojlovic Urosevic is a sector coordinator for the prevention of violence against women, consultant in SOS helpline for women in the situation of violence. She is very active in the work of Network of Women in Black on the issue of women peace security and transitional justice and in Network of women against violence in Serbia in the issue of gender-based violence.

Stop fascism

Activists of the Association of Woman Sandglass, Women's network of Rasina district, Women in black and Roma Center for Women and Children Daje, held a protest at the wall around the Roma settlement Marko Orlovic, on December 9, 2016. and demanded that the wall be removed and put on the path of racism and fascism.

The messages we highlighted are: "Stop fascism", "Racism is a crime", "Remove the wall", "Wall - separation, isolation, humiliation".





Campaign Step up

Public pressure will create change. People are stronger together. We need to mobilize, organize and build communities capable of standing together and demanding change. Knowledge and education are powerful. Free access to information is essential for driving change. In Europe, the Istanbul Convention is the most powerful legal tool in our hands; its implementation is a crucial step towards ending violence against women.

Life of rural women

The photo was part of the self-initiative exhibition of the Association of Women Sandglass, with motifs from the lives of rural women, called “In the field, in the yard ...”



Partner organizations

CULTURAL CENTRE GROCKA is a public institution of the municipality of Grocka (Serbia), founded in 2006 with an aim of carrying out cultural activities. The Centre is the only facility of its kind in the region of the municipality where the population is primarily engaged in agriculture and fruit growing from orchards. The municipality is composed of 15 dispersed settlements and encompasses over 100,000 inhabitants.

One of the basic objectives of the Institution is building their own locally authentic strategy for work and development, open to participation, suggestions and needs of the community which it serves. The Culture Centre's employed staff are female, as are most of the engaged programme associates and volunteers.

Cultural Centre Grocka strategically implements workshops aimed at mastering social skills and knowledge, which directly affect the empowerment of participants as individuals, also documented by the photo-archive available on the website (www.kultura-grocka.rs). Centre realises its basic activities through the organization of exhibitions, concerts, creative workshops, discussion programs, events and forums. The EU projects proposals writing workshops are aimed for civil and public sector. The centre's assertive communication workshop brings together young people who want to enrich their understanding of diversity through verbal and social skills.

One activity implemented by the Centre involves mural painting workshops. Most of the participants are girls at school age, who through these workshops get the opportunity to work in a team, to express themselves creatively, to ennoble public spaces in their local community whilst leaving a personal message. The centre then organizes group exhibitions of authors from the region of Grocka, where women who are engaged in applied arts and handwork get to exhibit; these forms of creativity and artwork are not commonly sufficiently valued in the local environment.

GEA COOP SOCIALE is a social cooperative, a non-profit private organizations founded in 2004 in Padua Veneto region. Its main goal is to promote and support processes of integration and active citizenship of immigrant individuals, families and communities, in particular minors and women, at local and regional level. GEA has sound experiences and skills in intercultural education, offering services of Cultural and Linguistic Mediation, intercultural counselling, consulting of migrant associations and groups in their relations with public institutions and services. Its main target are youth and women with migrant background. GEA promotes opportunities to meet, knowledge, mutual understanding of youth and people with different cultural and social backgrounds to improve intercultural dialogue and respect.

In this project we want to involve specific groups of young migrant women, both from rural and urban areas, that have already started process of empowerment and dialogue to promote their awareness and role in their communities (projects developed through the Regional Plan for Social Integration, Veneto Region, and several projects funded by the previous EIF). Also, we will involve youth workers already involved in different projects and peer to peer activities (EU for Citizens 563281-CITIZ-1-2015-1-IT-CITIZ-CIV project and regional fundings) to improve their capacity and awareness to support young women and cooperate with Western Balkans.

GEA has developed a solid experience in writing and managing EU funded projects (Europe for Citizens, AMIF, Erasmus+) focused mainly on the promotion of active participation and empowerment of youth and women and intercultural dialogue.

Is member of 2 local consortium (Consortio Comunità Solidale, Consortio Veneto Insieme) and national organizations (OXFAM Italia and Consortio Idee In Rete) and cooperate steadily with Education Office and schools, social health services and NGOs at regional, national and European level.

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN PESCANIK is a non-profit, non-government organization, established and registered on 06/06/2000. Primary field of our work is empowering women by providing education, information and support, and advocating for gender equality by organizing public actions and campaigns.

Beneficiaries of our work are women survivors of family & partner's violence, female CSO activists, and other women active in public and political life... The local authorities and institutions' representatives including media professionals are beneficiaries too.

Association of women Pescanik is the active member of two national women's networks: of Women against violence and of Women in black working on elimination of violence against women and on transitional justice and "Women, peace, security" issues. Believing that only by solidarity and cooperation women can achieve their aims and make their dreams become true, Pescanik supported women's self-organizing in area and initiated establishing of Network of women in Rasina district, consisting of 5 municipalities and a City of Krusevac.

Pescanik took part in making national and local strategies and plans for improvement of the situation of women and gender equality and in making standards for national SOS Helpline work.

Pescanik has 3 employed women with full working time, and one with part working time while 9 counselors work in SOS Helpline on volunteer base.

Currently we realize the project supported from OAK Foundation, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, Mission of OSCE in Serbia and, as partner of Autonomous Women's centre, Belgrade, from European Union.

ALDA is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of good local governance, namely through the empowerment of civil society and the promotion of active citizenship. It works in Europe (28 EU members states), in the Balkans and in the last years, in South Caucasus and North Africa. In the framework of promoting good governance and citizens participation at local level, ALDA focuses on various themes, such as European integration, civic initiatives, youth involvement, human rights, immigration, equal opportunities, sustainable economic development and volunteering. ALDA is a membership based organization gathering more than 250 members (including Local Authorities, CSOs, youth associations, Universities) coming from more than 30 countries. ALDA is funded through membership fees and project funding from the European Commission, the Council of Europe and other public and private donors.

ALDA's projects are promoted through its network and contacts established between the partners and by each partner at the local level. This contributes to the effective, quick and long-term promotion of the project and dissemination of the project results. ALDA's communication department has developed an effective communication strategy using the newest communication tools: social media (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc.), digital and written press.

As a general method of work, ALDA develops trainings based on non-formal education methods and tools, which engage groups activities, interactive games aimed at promoting experiential learning, intercultural knowledge, team building, social inclusion... Theory is always combined with practical activities, in order to foster a learning by doing approach.

ALDA coordinated awareness-raising campaign on female participation in politics, focusing on the importance increase participation and enhance motivation to be engaged into politics as a mean to favor gender balance in all life sector.

TRIM VRBOSKA-UDRUGA ZA PROMICANJE ODRZIVOG RAZVOJA NA OTOKU

The most important activities of the Association in the local environment is to encouraging all stakeholders to strengthen their own active participation that would contribute to sustainable community development.

Within the work in the civic sector, with the continuous education and informing, members of the association have become aware of the existing social problems and open up opportunities for solving them.

We are engaged in education and in empowerment and we are working with women and young people to help them in process of social integration. The association aims to mobilize all resources in the local community to improve the quality of life on the island, reduce emigration and unemployment. We are committed to the empowerment of vulnerable groups, especially children, young people and women, persons with disabilities, and elderly people in rural areas.

Through its activities the association has focused mostly on women, because women's, still the backbone of the family, researcher and guardian of tradition, but at the same time the initiators of positive changes in the family and community.

Trim organizes different kind of activities (exhibitions, events, voluntary actions, workshops, trainings and projects) on different themes: the equal opportunities, employment and self-employment, social entrepreneurship, etc. We increase the number of socially included women by encouraging their participation in activities which contribute improving of their opportunities.

CIVIL ASSOCIATION "LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY MOSTAR"

is a non-profit organisation founded with the aim of promoting basic democratic values such as:

- Rule of law, Youth, Local development, Protection of human rights and freedom, Minorities' rights protection, Support democratization processes, Socio-economic development, Multiculturalism, European integration.

Area of work, main types of activities: promotion of concrete initiatives to encourage democracy at the local level, building bridges between citizens and governments, development of a pluralistic civil society and the active participation of all social groups, Encouraging reconciliation and human rights, promoting sustainable local development, Improving the knowledge of the local community about the processes of stabilization and accession.

Our organisation empowers youth in their capacities to build a more sustainable world through different exchanges, trainings and seminars, conferences and tribunals. In order to raise awareness, we organize different events. and also our website disseminate information about the theme.

Centre for Architecture, Dialogue and Art (ADA) Mostar (<http://www.cadamostar.com>) has been established within the LDA Mostar. It is an independent platform on which citizens, public institutions, associations and representatives of economic and social areas can meet and consume the city as a cultural expression through art and architecture beyond the theory. Supporting the idea "city for everyone".

Creating exhibitions with contemporary and progressive content; Widening our understandings of the city; Ensuring enhanced citizen participation; Including new readings of the city among professionals within urban planning.

Since the war, however, Mostar is a divided city. The main Boulevard of the city was the front line during the war. Walking along it today, you still see many burnt out buildings. Others are stained with bullet holes.



ERASMUS+

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Erasmus+ is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. Education, training, youth and sport can make a major contribution to help tackle socio-economic changes, the key challenges that Europe will be facing until the end of the decade and to support the implementation of the European policy agenda for growth, jobs, equity and social inclusion. Fighting high levels of unemployment -particularly among young people -is one of the most urgent tasks for European governments. Too many young people leave school prematurely running a high risk of being unemployed and socially marginalised. The same risk threatens many adults with low skills. Technologies are changing the way in which society operates, and there is a need to ensure the best use is made of them. EU businesses need to become more competitive Europe needs more cohesive and inclusive societies which allow citizens to play an active role in democratic life. Education, training, youth work and sport are key to promote common European values, foster social integration, enhance intercultural understanding and a sense of belonging to a community, and to prevent violent radicalisation. Erasmus+ is an effective instrument to promote the inclusion of people with disadvantaged backgrounds, including newly arrived migrants.

Another challenge relates to the development of social capital among young people, the empowerment of young people and their ability to participate actively in society, in line with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty to “encourage the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe”. This issue can also be targeted through non-formal learning activities, which aim at enhancing the skills and

competences of young people as well as their active citizenship. Moreover, there is a need to provide youth organisations and youth workers with training and cooperation opportunities, to develop their professionalism and the European dimension of youth work.

Well-performing education and training systems and youth policies provide people with the skills required by the labour market and the economy, while allowing them to play an active role in society and achieve personal fulfilment. Reforms in education, training and youth can strengthen progress towards these goals, on the basis of a shared vision between policy makers and stakeholders, sound evidence and cooperation across different fields and levels.

The Erasmus+ Programme is designed to support Programme Countries’ efforts to efficiently use the potential of Europe’s talent and social assets in a lifelong learning perspective, linking support to formal, non-formal and informal learning throughout the education, training and youth fields. The Programme also enhances the opportunities for cooperation and mobility with Partner Countries, notably in the fields of higher education and youth.

In accordance with one of the new elements introduced in the Lisbon Treaty, Erasmus+ also supports activities aiming at developing the European dimension in sport, by promoting cooperation between bodies responsible for sports. This reinforced cooperation will notably have positive effects in developing the potential of Europe’s human capital by helping reduce the social and economic costs of physical inactivity. The Programme supports actions, cooperation and tools consistent with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its flagship initiatives, such as Youth on the Move and the Agenda for new skills and jobs. The Programme also

contributes to achieve the objectives of the Education and Training Strategic Framework for European cooperation in Education and Training and of the European Youth Strategy through the Open Methods of Coordination.

This investment in knowledge, skills and competences will benefit individuals, institutions, organisations and society as a whole by contributing to growth and ensuring equity, prosperity and social inclusion in Europe and beyond.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH

WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

Youth Capacity-building projects aim to:

- foster cooperation and exchanges in the field of youth between Programme Countries and Partner Countries from different regions²²⁵ of the world;
- improve the quality and recognition of youth work, non-formal learning and volunteering in Partner Countries and enhance their synergies and complementarities with formal education systems, the labour market and society;
- foster the development, testing and launching of schemes and programmes of non-formal learning mobility at regional level (i.e. within and across regions of the world);
- promote transnational non-formal learning mobility between Programme and Partner Countries, especially targeting young people with fewer opportunities, with a view to improving participants' level of competences and fostering their active participation in society.

WHAT IS A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

Capacity-building projects are transnational cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of youth in Programme and Partner Countries. They can also involve organisations from the fields of education and training, as well as from other socio-economic sectors.

WHAT ARE THE ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY A CAPACITY-BUILDING PROJECT?

Capacity-building projects should carry out activities that:

- promote strategic cooperation between youth organisations on the one hand and public authorities in Partner Countries on the other hand;
- promote the cooperation between youth organisations and organisations in the education and training fields as well as with representatives of business and labour market;
- raise the capacities of youth councils, youth platforms and local, regional and national authorities dealing with youth in Partner Countries;
- enhance the management, governance, innovation capacity and internationalisation of youth organisations in Partner Countries;
- launch, test and implement youth work practices, such as:
 - tools and methods for the socio-professional development of youth workers and trainers;
 - non-formal learning methods, especially those promoting the acquisition/improvement of competences, including media literacy skills;
 - new forms of practical training schemes and simulation of real life cases in society; new forms of youth work, notably strategic use of open and flexible learning, virtual mobility, open educational resources (OER) and better exploitation of the ICT potential;
 - cooperation, networking and peer-learning activities fostering efficient management, internationalisation and leadership of youth work organisations.

more information about Erasmus+ program

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-programme-guide-2019_en

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Publisher

Zorica Atić, director
Centar za kulturu Grocka

Edited by

Bojan Milosavljević, project coordinator

Proofreading

Bojan Đorđević

Graphic design and layout

Dragana Nikolić

Photos of events

Danica Trajković

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The project „**Women's Communication for Solidarity - WomCom**“ has been approved within the ERASMUS+ program of the European Union, KA2 – Capacity building in the field of youth -Western Balkan Youth Window; call 2017. Project was implemented in the period from September 2017 until March 2019.

Description of the project

Young women in the rural areas of the Western Balkans are faced with different forms of discrimination. In rural areas, strong patriarchal values and gender inequality are often dominated. Opportunities for communication, exchange and solidarity between young women from these areas and peers from urban areas of the EU are often poor. Improving specific communication skills and opportunities to learn and share experiences and good practices among women from different countries and areas can enhance self-confidence and self-representation of women in rural areas of the WB. The development of assertive and artistic communication skills enables active participation in society, international solidarity and the well-being of young women in the Western Balkans. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of young women about EU policies on social inclusion and women's rights is also an expected impact of the project.

General aim

- Increasing the capacity of young women in the rural areas of the Western Balkans to achieve progress in equal opportunities.

Specific objectives

- Creating international solidarity among young women from rural communities in the Western Balkans and European urban communities through connecting and networking.
- Increase the capacity of youth workers to facilitate and support the social communication of young women.
- Developed assertive and artistic communication skills of young women to express their opinions and create an active influence in their communities
- Increased interest and knowledge among young women in WB rural areas on European policies on gender equality and inclusion
- The celebration of the UN International Day of Rural Women in the communities involved in the project is established.

The Project consisted of 4 main activities

1. Mobility of youth workers - Training "Communication", Grocka/Belgrade, Serbia; 6-13/10/2017
2. Youth exchange - Workshop "Solidarity", Jelsa-Hvar, Croatia; 18-27/05/2018
3. Information and awareness campaign, in all partner communities; October 2018
4. International Conference, Mostar , Bosnia and Herzegovina; 03-06/02/2019

Results

The main results of the project are 6 short videos on the assertive communication (5min.) and 6 murals (20m2) painted in the public space in each partner local community.

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