



EU AND SERBIA AT WORK

FACT SHEET

COALITION FOR EQUALITY STEP

The promotion of LGBT rights, promotion of gender equality, involvement of women in political and public life and monitoring the cases of discrimination in all those areas are very sensitive issues that affect large number of people, and which do not get enough space in public and in media. The **Coalition for Equality Step** that was supported by the EU could be shortly described as networking on these specific sensitive topics, sending clear messages to citizens, media and decision makers. During the project *Civil Society Networking on Critical Human Rights Values in Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo**, the Coalition gathered 8 organizations from Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo. During the project, it was extended to Macedonia as its civil society organisations expressed willingness to join.

Coalition Step showed that mutual exchange of practices within the region contributes greatly to the targeting and resolving problems that citizens have and where intervention from the civil society is needed. Some of the areas of human rights did not get enough light, they were out of the focus of ordinary citizens and not large number of organisations was active in dealing with those areas. Since all three topics are sensitive and traditionally rooted by specific opinion, a very difficult task was to influence on citizens' awareness of the problem. Numerous seminars, trainings, focus groups, informal meetings, media statements, film promotions, social media campaign were used to influence large number of people in order to demonstrate that the problems dealt by the Coalition are actually related to all, and that all citizens must act in the direction of solving them.

The project lasted from October 2012 to October 2014.

It was supported by the EU funds with the amount of **€363,000**, while Coalition contribution was €203,204.

Project activities were implemented in Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo*. The Coalition has come closer to citizens at the local level through sub-granting: 14 sub-grants were given in Serbia, 4 in Montenegro and 2 in Kosovo. Each grantee – local CSO - implemented three months long project.

In Serbia, the Coalition contributed to reducing prejudices and stereotypes, and increasing awareness, specifically when it comes to the rights of LGBT persons, and promoting equality and gender mainstreaming. When it comes to monitoring the trials for discrimination, great contribution has been made to the awareness of judicial authorities on the urgency and special treatment if there is an element of discrimination. Through mutual cooperation and through good practice, it was used as an example to improve in the other one.

In Novi Sad, during the day, in the full bus of public transport two young boys were attacked only because of the assumption of a third person that they were homosexuals. One was stabbed in the chest by a knife and the other was beaten by fist. Case represented by YUCOM before the court ended with an adequate final verdict.

On the basis of this practical example, the short film "Where this road leads" about promotion of tolerance, equality and anti-discrimination behaviour was produced and broadcasted.

Coalition for Equality Step deeply advocated the promotion of various forms of human rights, and continues to be committed through targeting not only the problem, but also propose specific solutions to overcome those problems. The project's important result was extending of the Coalition to another country in the region – Macedonia.

CONTACT

Momčilo Živadinović, YUCOM, tel +381 637502879 E- mail m.zivadinovic@yucom.org.rs

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

