



**“Strengthening the women's movement” Program**

**Croatian women's organizations strategic reflection meeting  
Zagreb April 29-30 May 1<sup>st</sup> 2016**



## Introduction

*Based on their own experiences, the founders of the Mediterranean Women's Fund know that it is very difficult for women's organizations to take time to share their analysis of the situation in their own country, assess the strengths and the weaknesses of their movement and consider their needs and the strategy they should implement.*

*Therefore, the Mediterranean Women's Fund offers women's organizations a space for discussion and strategic reflection at the national level; it is a kind of think tank with no obligatory result expected to be produced at the end of the gathering.*

A first strategic reflection meeting gathered in November 2013, 18 Croatian women's organizations (and some women activists from abroad), and priority issues were identified after deep reflection on the challenges and needs of women and the women's movement in Croatia. A second strategic reflection meeting was organized a year later, in November 2014, where 22 women activists representing 16 Croatian women's organizations were present. They deepened their analysis and decided on collective actions on sexual and reproductive health issues and religious influence on politics.

This is the report of the third strategic reflection meeting organized in Zagreb with 18 women's organizations represented, almost all of them members of the Women Network of Croatia. It is now a kind of rendez-vous that takes place every year where the space offered by the MedWF is used in an increasingly committed way by women's organizations.

## Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April

### I- Opening

#### **a- Quick introduction of the Mediterranean Women's Fund, background, format and goals of the meeting**

4 women from the Mediterranean Women's Fund were present to facilitate, take notes on, manage with logistics and video the proceedings. Unfortunately other feminist funds working in the region could not attend the meeting.

A short welcoming was made by the Director of the Mediterranean Women's fund with presentation of MedWF activities and a reminder about the format of the meeting and MedWF's role.

As the gathering is meant to enable an in-depth discussion between the associations, the format is flexible and attuned to their needs. For facilitation and communication, Croatian/English translations are planned.

The role of the facilitator is to present the workshop, deliver the floor on demand, and reformulate points raised to ensure that everyone's contribution was taken into account.

As questions posed to MedWF could have distracted attention from the focus of the meeting, the decision is made that the representatives of the fund would be available to respond to questions and discuss during breaks.

#### **b- Introduction of the participants**

22 women, representatives of 18 women's or human rights organizations were attending. Center for Women's Studies, Center for women victims of War-Rosa, Autonomous Women's House, Women's group Brod, Women's Group Split, Domine, Pariter, Serbian Democratic Forum, Center for Civil Initiatives, Zar center, Center for healthy growth / Centar za zdravo odrastanje, Center for Civic courage Women's Association of Croatian Roma, Women's association « Izvor », Center for support and development of civil society-DOLPHIN, Women's Room, Lesbian women's group- Kontra.

They came from 9 cities of Croatia (Zagreb, Split, Porec, Slavonski Brod, Pakrac, Veli Lošinj, Vukovar, Rieka, Osijek). Among them, 9 women were under the age of 35. One of them, Zeljka, was also the local assistant for the organization of the gathering. (see list of participants annex II)

## II- Analysis of the context

Since November 2014, important developments occurred in the Croatian context: a woman from the conservative party was elected as president, and the ministries have been shared among different parties with the Ministry of culture

The participants confirmed the relevance of the challenges listed one year and half before were still relevant with a feeling of increasing urgency.

### Previous analysis had highlighted in November 2014

- Presence and power of the Church in the education system
- Sexual and reproductive rights at risk
- Insufficient political participation of women
- Feminization of poverty
- Minimization of the problem of violence against women
- Rise of hatred against minorities

### Main issues raised on April 2016

#### Analysis of the current situation at the society level

- ↓ A failure: failure at the State level, failure of Civil Society Organizations
- ↓ The situation has worsened, the new government has made things even worse.
- ↓ It is a clericalized society. The Church is even more present (merging of faculties).
- ↓ Croatia has become polarized.
- ↓ We are back in the 90's. The Pandora's box is open
- ↓ The society is split in terms of NGOs. Serbian have a lot of organizations, Roma too, Jew too. All divided. In terms of crisis, people like to unit on their ethnic background.
- ↓ To obtain a certificate of citizenship for someone who is not a Croatian is difficult: someone has to knock on 5 different doors. You become invisible. No one's there to do anything. The Croatian society lives in an atmosphere of fear.
- ↓ We have an example of society becoming fascist: we are systematically destroying the culture, promoting hate speeches, critical thinking has been suppressed, lack of secular area. In 6 months, a conservative revolution: women are told to go home, they are removed from the labor market, journalists are repressed.
  
- ↑ We have a strong civil society (difference with the 90's)
- ↑ The majority of the Croatian society is healthy
- ↑ The most fascists appear as they are the majority, they are not. Among the politicians, a lot are distant from the Church
- ↑ When refugees came different members of society showed solidarity. Citizens have shown they are better than their representatives
- ↑ More parents decide not to send their children to religious school
  
- ↑ The majority is in between and don't know where to go
- ↑ Women and men share our thoughts but will not say it publicly

#### At the women's movement level

- ↓ We have not done enough
- ↓ We are missing a seed of hope
- ↓ We are few to be active
- ↓ Women's network has difficulties

- ↓ Women's groups are very dispersed, not united.
  - ↓ We have forgotten what solidarity and common causes mean we need to be more focused on solidarity
  - ↓ We should forget about the difference between us
  - ↓ Networks exist but are slow, and there is nobody to coordinate actively
  - ↓ Lack of finances. We don't have money to organize
  - ↓ We waste a lot of energy so when they attack civil society we don't have strength, they will hit us at all fronts
  - ↓ Women activists who work on VAW for decades are not invited to events organized by government on the issue
  - ↓ European context. Things happening in Croatia are happening in Slovakia, Hungary, Poland: big attacks against gender ideology.
  - ↓ Lack of time
  - ↓ Women working in our organizations are exhausted by the daily work in the counseling center and shelter. Difficult to maintain female coalitions because additional work.
- 
- ↑ We are not that bad, they have the money and the infrastructure
  - ↑ No generational conflict within our organizations
  - ↑ The Women's Network has made a lot of steps since last year and worked well with organizations, journalists that are not part of the network (SRR, Cedaw, quotas)
  - ↑ Roma women: higher number of children going to school, increased awareness of women, number of underage marriages is decreasing, now young women marry at 18.

### How to resist ?

- ✓ How to get the majority on our side?
- ✓ The whole rhetoric will not change without change within the Church
- ✓ We need to have a kind of corporate model
- ✓ Find another way –a women's way- to reach the people,
- ✓ We need to change to communicate to wider public; without being super prepared to talk publicly we will not succeed

**Question:** it is interesting to measure if was the women's movement stronger in the 90's?  
 It is difficult to have a political subject that would last like the women's network: form a new coalition? Need to reexamine why maintain something is better than forming new coalitions.



## Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April

After the inclusion of the analysis of 5 new attendees (see above) a discussion on the issues to be given priority during the meeting took place. A majority of participants wanted to use the opportunity to get together at the same place to decide on concrete actions for the close future: on May 21<sup>st</sup>, a "walk for life" was announced by the ultra-conservative movement Pro Life and on May 27<sup>th</sup> a public discussion will be held about submission of proposal for educational curriculum reform

In conclusion topics brought up several times by the participants have been listed.

### List of Topics

1. Networking coalition inclusion, needs, list of coming event
2. Ad hoc coalition 21<sup>st</sup> may
3. Family act
4. Defense of secularism
5. Education/curriculum reform
6. Media coverage
7. Response to hate speeches

After a round-table where each participant had to give her two priorities, Groups were formed to reflect on potential actions and bring ideas to the rest of the assembly on one of the following three topics

- ❖ **Networking coalition inclusion, needs, list of coming event**
- ❖ **Ad hoc coalition 21<sup>st</sup> may**
- ❖ **Education/curricular reform**



## Reports from Groups discussions

### I. Networking coalition inclusion, needs, list of coming event

1. FUNDS (for Women's Network of Croatia) financial resources to carry out our activities. 6000€: minimum wage per year for a coordinator and chartered accountant. Coordinator should look for allies in trade unions, and other organizations, she will help to make it more visible and faster and facilitate communication among members, know their stories. This person should be very active, do this with due diligence of a good business (wo)man.
2. DATES TO TAKE ACTION: dates to launch publically
  - 9<sup>th</sup> of May, victory day maybe we should join and support the anti fascist campaign.
  - 24<sup>th</sup> of May: anti militarization campaign, world peace
  - 28<sup>th</sup> of May : international day of women's health (this goes hand in hand with campaign)
3. TOPICS on which we can make alliances with other organizations in civil society,
  - Sexual and reproductive rights
  - Collapse of civil society organizations /attack on civil society organizations
  - Labor rights related issues
  - Human rights (in terms of hate speeches)
4. INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES

### II. CIVIC EDUCATION and CURRICULAR EDUCATION

(Public discussion going towards 27<sup>th</sup> May)

20 pages of analysis already exist at Center for Women's Studies

1/Prepare press release on subject of gender equality: one page and a half with our recommendations and messages regarding gender equality in new curriculum. Good to have this text accompanied by photographs (to be done next week)  
Proposition: Send to friends in the education system to have their remarks

2/Share on facebook with at the bottom, a link to e-counseling

3/ Secure media space on local level (14 local media)

4/ Send to media and editors who are dealing with various gender equality

5/Organize one public event, a forum

(question: will the forum be held before the 27<sup>th</sup>?)

6/ Cooperation with good initiative

Discussion about the strategy: do we need to be very radical so people accept the reform or we should defend the reform as it is?

### III. AD HOC COALITION 21st May (Prolife walk: Walk for life with the support of Zagreb city )

General idea: take back the words that they have stolen: life, family and patriotism (?)

1/ Name the campaign: ALL for Life and underline the hypocrisy of those fighting for life...

2/Write a letter of invitation to women's groups, human rights groups and other potential allies (cultural sector...)

3/ Write a letter to medias (after receiving answers to the invitation)



3/ Launch a facebook campaign very realistic and done quickly. "Life is " ex: people that work in super markets, refugees, freedom of choice". Campaign on a large scale. Start with our friends...

4/ Organize a march or a gathering

- to be decided : the route : same route, in a place where they pass by, elsewhere ?
- and the day : same day, a day after , Friday, Saturday?

IZAZOVI:  
- JA ČIJE MREŽE (AD HOC KAMPANJE  
KAO DOKAZI)  
- IZGRADNJA SAVEZNIŠTVA NA  
FEMINISTIČKOJ PLATFORMI  
- IZBEGLICE (KULturnološki RELATIVIZAM)  
(KULTUROLOŠKI RELATIVIZAM)  
KREIRANOST  
⇒ IZAZOV SVETSKE (GLOBALNE)  
ŽENSKE MREŽE  
(MEDIJAMA IZGRADNJA SAVEZNIŠTVA)

♀ SAVEZNIŠTVA  
1. ŽML-KORDIJSKIJA -  
FEMINISTIČKA  
(IZGRADNJA MREŽE IZ OBLASTI KOMUNIKACIJA  
& MEDIJA)  
2. 9. MAJ 24.05. ME  
(23.05) - DAN ŽENSKOG  
3. SAVEZNIŠTVA  
- SEX I REPRODUKCIJNA PRAVA  
- NAPAD NA CIVILNO DEJSTVO  
- RADNA PRAVA  
- LJUDSKA PRAVA - GLOBALNE MREŽE  
- FEMINISTIČKA PLATFORMA  
ZA SAVEZNIŠTVA!

AD HOC AKCIJA 21. 05.  
SVE ZA ŽIVOT!  
\* STATISTIČKI PODACI - MEDIJSKI RAD  
\* FACEBOOK KAMPANJA → POŠALJI  
SELFIE S PORUKOM  
\* POVORKA 21. 05. SVE ZA ŽIVOT  
↳ ME ISTA LOKACIJA KAO HOD ZA ŽIVOT  
↳ Dovoljan broj sudionika  
\* MEDIJI - potpora celebritya  
→ kaznena prijava → državna revizija  
(zbog pokroviteljstva grada Zagreba)

## Sunday 1st May

### Working groups for organization of the launching of the had hoc coalition

- One group on the letter to send to
- One group on the program of the demonstration (to be continued)



### Conclusion

The work done and the process of the two-days meeting were evaluated with a round table at the end of the gathering. The evaluation showed that the meeting was very useful for the women activists present, who were happy to have had the opportunity to talk and reflect and decide upon collective actions in such an easy atmosphere. They felt that they had been very productive and participants expressed the wish that another meeting would be organized soon by the Mediterranean Women's Fund. The relevance of such meetings with follow up was again confirmed, as was the ability of the Mediterranean Women's Fund to organize strategic reflection workshops for women's organizations in different Mediterranean countries.

The Mediterranean Women's Fund has made a commitment to supporting the coordination of the Women's Network of Croatia.

### End of the meeting





## ANNEX I



### Invitation Strategic reflection meeting

Zagreb 29<sup>h</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016

The Mediterranean Women's Fund (MedWF) has the pleasure to invite you to a national gathering, aiming at creating space for Croatian women's organizations to exchange of experiences and debate strategies.

#### Context:

Based on our experience of women activists' work, we know that it is very difficult for women's organizations to take time to share their analysis of the situation in their country, think together, assess the strengths and the weaknesses of their movement and consider the needs they have and strategy they should implement.

This is why the Mediterranean Women's Fund proposes to women's organizations a space for discussion and strategic reflection at the national level :a kind of think tank with no obligatory result at the end of the gathering.

#### Format:

The MedWF invites you to a feminist gathering that will create a space for working discussions following up the strategic reflection meetings of November 2013 and November 2014.

The meeting will accommodate about 30 people altogether. About 25 women activists from Croatian women's movement will be invited - among whom leaders of feminist associations and/or women that have stood out for their dynamism and feminist positions. The languages will be Croat (with English translation for the women's funds coming from abroad).

We are proposing to hold this meeting on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May in Zagreb. The meeting place -and lodging for the women coming from outside Zagreb- will be confirmed soon/ will be Dubrovnik Hotel.

We are looking forward to your answers and if you have any, your suggestions for input in the proposed agenda.

We are very happy to see you and share once again this experience with you .

With kind regards,

Caroline Sakina Brac de la Perrière  
Director of the Mediterranean Women's Fund

## Agenda

### Women's movement Strategic reflection Meeting Zagreb, April 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April

- 17.00 - 17.40            Opening, introduction, background, goals of the meeting ( MedWF )  
                              Quick introduction of the participants
- 17.45 – 18 30            Analysis of the context (round table including all the participan
- 18.30- 18.45            Coffee breaks
- 18.45- 20.00            Review of the priorities and evaluation of their relevance one year- and half later (round table including all the participants )

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>

- 9.30-11.00            Review of the priorities and evaluation of their relevance one year- and half later (round table including all the participants )
- 11.00-11.15            Coffee breaks
- 11.15-13.15            Decision on the 2 priorities for an collective action (in groups or not depending of the number -and will- of participants)    Collective action brainstorming
- 13h 15 -14.30            Lunch
- 14.30-16.15            Collective action brainstorming
- 16.15-16.30            Coffee break
- 16.30 -18H            Collective action setting up

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May

- 9.30-10.30    Collective action setting up
- 10;30- 10.45    Coffee break
- 10.45-12.00    conclusion



## Poziv na sastanak o strateškom promišljanju

Mediterranski ženski fond/Mediterranean Women's Fund (MedWF) ima čast pozvati Vas na sastanak nacionalnih ženskih organizacija s ciljem stvaranja prostora međusobnog dijeljenja iskustava i raspravljanja o zajedničkim strategijama.

### **Kontekst:**

Temeljem našeg iskustva o ženskom aktivističkom radu prepoznale smo zahtjevnost odvajanja vremena isključivo predviđenog za međusobne razmjene analiza stanja u zemlji, zajedničkog promišljanja, analiziranja prednosti i nedostataka ženskog pokreta, te mapiranje vlastitih potreba i strategije nužnih za implementaciju.

Upravo zato MedWF predlaže ženskim organizacijama otvaranje prostora za diskusiju i strateškog promišljanja na nacionalnoj razini, poput *think tanka* bez obveze za donošenjem obvezujućeg rezultata na kraju okupljanja.

### **Format:**

Mediterranski ženski fond (MedWF) poziva Vas na feminističko okupljanje koje ima za cilj stvoriti radni prostor namijenjen nastavku rada na temelju održanih sastanaka o feminističkom strateškom promišljanju u studenom 2013. godine i 2014. godine.

Sastanak ima namjeru okupiti približno 30 aktivistica. Bit će pozvano 25 predstavnica hrvatskog ženskog pokreta među kojima će biti zastupljene voditeljice ženskih organizacija i/ili žene koje su se istaknule svojom predanim radom i feminističkim stavovima.

Radni jezik sastanka je hrvatski (osiguran je engleski prijevod za žene koje dolaze iz stranih fondacija).

Predlažemo održavanja sastanka u petak **29.04.**, subotu **30.04.** i nedjelju **01.05.2016.** godine u Zagrebu. Mjesto održavanja sastanka kao i osiguran smještaj za žene koje dolaze izvan Zagreba će biti u **Hotelu Dubrovnik, Ljudevita Gaja 1.**

Radujemo se Vašem odgovoru kao i svakom Vašem prijedlogu na predložen program sastanka.

Također, veseli nas i ponovni susret i rad s Vama,  
Srdačni pozdravi,

Caroline Sakina Brac de la Perrière  
Director of the Mediterranean Women's Fund

## **Program**

Sastanak o feminističkom strateškom promišljanju  
Zagreb, Hotel Dubrovnik, 29.04., 30.04 i 01.05.

### **Petak, 29.04.**

- 17.00h - 17.40h Otvaranje, predstavljanje, postavljanje ciljeva sastanka (MedWF )  
Kratko predstavljanje učesnica
- 17.45h –18.30h Analiza konteksta (rad predviđen u manjim skupinama na principu okruglog stola)
- 18.30h -18.45h Pauza za kavu
- 18.45h- 20.00h Rad na postavljenim prioritetima iz 2013. i 2014.godine: pregled i evaluacija njihove važnosti godinu i pol dana nakon (rad predviđen u manjim skupinama na principu okruglog stola)

### **Subota, 30.04.**

- 9.30h-11.00h Pregled postavljenih prioriteta i evaluacija njihove važnosti godinu i pol dana nakon (rad predviđen u manjim skupinama na principu okruglog stola – nastavak )
- 11.00h-11.15h Pauza za kavu
- 11.15h-13.15h Donošenje odluke o zajedničkoj akciji na temelju novih postavljenih prioriteta (rad u grupama ili ne, ovisno o broju i volji učesnica)  
Rad na predloženih idejama za zajedničku akciju
13. 15h -14.30h Ručak
- 14.30h-16.15h Rad na predloženih idejama za zajedničku akciju - nastavak
- 16.15h-16.30h Pauza za kavu
- 16.30h -18.00h Planiranje, organiziranje i način ostvarivanja zajedničke akcije

### **Nedjelja, 01.05.**

- 9.30h - 10.30h Nastavak planiranja zajedničke akcije (rad u grupama)
- 10.30h -10.45h Pauza za kavu
- 10.45h- 12.00h Donošenje zaključaka
- Ručak

**Popodne: odlasci i neformalna druženja**

## ANNEX II

## ANNEX II

### Strategic reflection meeting - Zagreb 29th-30th April and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016

#### Participants list

N°	Name	Organization	Country/city
1	Mirjana Kučer	Domine	Split
2	Biserka Momčinović	Centre for Civil Initiatives Ženska Mreža Hrvatske	Poreč
3	Nataša Medved	Center for Women's Studies	Zagreb
4	Rada Borić	Center for Women's Studies	Zagreb
5	Milena Babić	Zar center	Vukovar
6	Nela Pamuković	Center for Women War Victims-ROSA	Zagreb
7	Gordana Matanović	Women's Group Brod	Slavonski Brod
8	Kornelija Lombar	Women's Group Brod	Slavonski Brod
9	Bojana Genov	Center for healthy growth / Centar za zdravo odrastanje	Veli Lošinj
10	Nada Peratović	Center for Civil Courage / Centar za gradjanski hrabrost	Zagreb
11	Mira Ličina-Jovanović	Serbian Democratic Forum	Zagreb
12	Paula Zore	Women's Room	Zagreb
13	Silva Sumić	Women's Group Split	Split
14	Nikolina Zec	Women's Association "Izvor"	Osijek



15	Sanja Juras	Lesbian women's group- Kontra	Zagreb
16	Ramiza Memedi	Women's Association of Croatian Roma	Zagreb
17	Mirjana Bilopavlovic	Center for support and development of civil society-DOLPHIN	Pakrac
18	Željka Sartori	Center for Women's Studies	Zagreb
19	Jossipa	Women's room	Zagreb
20	Lana Bobic	Atonomous Women's House, AZKZ	Zagreb
21	Marinella Matejcic	Pariter	Rijeka
22	Cyrille Cartier		Zagreb
24	Caroline Brac de la Perrière	MedWF	France/Montpellier
25	Samia Allalou	MedWF	France/Paris
26	Marine Primet	MedWF	France/Montpellier

