

Conception strategy in Kosovo – Group

Women’s rights in the workplace

1. Topic of the strategy

Formulate and describe the topic of your strategy regarding gender mainstreaming in Kosovo (e.g., equal pay, equal parental leave, protection against gender-based violence, equal property rights, and so on...)

The Labor Law defines discrimination as anything that gives unfair advantage to a particular group. This often happens by excluding some the marginalized groups. A recent case in Montenegro sparked the discussion, as one female worker went under cover for an interview on unfair practices at her workplace. The report quoted her: “I don’t want to lose my job. This is the only reason I remain silent.” And this case does not stand alone. A woman in Bosnia was told during her job interview that there is an unwritten rule of the company- that you cannot plan to have a child for at least 3 years since the contract is signed. In Kosovo, a female employee was told by her work colleagues that she needs to hide the fact that she is pregnant. When her boss found out, he pressured her and eventually terminated her contract. Several cases were reported where the manager used derogatory terms to other female workers.

2. Current situation

Describe the current situation relevant to your chosen topic in Kosovo. What issues does the society face concretely?

Kosovo is currently struggling with many unfavorable phenomena in the area of gender discrimination in the job market. Unfair job interviews are only the beginning of the discrimination aimed towards the female sex. Due to low success rate of the cases of gender discrimination (30% of the cases get solved/70% of the cases don’t get solved), the public is facing a loss of faith towards the judiciary system. Between the years 2019 and 2021 approximately 498 complaints were filed in relation to gender discrimination in the workplace. The general belief is that many more cases were not reported due to the low efficiency of the current system. Surveys found that majority of women is aware of the concept of gender discrimination, however they are not familiar with the proper mechanisms to fight against it.

3. Objective of the strategy

Formulate the objective of the strategy. What do you want to achieve? Is awareness-raising your goal, or do you want to use international human rights mechanisms to push through a change? Identify the obstacles on your way to achieving your goal.

First and foremost, objective is awareness-raising. Since the majority of the Kosovar population is unaware of the means to treat gender discrimination, the awareness needs to be increased substantially. Only with victims or possible victims of discrimination aware of their rights in the workplace and job market can the system effectively combat gender discrimination.

Furthermore, we want to strengthen the existing legislation by importing examples of good practice from other countries. The obvious inspiration are the Nordic countries; however, the western Europe altogether is an example of continuous improvement in the field of antidiscrimination.

Lastly, we intend to cooperate with state agencies and unions to protect women's rights in the workplace

4. Means to acquire your goal

What is the action plan? What steps do you see as necessary to reach what you have set out in the previous question? Design your campaign.

The awareness-raising campaign is designed to be hugely thorough. There shall be organized trainings, workshops and other activities for the state authorities, stakeholders and general public to spread the knowledge on where to go when your rights are being violated.

To obtain further information in order to propose further implementation of anti-discriminatory rules and practices, we shall conduct specialized monitoring of job interviews to collect data that could potentially indicate discriminatory practices in the private sector. Finding better practices and company culture based on successful companies that have a good reputation for fighting against gender discrimination.

In cooperation with specialized non-governmental organizations, we shall provide free legal counseling to individuals searching information on gender discrimination.

As to the import of good practice from other countries, we shall use lobbying as a specific tool in order to change the legislation for the paternity leave law, as paternity leave has proven effective in lowering the gender discrimination in the job market in the Nordic countries.