



Regional Academy for Women Leadership and Mediation

by RWLSEE

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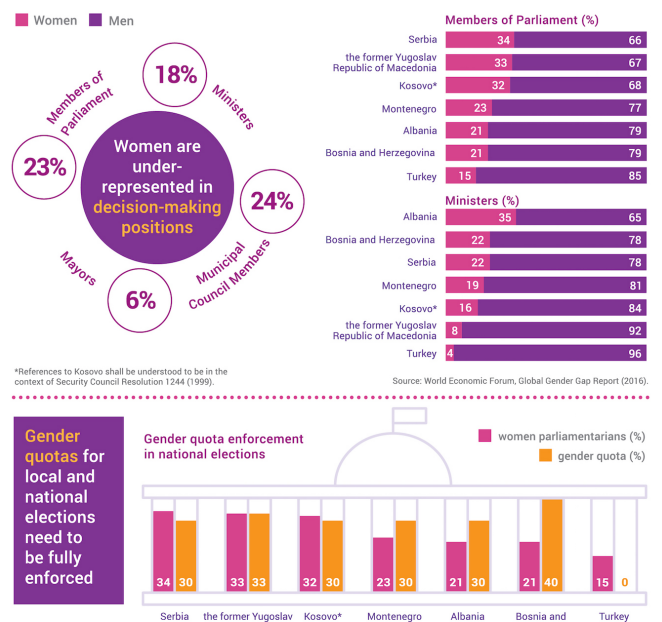
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As requested by : Regional Women Lobby (RWLSEE) www.rwlsee.org

1. What is the problem this project aims to address?

GENDER INEQUALITIES IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION/DECISION MAKING

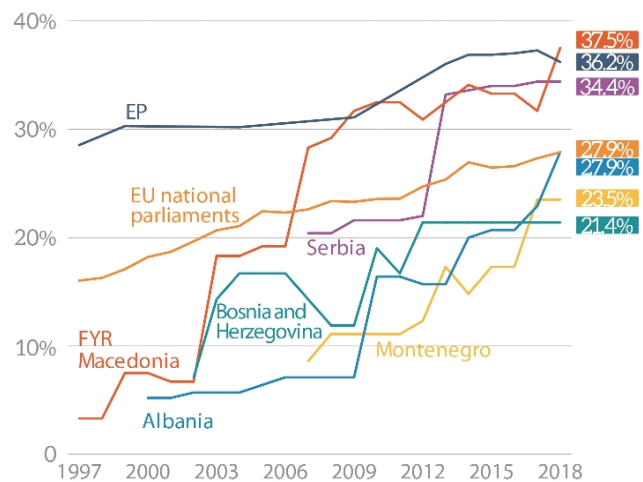
FIGURE I. UNDP 2016



Gender Inequalities in political participation and decision making in the Western Balkans remains low despite improvements seen in the last twenty years. Women participation in parliament has reached 30% thanks to a quota mechanism implemented in all Western Balkan countries. However, women participation in national governments, both in central and local level, have not faced a sustainable progress, as it can be seen in the figure at the left.

This issue is particularly sensitive for post-

conflict contexts, as an increase of women participation in politics is associated with reducing the risks of conflict relapse. It is also equality associated with lower levels of internal and external conflict and it is a better predictor for a state's peacefulness than democracy, religion, or GDP.



Source: Inter-parliamentary Union, EPRS, 2018.

GENDER INEQUALITIES IN PEACE-AGREEMENTS PARTICIPATION AND DECISION MAKING

Statistics in peace and security are even more appalling. Women have been consistently excluded from peace negotiations. Of seven peace agreements signed in the region since 1990, there was only one woman at the negotiation table who also signed the first ever peace agreement between Kosovo and Serbia in her role of Chief Negotiator at Brussels Dialogue. This is more significant considering that of the 1,187 peace processes and political settlements signed in the world between 1990-2017, only two other women have served as Chief Negotiators. Overall, UN. reports that between 1990

and 2017, women constituted only 2 percent of mediators, 8 percent of negotiators, and 5 percent of witnesses and signatories in major peace processes.

We know, however, that if women participates in peace processes the chances of reaching an agreement increases, and that the agreement is also 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years.

INCLUSION OF YOUNG POPULATION IN POLITICS, PEACE AND SECURITY

In the region, women are perceived within patriarchal gender roles despite legislations guaranteeing equal position of women and men. Therefore, they are mostly seen as subordinates, dependents, or as the ones that keep family together. This perception is reinforced for the case of young women as young people has been largely perceived - worldwide- in relation to adults rather as a relevant political actor on their own.

Globally things have started to change recently. International consensus has built the momentum to address specifically the role of young people in politics, peace and security. The [UNSCR 2250](#) on Youth, Peace and Security was a breakthrough to formally recognised the importance of young people in the maintenance of international peace and security. It was followed by the “twin” resolutions of Security Council [S/RES/2282](#) and General Assembly [A/RES/70/262](#) on inclusivity and peace sustainability, underlining the transformational role of young people and specially young women.

The two study reports that originated from these international efforts inform our work at RWLSEE empowering young women’s contribution to politics, peace and conflict resolution. We are committed to put at the service of new generations of women, our trajectory in politics and civil society as women leaders and our experience overcoming challenges. We believe that in the context above described, the empowerment of young women is key to consolidate a region with sustainable peace and gender equality.

2. What is RLWSEE road to change this? (Theory of Change)

WLSEE was launched in 2007 to improve women involvement in political life and particularly to enforce women’s role in peace and security. We work decisively to forge a path toward peace and women’s empowerment in our region. It is our strategic goal for 2019-2023 to help the next generation of women to thrive and to get empower to one day reach the social and political scene. Committed to this end, we have envisioned this project, the “**Regional Academy of Women Leadership and Mediation**” through which we seek to consolidate the role of women in the political, security and peace agenda in the region. The project’s goal is to increase women’s participation in political leadership and decision making as well as in peace-building processes, being that

participation within governments or within civil society structures of the Western Balkans at local, national and regional level.

We will target young women from each country each year from NGOs and Political Parties. We will strengthen their voice, and capacities to take action, we will provide a scheme of cooperation and networking without which concerted action is impossible. Moreover, because skills do not necessarily means opportunities, our network will work to facilitate those spaces of action for the young women involved in this project.

Then, our **theory of change** is that:

"If the young women from diverse communities of the Western Balkans have increased their leadership, mediation, and influence capacities to engage in politics and peace-building, and if their information access about diverse peace building efforts in the western balkans has been facilitated, and if their regional cooperation and networking opportunities have been strengthened through an intergenerational work with senior women leaders of the region, and if spaces and opportunities for action in the field of politics and peace-building for young women have been increased, THEN, women participation in politics, peace and security will be increased by empirical observation as an intergenerational network of young and senior women leaders is created and those women are capable of influencing government, civil society and political agendas in the Western Balkans paving the way for gender equality in the region."

The project summary in Annex I explains Project Objective, Outcome, Outputs and foreseen Activities .

3. What are the RLWSEE's strengths for this project?



Strong women/Experienced leaders. The project is developed and implemented by the highly experienced members of RLWSEE that have dedicated their life to peace and politics in the seven targeted countries of this project. They also are -and have been- actively working to improve gender equality in politics and peace-building. We have the capacity to transfer the lessons we have learnt along our careers in order to help increase young women's influence and participation in these processes as well.



A well established network. Our lobby have notorious success in the subject across the region and each member is an already well-established women leading within the agenda of politics and peace-building. Therefore, we seek to include young women's voices and to work with young women's organisations to increase their participation in politics and peace processes.



Logistics capacity. Our lobby is present and operational in seven countries of the Western Balkans facilitating the recruitment of the targeted population and the interventions to be implemented with this project.

4. What is the added value of this project?

PROJECT's APPROACH



Regional character & Local Ownership. This project is not only sensitive to its context but also is a project from the region for the region, from women to women. Youth projects and efforts oriented towards empowerment in the WB are largely implemented at local or national levels, our Academy is designed to be implemented regionally. Not only addressing regional needs, but also strengthening the ties among women and young women of the region.



Three dimensions of women empowerment. Our project works across three dimensions of women empowerment as active agents of peace and change: agency, relations and structure. Thus, it seeks to impact at individual, community and societal level. By empowering young women through capacity building and information access we reach to each individual women, supporting civil society by building and supporting networks of young and experienced women impacts the community of women working in politics and peace-building in the region; by promoting the design and implementation of projects, supports building political will and institutional capacities, impacting at societal level as well.



Intergenerational Exchange. This project contributes to close the generational gap that has excluded young women from accessing to information and taking action. With this project we will consolidate an intergenerational dialogue of women for peace and security in the region and we will build a critical mass of empowered women ready to raise their voices, fight for their rights and occupy deserve spaces of participation and action.



Mobility. the project is designed in such a way that could be implemented alternatively in any of the seven countries of the Western Balkans where RWLSEE operates. Thus, it shall in turn contribute to strengthened the existing capacities of each branch and of the Lobby itself.



Agency. The project highlights the agency of women in bringing about peace and positive change in the region, as advocates of a better future and as relevant actors of the political, economic and social landscape of the region.



Three pillars: Learning, Networking and Doing. The project understanding that women empowerment for increasing participation and decision making in politics, peace and security depends of a concerted effort of three pillars: 1) learning to build awareness and skills, 2) networking to consolidate their voices in joint actions with others and 3) effectively doing specific actions in the field of politics, peace and security. See [Annex II](#).

THE ACADEMY IS:



The **HUB** for consolidating women voice, participation and decision-making in politics and peace



An **Incubator of women leaders** for peace and sustainable change



The **regional reference point** for adult and young women of the region to connect for the mutual interest of strengthening their voice and their participation and decision making in politics and peace building.

ANNEX I. PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Summary		
Title: Regional Academy for Women Leadership & Mediation	Region covered: seven (7) countries of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia)	Duration: 36 months
Targeted Population: young women of civil society and politics of the Western Balkans		
Project Objective To empower young women from seven countries of the Western Balkans, advancing their leadership, mediation and influence capacities in the field of politics, peace and security for them to become active agents of change and peace in the region, and strengthening their voice and actions through an intergenerational network of women. In this way, the project will have a positive long term impact on increasing gender equality in the Western Balkans in participation and decision making in politics and peace-building . Thus, women and girls of the region realise their full political and social rights and live in full gender equality with men and boys.		
OUTCOME Young women participation in politics, peace and security has increased by empirical observation through an intergenerational network of young and senior women leaders with capacities to influence government, civil society and political agendas in the Western Balkans.		
Output 1:	Activities related to output 1	

<p>Leadership and mediation capacities and influence of young women to engage in politics and peace-building have been increased.</p>	<p>1.1 Dialogue Academy: 2 weeks program of capacity building and skills development in the area of politics and peace-building. Three areas: 1) Awareness building: socio-econ-pol situation in the WB, gender roles in politics, peace and security, peace building efforts and processes in the WB since 1990s. - largely delivered by RWLSEE members 2) Skills development: dialogue, negotiation and mediation techniques - delivered by international experts & RWLSEE members 3) Soft skills development: teambuilding, teamworking, problem solving. Methodologies are innovative, interactive, gender and conflict sensitive, include practical exercises and a "learning by doing" approach.</p> <p>1.2 Peace Camp: * 1 week program of training for action: advocacy, networking, fundraising, small projects development. * Evaluation of results of Dialogue Academy. * Methodologies are innovative, interactive, gender and conflict sensitive, include practical exercises and a "learning by doing" approach.</p>
<p>Output 2:</p> <p>Information access about diverse peace building efforts in the Western Balkans has been facilitated.</p>	<p>Activities related to output 2</p> <p>2.1 Database and Online Presence: on Peace-building Efforts and women working and researching in peace processes (politics, civil society, academia)</p> <p>2.2 Online information sharing (job opportunities, scholarships, conferences) in the fields of politics and peace-building.</p> <p>2.3 Blog space: for young women to share experiences, projects in development, advocacy actions, and disseminate information about Dialogue Academy and Peace Camp</p>
<p>Output 3:</p> <p>Regional cooperation and networking opportunities of young women have been strengthened through an intergenerational work with senior women leaders of the region.</p>	<p>Activities related to output 3</p> <p>3.1 RWALM Alumni Network: creation, organisation and implementation of the network.</p> <p>3.2 Lobby Branch Network Support: creation, organisation and implementation of a methodology through which each lobby branch can provide network support to the Alumni Network.</p> <p>3.3 Intergenerational Network: is created with the participation of RWLSEE members and RWALM Alumni Network that will seek to implement join actions.</p>

	<p>3.4. Mentoring program: young women participating in this project will be mentored by RWLSEE members to strengthen intergenerational work in the area of politics and peace/building. RWLSEE members will provide supports for the development of projects, activities and issues related to this project.</p>
<p>Output 4: Spaces and opportunities for action in the field of politics and peace-building for young women have been increased.</p>	<p>Activities related to output 4</p> <p>4.1 Yearly Projects within their NGO/Political Parties/ Alumni Network: throughout the year, the project will encourage young women to develop their ideas and join interventions - individually , in bigger or smaller groups as per choice, to have a join activity before the end of the each implementation year. The best project (s) will be selected, develop further and eventually implemented.</p> <p>4.2 Internships: Together with RWLSEE members , this project will grant at least 7 internship opportunities, as spaces of practise within NGOs, Political Parties, governments, to young women of this project that would succeed in defending a proposal of work within those institutions. This will be managed by each RWLSEE Lobby Branch, and each lobby branch has the right to decide if it is capable of offering more than one opportunity.</p>

ANNEX II. THE PILLARS of OUR ACADEMY

