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Dear KARAT News Readers

This month I would like to draw your attention to news about the recent elections for KARAT Coalition's Board. Please get to know our Board members as they will shape the Coalition's policy for the next 3 years.

Since there is a holiday season the next KARAT News will be issued at the end of August.

Please remember that I always look forward to receiving your news (also in Russian), so do not hesitate to write to me at: agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl

Have a nice reading!

Agnieszka Walko-Mazurek, KARAT Networking Officer

KARAT & Members' News

The elections for KARAT's Board

The elections to the KARAT's Board took place between May 27th and June 30th 2013. The aim of election was to elect 3 new members of KARAT's Board for three year term of office. Each of KARAT's 63 member organizations had one vote and could choose from 9 candidates. The results of the election were announced on July 4th, 2013. The new KARAT Board members are: Liliya N. Khamzayeva from NGO "Istiqbolli Avlod" (Uzbekistan), Sanja Popović Pantić from Association of Business Women in Serbia and Sanja Sarnavka from B.a.B.e. (Be Active, Be Emancipated) – Women's Human Rights Group (Croatia). They will join 4 existing Board members: Valentina Bodrug – Lungu from Gender-Center (Moldova), Evgenia Ivanova from "Adliga: Women for full citizenship" (Belarus), Jivka Marinova from GERT (Bulgaria) and Iatamaze Verulashvili from Women's Center (Georgia).

The participation in the elections was satisfying with a turnout rate of 53,97% . The Election Committee would like to thank all the candidates and the member organizations for taking part in this important event for KARAT's future.

For more information please contact Agnieszka Mazurek at: agnieszka.mazurek@karat.org.pl

Social Economy in Romania

On 25th July 2013 the final international conference on social economy instruments for the inclusion of marginalized groups on the labour market in Romania took place in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The conference was the last event of a three-year project run [AUR – The National Association of Human Resources Specialists from Romania](#) which, among others, resulted in development of six social enterprises and creating the Social Economy Association and the Social Inclusion Brand "MATCA". The conference was attended by the women and men from the vulnerable groups who used their skills and available resources to launch the enterprises based on social economy principles. The experts present at the conference stressed that having created six social enterprises run by people at risk of social exclusion is a big success but it is now, when the project is finished, that the real challenge begins. From now on, the entrepreneurs will have to compete on the market using the knowledge they gained during the last 3 years. The conference's participants had also an opportunity to learn about the ["Good Practices Guide on Social Economy in Europe"](#) created by KARAT, a partner in the project. The guide presents 20 examples of social economy initiatives from Romania, Poland, UK, Spain, France and Italy bringing together the practical experience of the social entrepreneurs and the expertise of people experienced in developing and supporting social and commercial business. The guide is available in Romanian and English.

For more information please contact Raluca Manaila from AUR at: raluca.manaila@resurseumane-aur.ro

Tajikistan: Improving leadership skills of women executives.

From April 9th to May 4th 2013, in Sughd province, Tajikistan trainings aimed at improving professional potential and leadership skills of women leaders working at the management level were held. The trainings were part of the project "Women in power – the benefit of the people" implemented by NGO "Nasl" (KARAT's member), and supported by U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan. They were also a part of implementation of the government's program "Education, selection and placement of the management staff from a number of capable women and girls in years 2007-2016" as well as the Recommendation No. 7 of the UN Human Rights Committee which states that the Tajik government should take more positive steps to ensure greater representation of women in public life. The trainings gathered 206 women working as middle and upper-level managers. The participants learnt about the political systems, gender equality, women's rights, leader's image and how to delegate the responsibilities to the staff and manage one's time effectively. They also practiced their public speaking skills and communication with the media and the citizens. The participants received the manual "To help the manager" which contains the examples of women who achieved a significant results in their professional activities.

For more information please contact Orzu Ganieva from NGO "Nasl" at: orzu-77@mail.ru

Macedonia: Restrictions on abortion passed

With almost no debate, 62 legislators from the ruling conservative VMRO DPMNE party-led majority in the 123-seat parliament voted for the new law on abortion in Macedonia. The controversial government-backed legislation was pushed through with no time for a wider public debate. The main opposition party - Social Democrats, SDSM - were absent from the vote, as a protest.

The new law, which entered into force 25th of June 2013 limits the access to abortion, through requiring a woman who wants to terminate her pregnancy to: file requests for abortion, confirm that she attended counseling, inform the "spouse" of her intention to abort, and see a gynecologist. The law further prohibits woman from having a second abortion within a year of the first one. As the MPs were voting, several hundred rights activists protested in front of the parliament building, urging the immediate withdrawal of the bill. Previously, 91 local and international rights groups, including the Macedonian Association of Development and Integration – MADI (KARAT's member), the Macedonian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and the Association for Health Education, HERA, had signed a joint letter to Macedonian lawmakers protesting about the proposed legislation.

For more information please contact Nade Kachakova from MADI at: madimacedonia@gmail.com

European Union

Poland: Step towards improving the Equality Act.

On June 21st, 2013 the Polish parliament sent the Polish Equality Act to Justice and Human Rights Committee for further considerations, It will be returned during the fall session. This is very good news for the Polish NGOs, including KARAT, which have been lobbying for amending the Act since its adoption in 2010. The amendments proposed by the opposition party "Palikot's Movement" and supported by the human rights organizations aimed at introducing equal protection against all forms of discrimination, regardless of its grounds. Further, the draft law recommends to develop more detailed definitions of various forms of discrimination and recognize the types of discrimination which have been already established in the case law of the European Court of Justice. One of the main objectives of the amendments is also to introduce an open catalogue of legally protected characteristics, and thereby expand their number which is currently quite low. An important change included in the proposed bill would be obliging state administration and local government bodies to develop and implement equality programmes.

The Act in its current wording falls short of its objectives. Its low effectiveness is reflected in a tiny number of lawsuits brought under the Act. As shown in official statistics of the Ministry of Justice, in 2011 only 30 such actions were brought to Polish courts. In 2012, the figure was even lower: only six cases were heard. However, the thorough review of the lawsuits made by the Polish Society of Anti-Discrimination Law revealed that hardly any of them was based on the provisions of the Equality Act.

For more information please contact Magda Pocheć at: magda.pochec@karat.org.pl

Source: [Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights](#)

Lithuania: Proposed abortion law threatens women's rights

On June 11th 2013 the Seimas of Lithuania gave its initial backing to a proposed abortion ban bill after 46 MPs voted in favour, 19 were against and 25 abstained. The bill will now go to the parliamentary Committees on Human Rights, Health Affairs and Legal Affairs for further considerations and will be sent back to the Seimas during the fall session. Under the bill proposed by the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania, an abortion would be possible only if it poses threat to the life or health of the woman or it was the result of criminal acts. In such cases, an abortion would be performed only up to the 12th week of pregnancy. This anti-abortion bill has aroused a lot of controversy in the country. If Lithuania introduces the law which will dramatically limit women's right to access abortion it will be the fourth country in the EU, after Poland, Ireland and Malta to have banned abortion. The proposed bill is almost a copy of the existing Polish law which bans abortions except in case of

rape, incest, fetal malformation or a threat to the woman's health or life. Currently, abortions are allowed by week 12 in Lithuania, with no additional conditions. Around 10,000 abortions are performed in Lithuania every year.

Source: [ASTRA](#)

World

UN report: 35% of women will experience violence

According to the new United Nations report more than a third of women worldwide are affected by physical or sexual violence, many at the hands of an intimate partner. The report [Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence](#) released on June 20th 2013 states that some 35 per cent of all women will experience either intimate partner or non-partner violence. The report details the impact of violence on the physical and mental health of women and girls, ranging from broken bones to pregnancy-related complications, mental problems and impaired social functioning. Among its key findings on partner violence was that globally, 38 per cent of all women who were murdered were killed by their intimate partners. Also, women who have experienced partner violence are almost twice as likely to experience depression or abuse alcohol. Fear of stigma prevents many women from reporting non-partner sexual violence, the survey finds. Other barriers to data collection include the fact that fewer countries collect this data than information about intimate partner violence, and that many surveys of this type of violence employ less sophisticated measurement approaches than those used in monitoring intimate partner violence. The guidelines stress the importance of training all levels of health workers to recognize when women may be at risk of partner violence and to know how to provide an appropriate response. They also point out that some health-care settings, such as antenatal services and HIV testing, may provide opportunities to support survivors of violence, provided certain minimum requirements are met.

Source: [UN News](#)

Resources

KARAT: Good practices guide on social economy in Europe

The guide presents 20 examples of social economy initiatives from different European countries. Descriptions of the examples include a factual overview for each initiative, with background information and aims, the target group for its work, its structure and activities. Additionally, there is information about the initiative's partnerships and about the promotion tools it uses. Each description has also been enhanced with reflections on the successes and challenges as well as lessons learned by these enterprises. In a separate chapter, "Tips for success" are gathered as conclusions drawn from the experience of the presented social economy initiatives. These have been enriched by the comments and reflections of experts specializing in human resources issues, business development and support for social economy. This guide brings together the practical experience of the social entrepreneurs and the expertise of people experienced in developing and supporting social and commercial business. This combination makes the publication comprehensive and useful for different groups of readers interested in various aspects of social economy. The guide was developed by KARAT within the project "Creating and promoting social economy instruments for the inclusion of marginalized groups on the labour market" run by Romanian organization AUR – The National Organization of Human Resources Specialists.

The guide is available in [English](#) and Romanian

KARAT: Правовые решения борьбы с дискриминацией и предотвращения насилия в отношении женщин

This is Russian version of the resource material "Legal measures to protect women from violence and discrimination" developed within the framework of a project "Mobilization for the legal protection of women's rights in Belarus". The resource

material summarizes four days of strategic training and is a relevant source of knowledge about the United Nations, European Union and Polish anti-discrimination and anti-violence legislation in a context of gender. It focuses on EU directives prohibiting gender discrimination, the recommendations of Council of Europe and United Nations on model regulations concerning counteracting domestic violence as well as Polish regulations aimed at protecting women from discrimination which can be found in the Labour Code, Polish Constitution, Anti-discrimination Act and Law on Domestic Violence.

The resource material is available in [Polish](#) and [Russian](#)

UN: The millennium development goals report 2013

This annual report presents the most comprehensive global assessment of progress to date, based on data provided by a large number of international organizations within and outside the United Nations system. The aggregate figures in the report provide an overview of regional progress under the eight goals and are a convenient way to track advances over time. The report is coordinated and published by the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

You can download the report [HERE](#)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

KARAT Secretariat would like to sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the News (forwarding information and providing us with 'original' information): Macedonian Association of Development and Integration "MADI", NGO "Nas" (Tajikistan), Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, ASTRA.

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