

ANNUAL REPORT  
2025



## Introduction

2025 was marked by a series of projects and important advocacy activities. **1,637** people participated in our various activities, including women, young people, students, teachers, and representatives of institutions, trade unions, and civil society organizations. We continued to work on improving gender equality in the world of work; promoting gender-aware policies; providing psychological and legal assistance to women victims of violence; preventing gender-based violence among young people and promoting sexual and reproductive rights and health in Croatia. We also continued to work on the issue of gender disinformation in society.

In 2025, **CESI contributed €112,871 to the state and local budgets** through taxes, surtaxes, contributions from salaries, and taxes and contributions from contracts, **and received €97,741 from the state and local budgets for the implementation of projects.**

**CESI contributed €15,130 more to the state and local budgets than it received from them in donations.**

## 2025 in numbers

**15** projects

**1637** direct beneficiaries

**10** employees

**20** associates

**14** volunteers contributed 48 hours of work

**2363 services provided to 170 beneficiaries**

through the SOS Telephone Helpline for Women Victims of Violence in Krapina-Zagorje County, the Support and Cooperation Network for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences, and the "Radnica" (Workingwoman) Legal Counseling Center for labor and social rights

**185 000** readers and followers on the web portal Libela

**49** articles (from the section for fact-checking gender-based disinformation, GenderFacts, Libela)

**6** analyses

**4** research studies

**2** research reports

**2** brochures

**2** public campaigns with a reach of **500,000** users

Participation in the art project **INDEX.WOMEN** by Andreja Kulunčić

# To see what 2025 looked like in photos, visit our Facebook page: [CentarCESI](#) and Instagram profile: [centar.cesi](#)

## Gender Equality in the World of Work Program

*Within the framework of the "Gender Equality in the World of Work" program, we advocate for the achievement of gender equality in the world of work. This includes improving women's labor rights and working conditions, pay equity, work-life balance, flexible work arrangements, health and well-being in the workplace, and combatting discriminatory practices in the world of work.*

### Women's Health and Well-being in the Workplace



#### Utjecaj simptoma menstruacije i (peri)menopauze na radni život žena u Hrvatskoj

Rezultati istraživanja i preporuke



The project "Women's Health and Well-being in the Workplace," conducted in collaboration with pstaboo, addressed the impact of menstrual and (peri)menopausal symptoms on women's professional lives. This was a response to the lack of relevant data and the absence of policies addressing the reproductive health of employed women in the Republic of Croatia. The project's goals were to examine how these symptoms affect women at work, to destigmatize the issue, and to create a foundation for changes in the legislative and organizational framework through recommendations and public debate.

A **research study** was conducted to examine the experiences, attitudes, and needs of women in Croatia regarding reproductive health and working conditions, with a specific focus on conditions during menstruation and (peri)menopause; the results were published in a [report](#). The study included 632 women, 74% of whom experienced pronounced symptoms related to menstruation, while 26% experienced (peri)menopausal symptoms. Regardless of age or employment sector, the main challenges women face includes decreased productivity, fear of disclosing symptoms, lack of support, and stigma.

*“Even if your head is spinning, your ears are throbbing, you’re bleeding, and you are visibly unwell—you don’t have a choice; you have to go to work.”*

*“What I remember most are the comments about my sweating and my complete inability to be nice and smiley, the way my workplace had grown accustomed to seeing me.”*

*Statements from research participants*

In anticipation of World Menopause Day, we organized a panel discussion in October entitled "Menstruation and Menopause at Work." The participants included: Marija Lugarić, Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Gender Equality; Lara Hamer, Menoglobal; Iva Majstorović, CEO, Enstring; Iva Penezić, HR Director, Nexi; Anita Bujanić, Founder and Executive Director, HealthHub; and Petra Kejla, MD, specialist in gynecology and obstetrics from Poliklinika Sinteza. The panel discussion was supported by the European Parliament Liaison Office in Croatia, as well as Marko Vešligaj, Member of the European Parliament and Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality.



The project results have served as a foundation for the continuation of activities in the field of women’s occupational and reproductive health, including planned training sessions and advocacy efforts directed toward employers and institutions.

## RESCALE - Reskilling employees by fostering cooperation between labour market actors and the education sector



The [RESCALE](#) project addresses the growing need for new skill development within the context of dynamic labor market changes. Adults from declining sectors—whether unemployed, inactive, or in-transition workers—often face limited access to quality education and training. Consequently, RESCALE provides innovative solutions that enable them to acquire foundational, digital, green, and transversal skills essential for navigating the modern work environment. In collaboration with enterprises, educational institutions, and policymakers, RESCALE aims to empower adults across the seven participating EU Member States and create new opportunities for sustainable employment in the green and digital economy.

The project is implemented in seven countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, and Croatia. It is coordinated by the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, with the following partner organizations: Spectrigrion B.V., the Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre, Progress Consult Ltd., the University of Molise (Unimol), the Lithuanian Education and Science Trade Union (LESTU), and CESI.

As part of the project, we have partnered with several Zagreb-based institutions the Craft College Zagreb, Orsus College, Petar Zrinski Public Open University, and the Public Open University—as well as with Pupitres Wine Bar, where a portion of the classes is held. These partners have begun implementing 'LABs' (laboratories) in basic digital and green skills programs (the Basic Digital Skills Program, Bookkeeping Program, and the Wine and Food Pairing Program). The objective is to pilot a project in which teaching is tailored to the individual needs of the participants, featuring guidance, mentoring, and progress monitoring to help them acquire the skills necessary to navigate the challenges of an ever-changing labor market.

The project has resulted in the development of several key **materials** available on the project website: Skills assessment tool for in-transition workers, unemployed or inactive adults; Comparative report on training infrastructure and public-private sector cooperation in the partner countries; European 'Reskilling Lab' blueprint; Enhanced model for vocational guidance, counseling, and mentoring; and an Innovative training materials, methods, and guidelines for the establishment and operation of 'Reskilling Labs'.

Partner meetings were held in Belgium and Italy to facilitate the exchange of experiences and knowledge regarding the implementation of adult education programs. The project results have been presented and are accessible via the official website and social media channels, including the project's LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/rescale-eu/about/>.

### **Radnica.org (Workingwoman.org) Legal Counseling Center and Web portal**

The Legal Counseling Center for Labor and Social Rights 'Radnica' continued to serve as a place where women could seek free legal advice and information regarding labor law, the system of maternity and parental benefits, gender equality in the workplace, as well as discrimination in the field of work and employment, most frequently based on gender and pregnancy.

Through the legal counseling center's activities in 2025, we provided **18 legal consultations to 13 individuals**, consisting of 12 female and 1 male beneficiary. Among the total number of beneficiaries, 77.8% are employed, while 11.1% are unemployed; 38.9% hold permanent employment contracts, whereas 22.2% are on fixed-term contracts. The most represented legal areas—noting that consultations often overlapped between labor and social law, or labor law and maternity/parental benefits due to their interconnected nature—were labor law (88.9%), social law (55.6%), and criminal law (5.6%).

With respect to legal inquiries, they focused on the violation and protection of labor rights (27.8%), the rights of pregnant and postpartum women (22.2%), employment-related rights and obligations (27.8%), and parental rights (27.8%). The remaining 22.2% of inquiries covered other legal fields, primarily family law (specifically divorce and parental care arrangements) and criminal law cases involving violations of labor rights protected under criminal statutes.

Regarding the field of discrimination, inquiries pertained to discrimination in work and employment, in most cases involving indirect discrimination, primarily on the grounds of gender (11.1%) and pregnancy (5.6%).

## Work-Life Balance



In collaboration with the portal MojPosao (MyJob) and Alma Career, we conducted a survey to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of flexible work arrangements, workplace stressors, and how various forms of work affect women and men in Croatia.

The **research** indicates that flexible work arrangements are increasingly prevalent, utilized by approximately 60% of women and 66% of men, most commonly through flexible working hours and working from home. Women engage in remote work more frequently and express a greater need for flexibility to balance professional and personal responsibilities, while men are more likely to extend their working day. The results also suggest that women more often experience stress related to time constraints and household chores, whereas work remains a significant source of stress for all respondents. Flexible working hours and working from home were identified as the most desirable forms of flexibility, particularly among women, as they contribute most significantly to work-life balance.

The results confirm that flexible work arrangements are a vital tool for adapting to the modern labor market, yet their availability and impact vary significantly. Distinct gender differences in the utilization of flexibility and the experience of stress highlight the need for gender-responsive labor policies and structured measures that support work-life balance for all employees.

These findings will serve as a basis for our future advocacy efforts and will inform the educational components of our programs.

### Other activities:

- As experts in the field of gender equality, we participated in the implementation of the project '[GENPROCURE](#) - Gender Equality in Public Procurement,' carried out by the City of Zagreb. The project focused on gender-responsive public procurement and the development of integrated action plans aimed at demonstrating how gender equality can become a key component of procurement decision-making.

- We participated in the working group of the [CAREvolution](#) project, implemented by the Croatian Business Council for Sustainable Development (HRPSOR). The project aims to promote inclusive, gender-responsive, and family-friendly policies within organizations. The project contributes to reducing gender inequalities and the care gap, and is being implemented in Slovenia, Croatia, and Romania.
- We joined the [MenoGlobal](#) initiative, an international organization dedicated to raising awareness and transforming the approach to menopause worldwide, with a mission to establish menopause as a global health priority.
- We delivered a presentation titled 'Menopause in the Workplace' for the company NEXI, as part of their *Conversation Starter program*, in collaboration with pstaboo and gynecologist Petra Kejla.



- We conducted a training session for the Red Cross of the City of Zagreb on the topic of gender equality in the workplace.
- To mark International Women's Day, at the invitation of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Republic of Croatia, we participated in a working lunch with Ambassador Charlotte van Baak.



- We participated in the 'Menopause Talk - Menopause, Policy & Economic Possibility in Croatia' event, which was organized by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Croatia following an initiative by MenoGlobal.



- We delivered a presentation on gender equality in the world of work for a Swedish trade union confederation, organized by the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

## Combating Violence Against Women Program

*As part of the 'Combating Violence Against Women' program, we provide continuous and specialized support to women victims of gender-based violence in Krapina-Zagorje County through counseling, legal aid, and psychosocial support. The objective is to contribute to the prevention and reduction of violence, empower beneficiaries to safely leave abusive relationships, and to support them in building healthy, high-quality lives and relationships.*

### SOS Helpline and Counseling Center for Women Victims of Violence in Krapina-Zagorje County

Throughout the year, the SOS helpline and counseling center continually addressed the needs of beneficiaries by providing timely psychosocial and legal support, while actively contributing to violence prevention through education, public campaigns, and intersectoral cooperation.

In 2025, we provided a total of **441 services to 51 beneficiaries**, including: 11 field visits, 38 in-person counseling sessions, and 26 legal consultations. Additionally, the SOS helpline received 366 calls, during which beneficiaries were provided with support, information, and counseling regarding protection from violence, reporting procedures, legal proceedings, and forms of assistance available to them.

To strengthen professional capacities and intersectoral cooperation, various training sessions and meetings were conducted. A series of counseling skills training sessions took place at the Taura Counseling Center in Zagreb, alongside regular supervision for the SOS team. Specialized training sessions were organized for professionals from

the Croatian Social Work Institute, the police, and members of the County Team for the Prevention and Combating of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, focusing on the dynamics of abusive relationships and gender-based violence. Furthermore, informative and educational workshops were held to activate, motivate, and empower women for personal development and labor market integration.

In the field of *preventing gender-based violence among youth*, workshops were conducted in secondary schools across Krapina-Zagorje County, including sessions for students and the Student Council at Zabok High School and the A.G. Matoš High School in Zabok. Additionally, several training sessions on internet safety were held for students and parents at the A.G. Matoš High School and Pregrada High School, led by CESI external associate Tina Andrašek.

We sustain ongoing collaboration with public institutions and civil society organizations, including through our participation in Women's Network meetings regarding police training, as well as meetings with the Croatian Social Work Institute (HZSR), the Krapina-Zagorje County Police Administration (PU KZŽ), and the 'Novi početak' (New Beginning) Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence. The SOS helpline increased its public visibility through media appearances, interviews, and radio guest spots, raising critical awareness on gender-based violence and femicide.

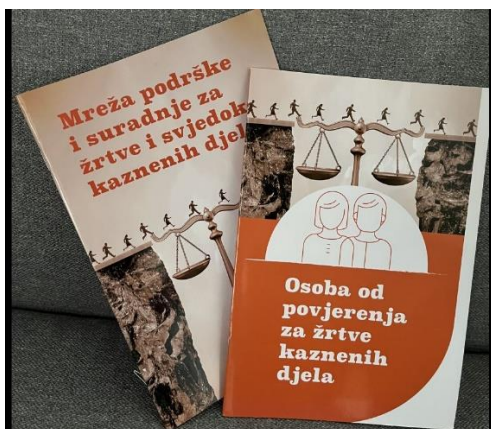
During November and December, we conducted an advocacy campaign against violence against women titled '**Roses are Red, Love Isn't Blue**', as part of the global initiative '16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence'. The campaign featured a symbolic rose installation in Zabok and Krapina in memory of women murdered in Croatia, alongside billboards, media appearances, and collaborations with social media influencers. The campaign aimed to spark conversations about healthy relationships, raise awareness about often unrecognized forms of violence, and to encourage women to seek support and the community to intervene. The campaign achieved exceptional reach, visibility, and engagement, with a social media reach of 447,158 users and an additional 1.2 million through influencer partnerships.



## Support and Cooperation Network for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences

Through the 'Network of Support and Cooperation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences' program—implemented with the support of the Ministry of Justice, Public Administration, and Digital Transformation—we provide continuous services across Krapina-Zagorje County. These services include emotional support, practical and legal information, legal and psychological counseling, accompaniment to court and other institutions, field visits, and psychosocial support.

In 2025, we provided **1904 services to 106 beneficiaries** (90 women and 16 men): *888 emotional support services; 563 services related to practical information and assistance; 310 services providing information on legal rights; 27 legal counseling services; 19 psychological counseling services; 36 court accompaniments; 3 accompaniments to other institutions (police stations and the Municipal State Attorney's Office); and 58 counseling services provided by a social worker.*



We continued our ongoing collaboration with the Municipal State Attorney's Office in Zlatar, the Municipal Court in Zlatar and its permanent services across Krapina-Zagorje County, as well as the regional offices of the Croatian Social Work Institute.

Throughout the year, we intensified our cooperation with the law enforcement system through meetings held at all police stations within the County, as well as the Krapina-Zagorje Police Administration. These meetings served to confirm our continued partnership and to explore opportunities for enhancing our joint efforts.



Regular meetings were held with member organizations and the Network coordinator from the Women's Room, including a two-day partnership and peer consultation meeting. Two online training sessions were conducted on social welfare rights and alimony, along with a specialized training for legal professionals, which was attended by a CESI legal expert.

#### Other activities:

We continued our collaboration with Bedekovčina High School, where we conducted a workshop on the prevention of violence against women and teen dating violence as part of the Civic Education curriculum.

## Sex, Gender and Sexual Rights Program

*Within the program Sex, Gender and Sexual Rights, we work on multiple levels to contribute to the promotion and realization of sexual and reproductive rights and more effective prevention of gender-based violence. We continuously monitor the adoption of policies and strategies at the national, international, and regional levels that concern issues of gender stereotypes in education, and reproductive and sexual rights. We also participate in public debates and events, draft policy recommendations and shadow reports, and inform the public.*

### **bE-SAFE- Raising awareness about gender-based cyber violence against girls and women and creating a safer online environment**

#### **Implementation of the Educational Program for Students**

We have continued our work on the bE-SAFE project, which aims to raise awareness of cyber gender-based violence at both institutional and societal levels, as well as to improve the legislative framework for regulating cyber violence in Croatia, Spain, and Portugal. The project is implemented by the Gender Equality Ombudsperson of the Republic of Croatia; the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb (IDIZ); CESI -

Center for Education, Counseling, and Research; the Domine Association - Organization for the Promotion of Women's Rights; the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) from Portugal; the Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights (PpDM); and LEM España - Organization for the Protection of Women's Rights from Spain.

The **bE-SAFE educational prevention program for students** was conducted in secondary schools throughout central Croatia and Slavonia. Its primary goal is to increase knowledge and actively involve young people in combating cyber gender-based violence. The program received an official recommendation from the Ministry of Science, Education, and Youth, as well as a positive professional evaluation from the Education and Teacher Training Agency. The curriculum consists of eight school hours delivered through four modules. The workshops are designed to be interactive, encouraging students to express their views, propose solutions, and engage in group discussions. Following the training, students designed and implemented their own peer-to-peer activities to share their acquired knowledge and experiences.

The implementation of the educational program for students began in January and continued through mid-June 2025. The program was delivered through a series of workshops of varying durations, adapted to school schedules and institutional capacities. In the majority of participating schools, the program consisted of four separate sessions, specifically: four workshops lasting two school hours each. In all schools involved, pre-testing was conducted with the students, followed by post-testing one week after the completion of the program.

The program was implemented in schools by CESI educators and teachers who had previously completed a capacity-building seminar on the prevention of cyber gender-based violence. The implementation by teachers was continuously monitored and supported by the CESI team.

The bE-SAFE educational program was conducted with *21 groups of students from 16 secondary schools* that participated in the implementation and evaluation of the program. A total of *421 students* from central Croatia and Slavonia took part, of whom 66.5% were girls and 33.5% were boys. The program was implemented in the following secondary schools: Antun Gustav Matoš High School (Zabok), Pregrada High School, Varaždin Vocational High School, Samobor Vocational High School, Bjelovar Technical High School, Bjelovar High School, Varaždin High School of Economics, Bjelovar Commercial and Trade High School, Ban Josip Jelačić High School (Zaprešić), Sisak High School of Economics, Dragutin Stražimir High School (Sveti Ivan Zelina), Ivan Zakmardi Dijankovečki High School (Križevci), Glina High School, Požega High School of Economics, Vinkovci Vocational High School, and Vrapče Nursing High School.

Following the workshops, students took an active role in prevention activities as peer educators, leading initiatives within their schools and local communities. In over 16 schools, they conducted peer-led training and campaigns, creating posters, leaflets, brochures, video and audio materials, digital games, and quizzes. They also organized school exhibitions and roundtables. These creative contents were shared via social media, local news outlets, and in public spaces; in some instances, students even extended their outreach by sharing their knowledge with primary school pupils. These activities testify to the high motivation and creativity of the

participants, while reaffirming the necessity of a systematic approach to cyber gender-based violence within the educational context.

The workshop facilitators observed that most students actively participated in group activities and discussions—asking numerous questions, providing comments, and sharing examples from their own lives or the experiences of their friends. The facilitators rated the program as highly effective across diverse school environments, noting that students demonstrated high levels of engagement, curiosity, and a readiness to discuss topics closely linked to their daily digital experiences.

Throughout July and August, information regarding the activities conducted in schools was shared on CESI’s social media channels. Several schools expressed interest in continuing the program and implementing peer education initiatives in the upcoming period.

The **impact analysis** of the bE-SAFE program indicates an improvement in knowledge regarding cyber gender-based violence, particularly in recognizing less visible forms of GBV, such as coercive control and public shaming, suggesting a positive program impact. A shift toward more critical attitudes regarding gender inequality, controlling behaviors, and digital violence was also recorded. There was a decrease in victim-blaming, an increased recognition that young men can also be affected by violence, and a reduction in homophobic and gender-stereotypical attitudes. However, the willingness to intervene as a bystander continues to show limited progress. At the same time, a high level of empathy toward victims was recorded. Regarding future behavior, there is a visible shift toward supportive and proactive reactions and a greater readiness to seek help—particularly from trusted adults—alongside a decrease in passive coping strategies. The program evaluation shows a high level of student satisfaction with the workshops and a strong perception of their utility.

**Srednja škola Glina** provela je edukacijski program bE-SAFE u sklopu projekta “Podizanje svijesti o rodno uvjetovanom kibernetičkom nasilju nad djevojčicama i ženama te stvaranje sigurnijeg online okruženja – bE-SAFE”. Završna faza projekta bila je posvećena kreativnom izražavanju učenika koji su sudjelovali u projektu, a ovom prilikom predstavljamo njihove radove.

Voditeljice programa: Suzana Stanković i Martina Labaš

**PREPOZNAJ NASILJE U VEZI**  
Ljubav nikada ne boli.  
kontrola nije briga.  
Uvreda nije šala.

GLUPA SI

Ako te partner vrijeđa, kontrolira ili ti prijeti- TO NIJE LJUBAV!

Reagiraj. Potraži pomoć. Nisi sam/a.

**PREKINI ŠUTNJU- IZABERI SEBE!**

Iris Bobeta, Petra Marenković

[Left]: Glina High School implemented the bE-SAFE educational program as part of the project: 'Raising Awareness of Cyber Gender-Based Violence Against Girls and Women and Creating a Safer

Online Environment - bE-SAFE.' The final phase of the project was dedicated to the creative expression of the students who participated in the program, and we are proud to present their work.

Program Facilitators: Suzana Stanković and Martina Labaš

*Right: Recognize relationship abuse. Love never hurts. Control is not care. An insult is not a joke. If your partner insults you, controls you, or threatens you—IT IS NOT LOVE! Take action. Seek help. You are not alone. Break the silence—Choose yourself."*

By: Iris Bobeta and Petra Marenković]



## Capacity building for teachers

As part of the project, training sessions were conducted for **educational staff** aimed at strengthening their capacity to implement prevention programs focused on cyber gender-based violence. Trainings were held for teachers from the following schools: Vrapče Nursing School, Dragutin Stražimir High School in Sveti Ivan Zelina, Varaždin Vocational School, and Varaždin School of Economics. A total of 136 teachers participated in these specialized sessions on cyber-GBV prevention. Furthermore, an online training was held in collaboration with the GOOD Initiative, where we presented the bE-SAFE educational program to more than 50 teachers from various parts of Croatia.



Teachers were issued certificates of professional development and project participation for the purposes of career advancement. A number of the teachers involved in the project presented the bE-SAFE program at professional conferences and in specialized publications. Furthermore, individual schools expressed interest in continuing the collaboration and providing additional training for their teaching staff.

## Training for Professionals Working with Victims of (Cyber) Gender-Based Violence

Throughout the year, a specialized training program on cyber gender-based violence was developed for **police officers and staff from the regional offices of the Croatian Social Work Institute (HZSR)**. The program aims to familiarize participants with the forms and specific characteristics of cyber-GBV against women and girls. It is designed to facilitate the exchange of practical insights regarding the prevalence of this type of violence, while strengthening the practical knowledge and skills necessary for effective intervention. A key objective is to enhance the quality of cooperation between law enforcement and experts working with victims, with an emphasis on improved risk assessment, clearer communication, and the timely protection of victims, in accordance with current protocols and professional policing standards. Training for HZSR staff will focus on the specific needs of social workers when supporting victims—particularly minors and their parents—as well as on identifying prevention methods and implementing early intervention in high-risk situations.

The Ministry of the Interior and the Croatian Social Work Institute recommended specific police administrations and regional HZSR offices for future trainings. Consequently, workshops for the police will be conducted in Zagreb, Koprivnica, Zabok, and Sisak, while sessions for social workers will be held at regional offices in Zagreb, Samobor, Karlovac, and Osijek.

Regular partner meetings were held regarding the activities within the 'Training' work package, for which CESI holds primary responsibility. A partnership meeting involving all participating organizations took place in Madrid in mid-November. While in Madrid, we also attended an international conference at the Complutense University. Following a lecture by Professor Tasia Aránguez from the University of Granada—titled *'Machismo on Social Media and Dating Apps'*, which contextualized the roots of cyber-GBV—a roundtable was held to present the key research findings from Croatia, Portugal, and Spain.



Finally, a request for a one-year project extension was submitted and officially approved; consequently, the project is now set to conclude in mid-January 2027.

## Implementing Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Schools in Zagreb

The advocacy campaign for the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in primary and secondary schools in the City of Zagreb was designed to strategically influence key decision-makers and inform the public about its importance.

Ahead of the local elections, intensive advocacy activities were directed toward political parties to ensure that the introduction of CSE was clearly defined in their election platforms, including concrete steps and a commitment to implementation during the upcoming mandate. Inquiries regarding stances and possibilities for introducing educational content on sexuality and the prevention of gender-based violence were sent to mayoral candidates and heads of electoral lists for the City Assembly. The advocacy focus was on the parties with the highest probability of forming the municipal government in Zagreb: WeCan! (Možemo) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP), though communication was maintained with other relevant parties and candidates. Positive responses were received from SDP representatives, while the party structures of WeCan! ignored direct communication—even though their election platform included the introduction of comprehensive health education.

CESI commissioned IPSOS+ to conduct a public opinion survey in Zagreb, which revealed a high level of support for CSE among citizens, particularly among women, highly educated individuals, and the 18-30 and 45-59 age groups. These data were utilized in advocacy activities and in communications with decision-makers.



The media and public awareness campaign **#WhyAreWeSilent 3.0** (**#Zaštošutimo 3.0**) maintained pressure on city authorities and political actors to secure a clear political commitment to the implementation of systematic sexuality education. The campaign utilized thought-provoking posters, radio jingles, social media outreach, and public actions, and was developed in collaboration with communication agencies.

A public action was conducted in front of the City Assembly under the slogan *“When there’s no theft [of public funds], there’s money for everything—except for sex-ed?”*, drawing attention to the delays in implementing the promised sexuality education. We issued four press releases, resulting in 28 media

mentions and significant social media reach (over 140,000 users, more than 500,000

impressions, and nearly 12,000 clicks on the policy brief). Furthermore, volunteers launched a TikTok profile dedicated to educational content. The social media advocacy campaign continued through mid-June 2025.



The #WhyAreWeSilent 3.0 (#Zaštošutimo 3.0) campaign received significant recognition within the communications industry, reaching the finals of the IdejaX 2025 awards in the 'Best of Positive Change' category. Furthermore, *the campaign was awarded a Silver Medal* at the Days of Communication festival in Rovinj.

Our advocacy efforts involved continuous communication with the City of Zagreb and other stakeholders, providing regular updates to the members of the Initiative for the Implementation of CSE, and engaging civil society organizations, experts, institutions, and the media.

To strengthen the arguments for CSE and counteract disinformation, we developed and shared a **research database** with our allies and stakeholders. This database provides evidence-based proof of how high-quality CSE leads to positive outcomes in physical and mental health, the prevention of gender-based violence, the

protection of gender and sexual minorities from discrimination, and the cultivation of healthy intimate relationships.

With the aim of exposing disinformation and dominant disinformation narratives concerning sexuality and reproductive rights, the Libela.org portal published three fact-checking articles: '[How is Sexuality Education Implemented at the Local Level?](#)', '[Sexuality Education: Where Are We Today?](#)', and '[Contraceptive Pills in the Era of Social Media: What the Platforms Say vs. What Research Shows](#)'. Furthermore, additional articles were published on these topics, contributing to the development of expert and scientific foundations for debunking gender-related disinformation. In the long term, these efforts help mitigate the harmful effects of such narratives on human rights.

Our project also focused on informing and raising awareness amongst **parents**. To this end, we produced a series of short videos aimed at debunking the most common myths surrounding CSE. These materials emphasize the importance of open, honest, and informed conversations about sexuality, while contributing to a clearer understanding of what CSE actually entails and how it supports the well-being of children and youth. Through these video materials, we aim to increase awareness of the importance of CSE and inform parents about its core principles and content, ensuring that sexuality education remains relevant, effective, and age appropriate. Additionally, we recorded a series of online lectures featuring various experts discussing contraception, sexual health, and the impact of gender stereotypes and prejudices on mental health. These materials, primarily intended for parents, will be featured as part of an awareness campaign and distributed via social media and online platforms to schools, in collaboration with civil society organizations—particularly parents' associations.

The project has contributed to increasing the visibility and influence of CESI and its partners in the public sphere, strengthening evidence-based advocacy capacities, and developing new alliances with schools, experts, and institutions. This forms a vital foundation for continued advocacy for the implementation of CSE in Zagreb schools.

In October, the 'GOOD School' session titled 'Comprehensive Sexuality Education for Youth' was held as an online presentation for over 50 teachers. Participants were introduced to the core concepts of CSE—including its principles, values, and content—and our *SEXED Platform* was presented as a key online resource for teachers, specialized school staff, and educators.



In early September, the conference '*Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the Local Context*' was held in Zagreb, with approximately 70 experts in attendance. During the conference, the Head of the City Office for Education, Sports, and Youth, Luka Juroš, presented the City of Zagreb's decision to implement health education and introduced the Commission responsible for developing the extracurricular

subject, of which sexuality education is intended to be an integral component. Frank Berglund, representing the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (RFSU), shared insights into the history of CSE implementation in Sweden, while the local implementation of the "W L'amore" program in the Emilia-Romagna region (Italy) was also showcased. A panel discussion focused on current practices, challenges, and the practical aspects of implementing CSE in Croatia, alongside the presentation of materials, videos, and maps created within the framework of this project.

Following the conference, in September, Status M and CESI became the targets of a *disinformation campaign* initiated by the Member of Parliament Nikola Grmoja (MOST) and the web portal Narod.hr. The campaign spread false claims that Sex-Ed Conversation Cards (an educational tool for adults created by Status M volunteers) would be used in schools as part of the health education curriculum being introduced by the City of Zagreb.

Although the initial public discourse was predominantly negative, the narrative gradually shifted as proponents of CSE joined the debate, leading to more balanced media coverage over time. Due to this crisis, the launch of the planned parental awareness campaign was postponed, and a portion of the video materials was revised and adapted.

### **My Voice, My Choice**

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) '*My Voice, My Choice: For Safe and Accessible Abortion*' collected over 1.2 million signatures across the EU in 2025. In Croatia, CESI was a member of the national initiative and contributed to an online campaign which collected approximately 65,000 signatures. The signatures were submitted to the European Commission in early September, after which the initiative continued its advocacy within EU institutions. On December 17, 2025, the European Parliament *adopted a resolution supporting the initiative* and calling for concrete measures to ensure safe and accessible abortion in the European Union. The European Commission has until March 2026 to issue an official response and outline further steps toward ensuring abortion access across the EU.

### **The ASTRA Network**

CESI continued its collaboration and active engagement within the ASTRA Network (*Central and Eastern European Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and*

*Rights*), which gathers organizations active in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights across Central and Eastern Europe. CESI has been a member of this network for over 20 years. The network's annual meeting was held in Krakow in May, focusing on the exchange of information, experiences, and best practices, analyzing current trends in reproductive rights, and planning joint advocacy activities at the regional level. During the meeting, a half-hour documentary was filmed featuring ASTRA members, highlighting their contributions and the challenges they face in their respective countries. A representative from CESI participated in the film, and the premiere is scheduled for January 2026.

### **The Elephant Talk Project**

As part of the international project 'Elephant Talk'—which focuses on building capacities for transfeminist data collection and visualization regarding gender-based online hate speech—CESI participated in the project's educational and research activities. During a training session held in Athens in January, an online questionnaire was finalized and piloted, and concepts for data visualization and communication materials were developed. The research on gender-based online hate speech, with a specific focus on body shaming, was conducted across all participating countries. The data gathered was utilized for further analysis and advocacy activities at the European level.

Results from the **survey** of 700 young people indicate a high prevalence of this phenomenon: a significant proportion of respondents reported personal experiences of online body shaming, while the vast majority witnessed such content in the digital environment. The study confirms a severe negative impact on mental health, self-esteem, and social participation among youth, while highlighting the strong gender dimension of the phenomenon, including victim-blaming and the normalization of discriminatory body narratives.

*The recommendations*, based on the findings, emphasize the importance of implementing comprehensive and inclusive sexuality education that addresses gender equality, digital violence, and the critical examination of societal body norms, alongside the systematic strengthening of media and digital literacy among youth. The set of recommendations also addresses the implementation of the European legislative framework—specifically the Digital Services Act (DSA)—with a call for a stronger integration of the gender perspective. Furthermore, it highlights the need for systematic data collection and cross-sectoral cooperation to ensure that body shaming is recognized and addressed as a structural form of gender-based violence.

The survey results and policy recommendations were presented to Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and their teams, further enhancing the visibility of this issue at the European level. Importantly, engagement through this project has created opportunities for continued collaboration between civil society organizations, youth, and EU institutions.

## INDEX. WOMEN



We participated in the art-research project **INDEX.WOMEN** by artist **Andreja Kulunčić**, which addresses the position of women and gender equality through an interdisciplinary approach. Throughout the year, a CESI representative participated in a *working group* on the exhibition, contributing to defining thematic frameworks, providing theoretical inputs, and integrating research findings. Ahead of the exhibition premiere at the Zagreb City Museum, a campaign was launched featuring posters placed throughout Zagreb in honor of March 8th, International Women’s Day. CESI representatives took part in public presentations and the press conference for the exhibition premiere. Furthermore, we participated in the exhibition’s discursive program, which included a presentation of research results on the impact of menopause on women’s professional lives, held in June at the Zagreb City Museum.

### Other activities:

- In partnership with the organization Restart, we implemented the project “*Thinking through Film*” (Razmišljaj filmom). As part of this initiative, a workshop on peer violence prevention was organized at Petrinja High School, featuring a screening of the film “*Playful Game*” (Šaljiva igra), which was produced during the project’s filmmaking workshops.
- CESI participated in a series of professional, advocacy, and educational activities at both the national and international levels. Lectures were held on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender equality in education for participants of the Feminist School in Sarajevo, as well as for students at Juraj Dobrila University in Pula. Additionally, an online lecture was conducted within the 'GOOD School' framework for over 50 teachers.

- In early April, we attended the Women in Black Network meeting in Belgrade. We participated in a panel discussion where we presented the current situation and our advocacy efforts regarding the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in Zagreb to an audience of over 60 activists, journalists, and academics from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, and Montenegro.
- In February, the Women's Fund organized a gathering (consisting of an exchange, discussion, and retreat) for its grantee organizations. The meeting focused on discussing a multi-year strategy supported by analytical frameworks and included a specialized workshop on communications.
- CESI participated in numerous conferences and professional symposia, including a conference on online violence against women organized by the association BaBe; an international conference on online child sexual abuse organized by the University of Ljubljana; and the "Science for Choice - Abortion in Global Perspective" conference in Split. We also attended events focused on the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education within the context of anti-gender mobilizations, as well as various conferences dedicated to reproductive rights, gender equality, and democratic processes in Europe. Furthermore, we took part in online events hosted by international organizations such as the World Association for Sexual Health, the Sex Education Forum, and other professional networks.
- Collaboration with the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Zagreb continued through student internships at CESI for journalism and political science students. These students participated in creating media content, writing articles, and preparing communication materials related to Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).
- CESI representatives also participated in professional consultations and training sessions regarding the legislative framework for lobbying, the operation of referral and crisis centers for victims of sexual violence, and in research interviews and academic projects focused on feminist movements and reproductive rights.
- Meetings and consultations were held with decision-makers and European institutions, including meetings with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) about the priorities of the new European Gender Equality Strategy. We also contributed to the dialogue within the joint initiative of the ASTRA Network members.
- Furthermore, we engaged in advocacy at the European Union level concerning the development of the first-ever *EU Civil Society Strategy*. At the invitation of the Center for Reproductive Rights, and alongside other European networks

and organizations, we developed recommendations for the strategy. These aimed to strengthen the protection of fundamental rights, secure the civic space for civil society organizations, and ensure the financial sustainability of organizations promoting human rights. Following the strategy's publication, we responded with a letter emphasizing the need for concrete implementation mechanisms and stable support for organizations working in the fields of gender equality and reproductive rights.

## **CROSOL- Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity**

CESI actively participated in the work of CROSOL - Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity, a national network of civil society organizations active in the fields of international development cooperation, human rights, global education, and international solidarity. A CESI representative serves as a member of the CROSOL Steering Committee, which held several online consultations throughout the year regarding the platform's current operations and the preparation of the Electoral Assembly. At the Electoral Assembly held in October, the CESI representative was elected as the Chair of the Steering Committee and the authorized representative of the national network.

## **Gender, Equality, and Media Program**

*Within the Gender, Equality, and Media program, we inform, raise awareness, and educate citizens on the topics of sex and gender equality, social justice, and social inclusion within the public and media spheres. The program's core activities are centered around the operations of the Libela.org web portal.*

### **GenderFacts**

Through the [GenderFacts](#) section on the Libela.org web portal, we verify the accuracy of information, claims, and statements made in the public sphere concerning gender equality. The goal of these verifications is to *combat sex and gender discrimination*, with the fundamental purpose of strengthening societal resilience against gendered disinformation.

In 2025, we debunked **49 instances of gendered disinformation**, publishing 49 corresponding verifications and analyses of public statements in the GenderFacts section. Additionally, 37 articles were published on točnotako.hr —a collaborative fact-checking platform.

In addition to fact checking and information analyses, we conducted five **training sessions** in Zagreb and Rijeka for students, journalists, and gender equality experts on the topic of gendered disinformation and fact-checking tools, reaching 63 participants. Furthermore, we delivered three educational lectures in Pregrada, Krapina, and Split for approximately 70 attendees. CESI also participated in three panel discussions sharing our fact-checking experiences (organized by the Adria Digital Media Observatory, GONG/Faculty of Political Science, and the University of Split).

In collaboration with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Rijeka, our project partner, we produced **reports** on gendered disinformation during the presidential and local elections, as well as a final comprehensive report summarizing the key findings. Finally, we developed a set of **guidelines for monitoring gendered disinformation**.



The *final conference* of the GenderFacts project was held at the end of October, bringing together approximately 40 participants from various fields, including the media, public and government sectors, the NGO sector, and the academic community.

As part of the 'Women's Fund' grant, two fact-checking articles were published regarding sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

### **Libela.org Portal**

As part of our regular editorial activities, we publish various texts under the sections 'With Attitude' (*Sa stavom*), 'In Focus' (*U fokusu*), and 'Discussion' (*Razgovor*). We also monitor chauvinistic, sexist, and discriminatory statements made in the public sphere through our 'Pillar of Shame' (*Stup srama*) section.

In 2025, we published **126 news items, analyses, reviews, and interviews**, and recorded **46 discriminatory, sexist, or chauvinistic statements on the 'Pillar of Shame.'** We organized online voting for periodic 'winners' of the *Pillar of Shame* for

the most egregious statements made during the presidential and local elections, as well as a winner for *'Cringe of the Year'* (*Susramlje*) for 2025, awarding the most sexist and discriminatory statement of the year.

Between April and July, we mentored two students from the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Zagreb. We also supported students from the School of Applied Arts and Design in Zagreb who, as part of the 'School and Community' (ŠiZ) curriculum, conducted research on sexism in politics; their report was subsequently published on Libela.org. Furthermore, as part of a grant for promoting media excellence, two of our contributors—Dinka Premužić and Tena Vizinger—published nine articles as part of the investigative series *'Safe House'* (*Sigurna kuća*) and *'Female Faces of Migration'* (*Ženska lica migracija*).

### **Disinformation Action**

Following the training program for youth work professionals held in late 2024, which was focused on identifying disinformation, its accompanying narratives, and its impact on marginalized groups, the [brochure 'Disinformation Action'](#) was produced. This resource covers various types of information disorder and disinformation, the most common narratives targeting minority groups, essential media literacy and fact-checking skills, and strategies for combating disinformation.

The brochure was distributed through multiple channels (our own and those of our partner organizations). On our part, it was presented to the office of Marko Vešligaj, Member of the European Parliament, added to the Solidarna Foundation's virtual classroom, and presented at the GOOD Initiative conference. Furthermore, it was presented to students at various universities (*University of Split, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka*). Additionally, a training session was conducted for approximately 30 youth work professionals from schools and civil society organizations within the GOOD Initiative network.

We also organized a meeting with representatives of the European Commission and the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes to discuss the project's implementation and outcomes. The project was implemented by CESI in collaboration with several partner organizations: Building the Balkans (*Kosovo*), IKAR (*Bulgaria*), BeFem (*Serbia*), Chance (*Germany*), Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (*Cyprus*), Juventas (*Montenegro*), and Centre for Bridging Communities (*Albania*).

### **ElectionFacts HUB**

In early 2025, we implemented the *'ElectionFacts HUB'* project in partnership with the media portals Lupiga and Faktograf. The project aimed to monitor disinformation during the Croatian election cycles. Libela's specific role was to

monitor gendered disinformation during the presidential elections. We published two in-depth articles concerning the presidential candidates, which were also shared across our partner organizations' platforms.

#### Other activities:

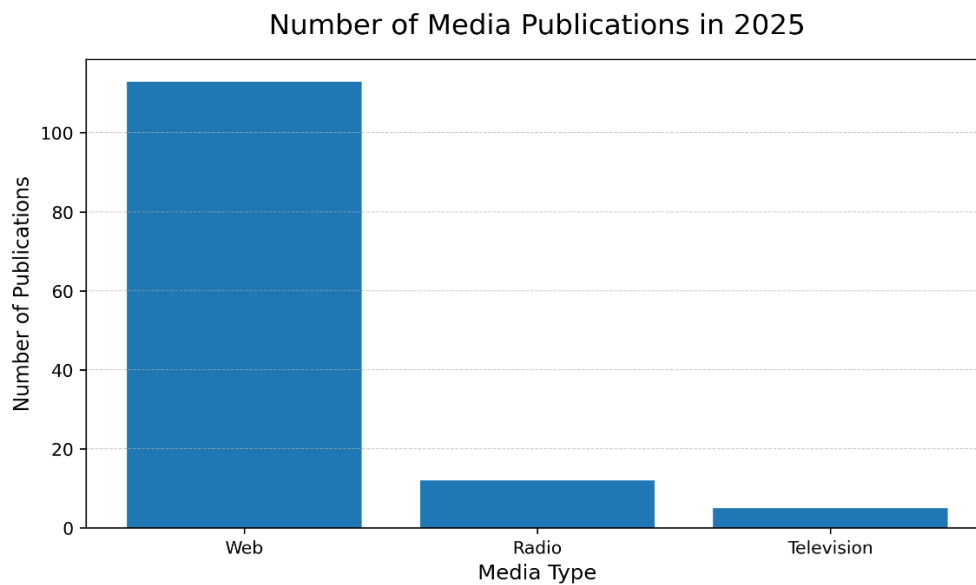
- We participated in various conferences and festivals, including the Voices - European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy (*Zagreb*), the POINT Conference (*Sarajevo*), the Philea Forum (*Portugal*), and the Final Conference of the ADMO Project (*Zagreb*). We also attended the symposium 'Constructive Journalism: A Step Towards the News We Need,' organized by the Agency for Electronic Media (*Zagreb*), Communication and Media Days (*Split*), and a specialized seminar on Responsible Reporting on Gender-Based Violence Against Women (*Zagreb*).
- Our team took part in various specialized workshops, such as 'Legal Aspects of Fact-Checking,' organized by the Agency for Electronic Media and the Faculty of Law in Zagreb (*Zagreb*); the Academy for Resilience Against Anti-Gender Movements (*Zagreb*); and workshops focused on constructive and solution-oriented journalism (*Zagreb*).
- Iva Zelić, the 'Gender, Equality, and Media' Program Coordinator, was nominated for *Journalist of the Year*, an award presented by the organization Pariter.



## CESI in the media and on social media networks

As in previous years, in 2025, we continued to monitor media content on web portals, television, radio and in print. This media report was compiled based on our internal archives, activity tracking systems, and PR reports.

In 2025, we recorded a total of 135 media publications and appearances. The majority of these were online (113), followed by radio (12 guest appearances/features) and television (5 guest appearances/features).



We maintained the same level of engagement on social media as in previous years. The CESI website was visited by 8,766 people, while our Facebook and Instagram pages are followed by a total of 7,855 followers.

In addition to the official CESI Facebook page, separate pages have been created for many of our projects, which offer more detailed information about project activities.

## Find us online

Web	FB	Instagram/Youtube/LinkedIn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• cesi.hr</li><li>• radnica.org</li><li>• libela.org</li><li>• sezamweb.net</li><li>• nechupedia.sezamweb.net</li><li>• nijeuredu.com</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CentarCESI</li><li>• Libela.org</li><li>• Eumogucnosti</li><li>• SOStelefonZagorje</li><li>• mrezapodrskezisKZZ</li><li>• sezamweb</li><li>• radnica.org</li><li>• MojastvarMojizbor</li><li>• kampanjadvijedjevojce</li><li>• nasilnevezesubezveze</li></ul>	Instagram libela_org Centar.cesi Mogurecinecu Youtube Ravnopravnost

## Team members and organizational development

CESI Staff and Team members in 2025:

- Nataša Bijelić, Program Associate and CESI Coordinator
- Sanda Malbaša, Finance Manager and Deputy Coordinator
- Anamarija Tkalčec, Program Coordinator
- Sanja Cesar, Program Coordinator
- Iva Zelić, Program Coordinator
- Tena Sambolić Petrišić, Project Manager
- Vendi Keserica Tomičić, Program Associate
- Lana Kučer, Program Associate
- Tamara Šterk, Program Associate
- Josip Šipić, Program Associate

We implemented the *Strategic Plan for the period 2025-2027*, as well as the *Operational Plan for 2025*. In October 2025, we conducted an operational planning session together with the members of the CESI Steering Committee, resulting in the development of the Operational and Financial Plan for 2026. The regular CESI General Assembly was held in December.

We participated in a series of training sessions relevant to our field of work, organized by various institutions, foundations, and civil society organizations from both Croatia and abroad. To ensure effective governance and organizational

excellence, we utilize the *OK-Quality Management System for Civil Society Organizations*.

The CESI Library is open to the public on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with prior notice. All books are registered in the BIBA system ([biba.cesi.hr](http://biba.cesi.hr)).

## Collaboration

We are grateful for all our collaborations, including with the NGOs SOS Rijeka, DOMINE Split, RODA, Women's Group Karlovac "Korak", and Pariter. We also collaborated with the association HERA Križevci, the Women's Network Croatia, the Zagorje Creative Youth Association (ZAKum), the association Restart, the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, the City of Zagreb, the association Faktograf, the portal Lupiga.com, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, and the European Parliament Liaison Office in Croatia. We also joined the EU-wide initiative 'My Voice, My Choice,' launched by the Slovenian 8th of March Institute (Institut 8. mart). Furthermore, we established partnerships with several educational institutions in Zagreb, including the Craft College Zagreb, Orsus College, and the Open University Petar Zrinski and Open University Zagreb. Collaborations were also formed with the private sector, specifically with the companies pstaboo and MojPosao.

The program "Support and Cooperation Network for Victims and Witnesses of Crime" is implemented in partnership with the NGOs: Ženska soba (Women's Room); "Hera Križevci - for the protection and promotion of human rights", the Center for Support and Development of Civil Society "Delfin" Pakrac; Deša - Dubrovnik; S.O.S. Virovitica - counseling, empowerment, cooperation, "ZvoniMir", and "Korak" - NGO for the Support of Victims and Witnesses, Women's Group Karlovac, along with the Information Legal Centre (IPC), and the Centre for Civic Initiatives Poreč (CGI Poreč).

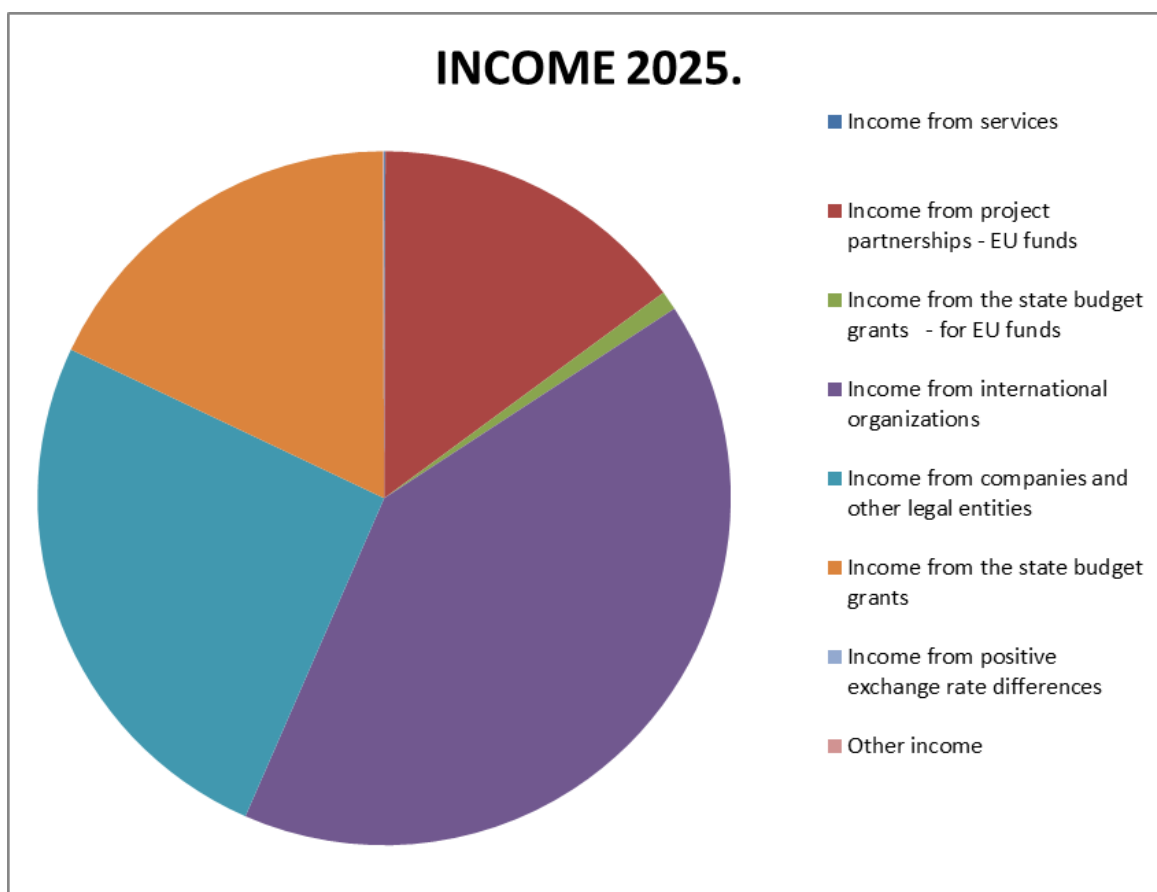
Among partner organizations from Europe, we are currently collaborating on project activities with CIG - Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality from Portugal; the Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights (PpDM); and LEM Espana - organization for the protection of women's rights from Spain; as well as Building the Balkans from Kosovo; IKAR from Bulgaria; BeFem from Serbia; Chance from Germany; the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies from Cyprus; Juventas from Montenegro; the Centre for Bridging Communities from Albania; and the organization Maldita.es. Furthermore, we collaborate with Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium), Spectricon B.V. (Netherlands); the Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre (Finland); Progress Consult Ltd. (Hungary); the University of Molise - UNIMOL (Italy); and the Lithuanian Education and Science Trade Union - LESTU (Lithuania).

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### INCOME

**482.729 €**

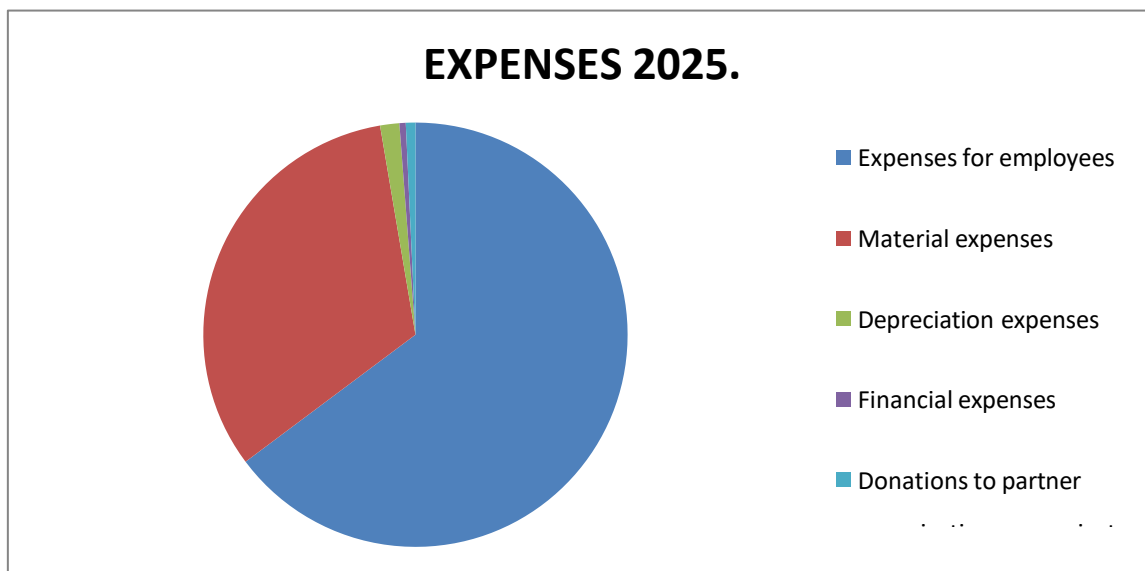
Income from services	270,00 €	0,06%
Income from project partnerships - EU funds	71.707,08 €	14,85%
Income from the state budget grants - for EU funds	4.285,96 €	0,89%
Income from the state budget and the budgets of local self-government units	93.455,27 €	19,36%
Income from international organizations	196.749,26 €	40,76%
Income from companies and other legal entities	115.986,13 €	24,03%
Income from positive exchange rate differences	88,81 €	0,02%
Other income	186,17 €	0,04%



## EXPENSES

**446.215 €**

Expenses for employees	289.070,71 €
Material expenses	145.218,42 €
Depreciation expenses	6.521,65 €
Financial expenses	2.145,65 €
Donations to partner organizations on projects	3.258,08 €



Total income in the year 2025 was 482.729 €. The amount of funds transferred from the previous financial period was 122.642 €. Total expense in the year 2025 was 446.215 €, therefore surplus for the next period is 159.156 €. The final balance on December 31, 2025 was 524.712 €.

### Donors in the year 2025 were:

The Sigrid Rausing Trust  
Fondation Chanel  
European Union  
Agency for Eletronic Media  
Ministry of Justice  
Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social  
Policy  
Central State Office for NGO  
Solidarna Foundation  
Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes  
City of Zagreb  
National Foundation for Civil Society Development