



**CEE Network for Gender Is**

Associate Member of PES Women

Budapest, Ljubljana, Zagreb

**UK Labour Party/Westminster Foundation for Democracy Funds & CEE Network for Gender Issues & Institute for Democracy and Social Progress from Ukraine 2013 project:**

**Social Democratic Platform and Women's Representation**

CEE Network for Gender Issues and a young team from the Institute for Democracy and Social Progress supported by LP WF from 2010, (first in the project named "Parity Coalition for Ukraine in 2010, followed by the project named "Campaigning on Gender Issues in 2011-12 and the project named: "Social Democratic Platform and Women's Representation" in 2013.

Young team of the Institute consists of: Olena Lukaniuk, Bohdan Ferens, Igor Iltiyo and Katja Vezeleva. This young team is mentored by Vitaly Shibko, the Chair of the Institute, and Sonja Lokar and Mija Javornik from the CEE Network for Gender Issues.

In 2013, 100 young, educated people, out of them 40% are women, in 6 regions of Ukraine have been informed about values, programs and ways of working of SD in EU, and encouraged to take active part in the formulation of a new social democratic platform for Ukraine.

At the same time, 210 women in 5 regions (and 65 supportive men) were informed about the social democratic approach to gender equality and the project team became one of the initiators and visible partner in the nationwide Consortium of Ukrainian women, fighting for equal political representation, as the share of women in all branches of power is still lamentable. For the moment women make 9.5% of MPs in the national Rada, 12% in regional councils, 28% in city councils and almost 50% in village councils. 3 women are ministers (minister of justice, minister of labour and social policy, minister of healthcare). All city mayors in Ukraine are men.

United efforts of different women human rights actors in this Consortium aiming to enact quota regulations for the general elections in 2012 failed, but they prevented that the share of women MPs shrinks further, even if the proportional electoral system has been changed into a mixed one.

In the last series of regional workshops for women activists, out of 275 participants, some 40 women expressed their willingness to become candidates at local elections.

The Consortium of Ukrainian women, some individual women MPs, women's caucus in the parliament, are now working on the amendments to the law on local elections which are due end of 2014 or beginning 2015. This Consortium has recently organised a very visible and

well attended hearing in the Rada, sent their recommendations and amendments to the government and respective parliamentary committees and is now awaiting for their response. There are signs that there will be some positive changes but nobody can predict if any legal quota rules will be enacted and how efficiently tailored potential positive measures for women's better political representation might be proposed and accepted.

In this way, in three years, ideological ground work and an organisational bases for a new start of social democracy in Ukraine – a network of young women and men, educated and enthusiastic activists and a network of social democratic women activists in 6 regions has been set up.

On November 16 2013, in Kiev, a second Forum of new Social Democratic Platform for Ukraine was held and it was proposed that the work for the renewal of social democratic movement in Ukraine, at this stage, should stay focused on two target groups: women and youth, but this time, its growth should lean upon triggering of the first concrete political activities. Two intertwined advocacy campaigns, connected with the fore coming local elections were proposed. It was agreed that both campaigns will be done in Kiev and in the regions but will be also visibly targeting and lobbying national decision makers in the parliament and in the government. The working titles of these campaigns are:

- I. Youth employment policy campaign
- II. Gender sensitive local politics & more women and youth in local politics now

Reporting Sonja Lokar, from Kiev, November 18, 2013

