

CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS  
**THE POVERTY RISKS FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE AND FOR  
MULTIPLE MARGINALIZED GROUPS OF WOMEN**  
8<sup>th</sup> November 2012, Belgrade

Autonomous Women's Center organized the international conference **“The poverty risks for women who have experienced violence and for multiple marginalized groups of women”** on 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2012, in Belgrade. The conference is the final activity within the project “Towards Social Cohesion – influencing social inclusion policy for multiply marginalized groups of women and victims of violence”, implemented in partnership with the Center for Women War Victims (Croatia), United Women Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Association SOS Telephone (Slovenia). The project is funded by the European Union within the IPA Regional Programme 2009 – Civil Society Facility.

At the conference were presented key features and initiatives for improving social inclusion policies for women who have experienced violence and other marginalized groups of women in Western Balkan countries and the European Union. There were presented poverty risks for these groups of women in the midst of the financial crisis, with a special focus on the impact of reduced funding and cutbacks in services and benefits on women's rights in Europe.

The conference was attended by 62 representatives of state institutions, independent bodies, non-governmental organizations from Slovenia and Western Balkans countries (Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE), Vienna Intervention Centre against Domestic Violence, Center for violence against women in Bologna, Delegation of the EU to the Republic of Serbia, European Women's Lobby (EWL), Offices of the UN agencies in Serbia (UNICEF, UN Women, UNDP) and the media.

**CONCLUSIONS:**

- It is necessary for all Western Balkan countries and Slovenia to ratify the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, and following the ratification to align their legislation with the Convention.
- It is necessary to amend the existing regulations in accordance with identified needs of women victims of gender-based violence in the fields of social housing, access to justice, child care and employment.
- It is necessary to adopt laws and strategies on social housing in countries that do not have them, and to improve the social housing system and provide sufficient capacity for urgent and temporary accommodation for women in shelters in all Western Balkan countries.



- It is necessary to establish alimony fund in countries that do not have it, and to adopt all necessary measures for improving the collection of mandatory alimony.
- It is important to ensure effective employment measures for women victims of violence and multiply marginalized groups of women.
- It is necessary to provide better access to justice and legal aid services to women victims of violence.
- It is necessary to establish a quality system of monitoring of the implementation of legislation and strategies in all areas, and reports on implementation should be made publicly available.
- It is essential to involve civil society organizations in the European Union accession processes.
- It is necessary to increase the impact of women's civil society organizations in the public budgets creation and allocation at all levels of government, including the improving of women's organizations expertise in the areas of public finance and gender responsible budgeting.
- It is important for women's civil society organizations to maintain their focus on activism in the areas of social inclusion of women and combating violence against women.
- It is necessary to set a women's and children rights protection as an important issue for women and men, in order to accelerate the process of achieving full equality of women and men in all Western Balkan countries.

