

# CESI ANNUAL REPORT 2023



In 2023, we successfully designed and implemented an **online educational platform** for experts who want to conduct **comprehensive sexual education** in schools.

As part of the bE-SAFE project, which aims to combat online gender-based violence, we created an **educational program for students**.

We continuously **provide support to women victims of violence through psychosocial support, field visits and legal counseling**. Over 800 services were provided in 2023. As of the end of the year, our SOS Helpline and Counseling Center for Women Victims of Violence in Krapina-Zagorje County has been operating at a new address in Zabok.

Through a partnership with the Croatian Alliance for Rare Diseases, we conducted **research on the experience of women with rare diseases and mothers of children with rare diseases**, which provided the first data of its kind on this topic in the Republic of Croatia.

We continued our work on the **protection of women from discrimination in the workplace** by providing legal assistance and conducting research on women's attitudes towards working from home, which is an important aspect of harmonizing work-life balance.

We developed a policy brief on: "**Promoting Gender Equality: The Position of Women in the Labor Market in Croatia**" on the basis of our gender analysis of the Croatian Labor Law and data analysis of the work we undertake with beneficiaries.

We organized the **international conference "Availability of safe and legal abortion: The problem of denying health care based on religion or conscience"** in cooperation with the

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Physicians' Initiative for Regulating Conscientious Objection and the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR).

After a pause, we re-launched the **Libela.org online portal** through the project "**GenderFacts**: establishing a new fact checker in the field of gender equality with the aim of combating gender misinformation and sex and gender discrimination".

Together with experts from feminist associations and the academic community, we drafted a **proposal introducing femicide as a criminal offense** and successfully advocated its introduction into the Criminal Code.

In 2023, **CESI contributed €81,376 to the state and local budgets** through taxes, surtaxes, contributions from salaries, and taxes and contributions from contracts, **and received €63,065 from the state and local budgets** for the implementation of projects. **CESI contributed €18,311 more to the state and local budgets than it received from them through donations.**

#### **2023 in numbers:**

- 14 projects
- 3,292 direct beneficiaries
- 800,000 indirect beneficiaries
- 9 employees
- 8 associates
- 7 volunteers contributed 40 volunteer hours
- Over 170 individuals directly received at least one of the services provided by the SOS Telephone Helpline for Women Victims of Violence in Krapina-Zagorje County (consultations, counseling, support)
- 194 legal consultations were provided to 95 individuals - 84 legal consultations to 50 individuals on labour and social rights, 92 legal consultations to 39 women victims of violence and 18 legal consultations to 6 victims of criminal offences
- 85 teachers trained
- 75 peer educators trained to carry out activities to prevent online sexual violence and violence in relationships
- 1,088 students trained
- Created one educational online platform - SEXED platform
- 4 trainings conducted for civil society and public sector employers
- 18 women active in political parties and civil society organizations trained
- 2 analyses
- 1 manual
- 1 educational program

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# Social Justice and Equal Opportunities Program

*As part of the Social Justice and Equal Opportunities program, we advocate for a socially just society in which all people have equal rights and equal opportunities to realize their full potential and participate in all aspects of social, political, cultural life and economy.*



## SOS Helpline for Women Victims of Violence

During 2023, we provided a total of **528 services** - including 302 counseling services and 131 informational services for 47 women, and 92 legal consultations for 39 women. All the women received at least one of the services offered by the SOS telephone helpline for women victims of violence in the Krapina-Zagorje County directly (counseling, information, or support services). Most callers entered into long-term counseling, while a smaller number of callers used our services only once, usually seeking specific information about placements in a shelter for victims of violence, to whom to report violence, what to do as a witness of violence, etc.

. At the beginning of the year, we started conducting **field visits**. Considering that the services provided also affect the family members, we estimate that the work of the SOS telephone helpline and counselling center indirectly affected a further 200 people. We provided psychosocial counseling services, legal counseling, and information, received requests for placement in a safe house and anonymous reports of violence.

Monthly **support groups were organized for the beneficiaries of the Shelter for Victims of Violence – New Beginning Home** in Krapina - Zagorje County. We also use expressive art therapy in our counseling work.

On International Women's Day, March 8th we held a **public action** in Zabok where we interacted with the citizens and distributed flyers on the SOS telephone and counseling center. We also organized a pub quiz on gender equality for Women's Day in Zabok, together with the Zagorje Creative Youth Association.

We held trainings for new volunteers, and we regularly conduct interviews and supervision of the professional team and volunteers.

On the occasion of the National Day against Violence Against Women, in Zabok, we organized an **art exhibition** of the works of our beneficiary, a victim of domestic violence, called "Poppies behind bars".



During 16 days of activism against violence against women, in cooperation with the City Library of Krapina, we organized a series of activities for the public called - **Week of Women's Creativity**.

**TKO?** CESI - SOS telefon i savjetovanište za žene žrtve nasilja KZZ.

**ŠTO?** Program obilježavanja  
Međunarodnog dana borbe protiv nasilja nad ženama  
16 DANA AKTIVIZMA PROTIV NASILJA NAD ŽENAMA  
Tjedan ženskog stvaralaštva

**KADA?** 4. 12. u 18 sati otvorenje izložbe slika "Makovi iza rešetaka" i predavanje "Uvod u mindfulness"

7. 12. Librići od 9 do 11 sati - u 13 sati Tribina "Žene danas, rodna ravnopravnost u privatnom i poslovnom životu"

19. 12. u 18 sati Predstavljanje knjige Vesne Oršulić "Spašavala sam brak, a spasila sebe"

**GDJE?** Svi programi se održavaju u Gradskoj knjižnici Krapina.

GRADSKA KNJIŽNICA KRAPINA

REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA  
Ministarstvo rada, mirovinskoga sustava, obitelji i socijalne politike

In collaboration with Pregrada Secondary School and Bedekovčina Secondary School, we organized **seminars** for 120 students on the topics of sexual violence, online violence, violence in youth relationships, and gender-based violence. Also, as part of the work of the County Professional Council for Education, we held a lecture on gender-based violence.



As part of the project "Counseling center for women victims of violence and victims of domestic violence - free legal aid" of the Association Domino - an organization for women's rights in which we are partners, two training sessions were held for students of law faculties entitled "Legal bases of femicide - comparative legal arrangements and introduction to national legislation" and "Violence against women in the context of the CEDAW Convention - provisions, procedures and cases".

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



The professional team provides psychosocial and emotional support, legal counseling, and hands-on support to victims and witnesses during visits to courts or other public institutions. Services are available to beneficiaries before, during and after court procedures. The Network program currently covers 17 counties in the Republic of Croatia, and CESI works in the area of Krapina - Zagorje County. In 2023, CESI provided services to a total of **100 people** through this network.

At the beginning of the year, we started conducting field visits. In this way, we make our services available to the beneficiaries who cannot reach our office in Zabok in person due to the lack of public transport options and/or unfavorable socio-economic status. Through media advertising, we additionally inform the public about the Network's activities.



Cooperation continued with the Municipal Court in Zlatar and the State Attorney's Office in Zlatar, as well as with other institutions in the Krapina-Zagorska County (police stations and the entire Krapina-Zagorje County Police Department, as well as with all branches of the Croatian Institute for Social Work in the Krapina-Zagorje County area), which enables us to offer higher quality of service provision and the realization of guaranteed rights for victims and witnesses of criminal offences.



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Interdepartmental training was also held for representatives of institutions and organizations that work with victims and witnesses of crimes/misdemeanor crimes. 74 people participated, mainly representatives of municipal and county State Attorneys' Offices, judges, police officers, as well as representatives of regional offices of the Croatian Institute for Social Work. More information can be found on the website: <http://www.mrezapodrskeisuradnje.com>

## Gender Equality in the Labor Market

As part of the "**Equal Rights - Equal Opportunities in the Labour Market**" project, we conducted an [analysis of women's attitudes towards working from home and balancing private and professional obligations](#). One of the goals of the project was to collect data on women's attitudes on working from home while caring for the family and performing household chores. An online questionnaire was developed on the topic of working from home and balancing private and professional obligations. 82 women from the City of Zagreb who are currently working or have worked from home in the past responded to the questionnaire. The purpose of the research was to contribute to the visibility of women's issues in the world of work, but also to use the results when creating measures at the local level to improve gender equality, public services and the quality of life in the City of Zagreb.

As part of the project **Workingwoman - Gender Equality in the Labor Market**, we developed a [policy paper](#) on the position of women in the labor market in Croatia, which serves as an advocacy tool for achieving gender equality in the world of work. This document provides a concise overview of the position of women on the labor market in Croatia and presents key political recommendations for the promotion of gender equality in Croatia. The summary (in Croatian and English) highlights the challenges and inequities faced by women, identifies key factors that affect their participation in the labor market, and offers proposals for changes in policies and regulations to improve their position. The policy paper was submitted to the OECD for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of guidelines for the responsible behavior of companies in the Republic of Croatia.

We also organized a **presentation on balancing private and professional life and unpaid women's work** for the Main Committee of the Social Democratic Party Women's Forum.

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

Radnica  
.ORG

The free Legal Counseling Center "Radnica" (Workingwoman) supports women in exercising their labor and social rights, but also provides free legal advice in other legal areas. In 2023, we provided **84 free legal aid services to 50 individuals** as part of the Legal Counseling Center. Beneficiaries were mostly women aged 30-45 with a university degree. In the vast majority of cases, legal counseling was related to the fields of labor and social law (*the use of parental rights of working mothers, most frequently parental leave, paid leave for prenatal check-ups, the right to work half-time due to increased child care needs, organization of working hours and return to the workplace, as well as inquiries related to temporary work conditions, protection against dismissal and violation of labor rights, use of family pension and protection against discrimination*). About a third of the legal inquiries related to protection against discrimination in the field of work and employment. A smaller number of inquiries were related to civil law (*issues of ownership of property and other assets and possessions, and the fulfillment of contractual obligations*). Legal aid consisted of the interpretation and application of relevant provisions of laws and by-laws related to substantive and procedural law.

Through the web portal and Facebook page Radnica.org (Workingwoman.org), we report on current events and sensitize the public to issues of gender equality in the world of work. In 2023, we published **26 articles on the rights and position of women in the world of work** on the web portal Radnica.org. On the portal, women who have experienced discrimination can find all the pertinent information on labor and social rights and can contact us for free legal advice and information.

### The "WOMEN'S STANCE FOR THE SYSTEM!" Project



During the project, and as a part of organizational capacity-building, we provided mentoring support to the Alliance for Rare Diseases and participated in workshops conducted by the organization FRAMBU, a resource center for working with people with rare diseases from Norway.

We also participated in the development of a questionnaire for **conducting national research on the problems faced by women with rare diseases and mothers of children with rare diseases**. This was the first research of its kind in Croatia, conducted with the aim of gaining insights into their experiences and developing proposals for improving the position of women with rare diseases and mothers of children with rare diseases in Croatian society. 153 mothers of children with rare diseases and 195 women with rare diseases participated in the research. The research identified the obstacles faced by these women (*e.g. below-average income, physical and/or mental impairment resulting from a rare disease diagnosis, distance from the health facility where their disease is treated, partial coverage of treatment costs, unavailability of necessary medicines or health services, unequal burden of childcare responsibilities, and other*).

The following were identified as particular needs of the group in question: adjustments to working conditions, the need for information about their associated rights, increased needs for support from mental health experts, the need for systematic support, community sensibilization, equal distribution of work and childcare activities within the household, and other. A worrying result of the research is the fact that 6.7% of women with rare diseases and 3.3% of mothers of children with rare diseases thought about suicide.

As part of the national conference on rare diseases, CESI presented its research conducted as part of the "Parents at Work" project, as well as the results of an analysis of women's attitudes on working from home.





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## The “Strong women - active support for single-parent families” project



The goals of this project are to empower single-parent families and to improve their position in the labor market and the community, while also increasing the community’s awareness of their specific needs, by informing parents and employers about parental rights, the provision of psychological and legal counseling, strengthening parental competencies and increasing public awareness about the needs of single-parent families. The project coordinator is the association SOS Rijeka - Center for Non-violence and Human Rights. As part of the project, we collaborated on the development of 5 newsletters for employers on the labor and social rights of parents and the relevant provisions of the Labor Act and the Act on Maternity and Parental Support.



As part of the project, we participated in the development of a manual called ["I have the right - a manual on the rights of pregnant women, mothers and parents"](#) which aims to help parents find answers to the most common questions related to maternity and parental benefits and labour rights. Since these are complex topics with numerous associated regulations, the purpose of the manual was to present these topics in the simplest way possible to facilitate as wide an audience to protect and exercise these rights.

As part of the project "**Together towards more comfortable housing 5**"- energy poverty of women, led by the DOOR association, we organized workshops with the aim of educating and facilitating active participation of the participants through discussion on the topic of energy poverty and how it affects the equality of women and men in society.

As part of the **Learn2be** project of Zaposlena magazine, and as part of the Erasmus+ program, we also held a workshop for unemployed women on the position of women in the world of work.

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## Seminars on gender equality and the position of women in the labor market



We continuously receive requests for seminars and consultations for implementing the principle of gender equality in the workplace. As in previous years, we conducted a series of seminars for public, private and civil sector employers, and this year we also responded to calls and conducted several trainings.

At the invitation of the City of Zagreb, we conducted training for employees of the City of Zagreb on **gender equality in the workplace**.

At the invitation of the RODA association, we held a workshop for the University Hospital Centre of Zagreb and health institutions from Osijek-Baranja County and Bjelovar-Bilogora County under the title "**Promoting gender equality for the purpose of contributing to the implementation of horizontal measures, developing cooperation and capacity-building of all involved actors of the project**".

For the **Zagor Network of Associations**, we held consultations on **harmonizing the organization's work with equality measures in the workplace**.

At the invitation of the Center for the Development of Values, we held a lecture for members of the association entitled "**Discrimination on the basis of disability and gender equality -legal framework and protection**".

## Sex, Gender, and Sexual Rights Program

*Within the Gender, Sex and Sexual Rights Program we work on several levels to contribute to the promotion and realization of sexual and reproductive rights and more effective prevention of gender-based violence. We continually monitor policies and strategies regarding gender stereotypes in education and reproductive and sexual rights at the national, international, and*

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*regional levels, as well as participating in public debates, making policy recommendations, producing shadow reports, informing the public and organizing events.*

## Preventing gender-based violence

### #ThatIsn'tLove Project



We implemented this project in partnership with five secondary schools: the Economics High School of Sisak, the Commercial and Trade High School of Bjelovar, the Dragutin Stražimir High School of Sveti Ivan Zelina, the Economics High School of Požega and Glina Secondary School. The goals of the project were to improve the knowledge of young people about **online sexual violence and violence in partner relationships**, to encourage young people to actively solve the problems they face, to strengthen the capacities of teachers to work on the **prevention of online sexual violence and violence in youth relationships**, and to provide youth with the tools necessary for preventing and responding to situations of violence.

An **educational program for peer educators was designed** which improved their level of knowledge and skills for creating equal and high-quality relationships and their willingness to react to violence. The program was implemented in five secondary schools, where 75 peer educators were trained through workshops and then conducted workshops and lectures for the students of their schools. During the project, 683 students in 5 secondary schools participated in workshops conducted by their peers with the support of teachers. In addition, through various activities, more than 1,000 young people in partner schools, as well as in other schools in their cities and counties, were informed about the importance of equal and quality relationships.

Peer educators designed and recorded three videos on the problem of online violence in relationships, calling on young people to react and provide support to victims of violence. They prepared and printed "think" worksheets that encourage discussion about online violence in relationships that can be used in workshops. 3 podcasts were also recorded in which schoolgirls talk about violence in relationships with different experts.

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### Links to education materials developed:

Podcast 1: <https://soundcloud.com/espz-409605087/tonijeljubav-01>

Podcast 2: <http://skr.rs/zmrf>

Podcast 3: <https://on.soundcloud.com/L1c5p>

### Educational video material:

You deserve better: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u116fyOYdLE>

Gossip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3iGdXJw\\_Ks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3iGdXJw_Ks)

Toxic relationships: <https://youtu.be/f-KzPA4iMtU>

Brochures distributed to students who participated in the workshops: [#ToNijeLjubav](#).

We carried out **trainings for 86 teachers** in five partner schools with the aim of strengthening their capacity to carry out preventive activities. The trainings included practical work on the prevention of online sexual violence and violence in relationships and how to intervene in cases of online violence among school students.



Teachers are encouraged to create a positive environment that will be ready to react to situations of violence in young people's relationships, including online violence. Teachers and professional associates were given a manual and other tools for prevention-focused activities for students, as well as strategies and instructions for dealing with situations of violence in young people's relationships. Six teachers/professional associates from partner schools were involved as performers in project activities and mentored the work of peer educators in their schools.



## PROJECT: SVEP 2 JUNIOR

The project: Sexual violence - educational and preventive program 2, led by the Women's Room, was implemented in upper grades of elementary schools with the aim of preventing sexual violence against children. This year, the **textbook** "Sexual violence against children", which includes the educational program SVEP 2 Junior was published in Croatian and English. The textbook provides a comprehensive overview of the issue of sexual violence against children. The educational program and all accompanying materials are available online.

A **national campaign** was carried out with the aim of raising awareness amongst children and young people, as well as the public at large, about sexual violence against children. The goal was to raise awareness about the fact that sexual violence is all around us, that it happens very often to children and that it is up to adults to do everything they can to stop sexual violence and to protect children. Through the implementation of the campaign, we continuously advocated for the introduction of the sexual violence prevention program for upper grades of elementary schools (SVEP 2 - Junior program).

We organized the **Conference** "What we can do better - prevention of sexual violence against children" in which experts, representatives of institutions and civil society organizations from Croatia and abroad who are actively working in the field of prevention of sexual violence against and among children and young people participated. About 400 people participated in the conference online and offline.



## BeSafe Project

At the beginning of the year, we started work on the [BeSafe project](#), led by the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality. In addition to CESI, other partner organizations participating in the project are: CIG - Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality from Portugal, PpDM - Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights, LEM Espana - organization for the protection of women's rights from Spain, as well as the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, and Association Domino - an organization for the promotion of women's rights.

The purpose of the project is to **raise awareness about online gender-based violence in public institutions and among the general public, and to improve the legislative framework for the regulation of online violence in Croatia, Spain and Portugal.** A meeting of project partners and an **international conference** were held in Zagreb, where the project and the work of partner organizations on this issue were presented. The conference was held in a hybrid format and was attended by participants from the project partner countries. The conference was attended by experts who work with young people, pedagogues and psychologists of primary and secondary schools, representatives of academia, civil society, and government, in order to gain insights into the occurrence of online violence to which women are especially exposed.



One of the main activities of the project was the development, implementation, and evaluation of the effect of an educational program aimed at increasing knowledge and active involvement of young people in combating gender-based online violence, and training teachers to implement the educational program.



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CESI and the Association Domino coordinate the work of partner organizations in the field of youth education and capacity building of experts and have designed a **preventive educational program for students** aged 14 to 18. The educational program for students has a total duration of 8 school hours divided into four modules, with each module consisting of two workshops. The workshops are interactive, giving students the opportunity to express their opinions, offer solutions and discuss issues in groups. The educational program includes the following modules: Gender stereotypes, sexism and violence in the online environment; Gender-based online violence; Observers of violence; and Online violence in youth relationships. The program was translated into Spanish and Portuguese and was piloted in all countries. CESI piloted the program in two secondary schools, the Economics High School in Požega and the Zagreb Administrative High School, with 38 students participating in the workshops. After the implementation of the program, the students gave their feedback, and reports were prepared with recommendations on how to improve the program.

In addition, we worked with the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb to improve the questionnaire that will be used in research on gender-based violence on a nationally representative sample.

## StopRUN



**The social media campaign for youth: StopRUN** is carried out on an ongoing basis. We focus on combating gender stereotypes and preventing and combatting various forms of gender-based violence. We publish two posts a week on various social media networks.



As part of the **UProot Gender Based Violence project** of the CURE Foundation, and in cooperation with the Alternative Center for Girls and the NGO Prima, and with the support of the Western Balkans Fund, we worked on the creation of the **manual**: "Gender-based violence - changing rules and practices - overview of the situation in BiH, Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro." A participatory methodology was developed for the creation of this manual on gender-based violence, and workshops/meetings were held with partner organizations where we discussed legal regulations, the prevalence of violence against women, and methods for the prevention and suppression of violence. We also carried out a **social media campaign**, with all partner organizations participating in the creation of content. The manual was presented at the 18th edition of the Pitchwise festival, held in Sarajevo (BiH) in September. As part of the festival, we talked about the situation in Croatia on a panel entitled: "**Gender-based violence - changing rules and practices - overview of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro**".

## Workshops in Krapina-Zagorje County



In collaboration with the Shelter for Victims of Violence – New Beginning Home, workshops on "**Violence in Youth Relationships**" were held in Krapinske Toplice Elementary School, Krapina Secondary School, Zlatar Secondary School, and Holy Cross of Začretje Elementary School. 90 students, of which 43 boys and 47 girls, attended the workshops. Workshops were also held in Zabok Secondary School and the School of Arts, Design, Graphic and Clothing in Zabok, with 36 students participating. An **informational brochure** on violence in youth relationships was prepared and printed for students.

A **train-the-trainer** session was also organized for secondary school teachers and students. The training consisted of 4 modules: gender-based violence, how to live gender equality at school,

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prevention of online violence in young people's relationships, and how to intervene in cases of gender-based violence at school. Ten people were trained at the training.

In the Krapina-Zagorje County, we held a two-day seminar on combating homo/bi/transphobia and violence and/or abuse based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression for representatives of public institutions and civil society organizations.



- We are one of the organizers of the One Billion Rising campaign against violence against women. The year 2023 marked 10 years of the One Billion Rising campaign against violence against women and girls and 20 years of the V-Day movement from which One Billion Rising grew. The motto of the campaign was: RISE FOR FREEDOM, and the goal was to create a new culture with no violence, and in which we create compassion, fight against inequality and protect the planet Earth.
- As part of the Erasmus+ project, we held a workshop at Ban Josip Jelačić Secondary School in Zaprešić on gender equality for students and teachers from Croatia and Norway. 16 students and their teachers participated.
- As part of the human rights festival organized by the Varaždin I Grammar School, a presentation was held for about 120 students entitled "Love in the Digital Age".
- As part of the One Billion Rising campaign, which was carried out this year as part of the Women's Film Festival, we held a presentation on gender-based violence among young people.

## Promoting and protecting sexual and reproductive rights

We organized the **international conference "Availability of safe and legal abortion: The problem of denying health care based on religion or conscience"** in collaboration with the Physicians' Initiative for Regulating Conscientious Objection and the Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR-Center for Reproductive Rights) in Zagreb. The conference was intended for medical and legal

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experts, civil society representatives dealing with the promotion and protection of reproductive rights and health, the academic community and decision makers. 70 people participated in total. Welcoming speeches were given by Višnja Ljubičić, Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, Ivana Radačić, Vice-President of the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls, and Maja Gergorić, President of the CESI Governing Board.

Local and international experts participated on the panels, including gynecologist Dr. Jasenka Grujić, Mirella Parachini from Italy, Nataša Kočnar, specialist in gynecology and obstetrics at the Brežice Hospital in Slovenia, Dr. Rodica Comendant, gynecologist, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Medicine and member of the FIAPAC scientific committee. Branka Mrzić Jagatić from the RODA Association and Nada Peratović from the Women's Network Courageous Sisters and spoke about their many years of work and activism on the topic, while Adriana Lamačková from the Center for Reproductive Rights and Predrag Fred Matić, Member of European Parliament, spoke about international standards and recommendations. The conference aimed to improve cooperation between institutions, experts, and civil society organizations with the goal of improving access to safe abortion in Croatia, advocating concrete changes to policy and practice, and working to remove the stigma associated with abortion. It was also important for us to show support to medical professionals who respect and advocate for the right to choose, and to discuss future collaboration, exchange experiences and good practices.



Together with legal and medical experts, we continued to advocate for the adoption of the Law on Exercising the Right to Freedom of Choice in Childbirth.

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## Comprehensive Sexual Education

**The Initiative for the experimental introduction of comprehensive sexual education in primary and secondary schools in the City of Zagreb** held meetings with the head of the City Office for Education, Sports and Youth and his colleagues on the possibilities and methods of introducing the program of comprehensive sexual education in Zagreb. Alongside CESI, the initiative consists of: the Women's Room, CroMSIC, the Committee for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights including HIV and AIDS, RODA-Parents in Action, Status M, the Croatian Youth Network, Zagreb Pride, the Rainbow Families Association, the Parents' Association "Step by Step", the Croatian Association of Paraplegics and Tetraplegics, the Croatian Association for the Promotion of Midwifery, Dr. Tanja Jurin, psychologist and sexual psychotherapist, and Reci.hr – the web portal about sexual and reproductive awareness. Considering the slowness and ineffectiveness of the process, advocacy activities and a media campaign were prepared.

**We have created the online educational platform: [SEXED Platform](#) with content that can be used to teach young people about sexuality and reproductive health and rights.** It is intended for teachers and professionals who work in primary and secondary schools and want to implement content related to sexual education, but also for all other educators in the formal and informal education system who have the necessary knowledge and skills to work with young people.

The SEXED platform can also be a useful resource for the implementation of the cross-curricular topics: Health, Civic education, and Personal and social development, but also for marking important dates related to reproductive health, women's human rights, gender equality and violence prevention.

The platform contains activities across eight thematic modules, with each module containing special activities for primary and secondary schools which can be applied in working with young people using an interactive approach. Based on the thematic modules proposed by UNESCO's International Guidelines for Sexuality Education, the content and modules of this platform are organized as follows:

- 1) Relationships
- 2) Values, rights, culture, and sexuality
- 3) Understanding gender
- 4) Violence and Safety
- 5) Skills for maintaining health and well-being
- 6) The human body and its development
- 7) Sexuality and sexual behaviour
- 8) Sexual and reproductive health

The platform also contains other resources related to sexual education, including manuals, videos and websites in Croatian and English.



- We spoke at the forum "Sexual (non)education" organized by the Social Work Student Society. The topic is extremely current and of interest to students, parents, and the general public. About thirty young people participated.
- We took part in a round table on the topic "Methods to combat homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in education and the protection of LGBTIQ+ youth" organized by the Association Rainbow Families and LORI association.
- At the High School for Road Traffic, we held a lecture on the topic of sexual education, as part of its implementation of the cross-curricular topic: civic education.



- At the invitation of the associations Lori and PaRiter from Rijeka, we held a presentation on the importance of sexual education at the **Comprehensive SEXED in Schools Conference**.
- At the invitation of the Sarajevo Open Center, as part of the Feminist School Žarana Papić, CESI President of the Governing Board Maja Gergorić held a seminar on: "How to respond to the anti-gender movement and prevent it?" for the participants of the feminist school in Sarajevo.



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## Social Activism and Political Processes Program

*Within the program **Social Activism and Political Processes**, we promote active participation of citizens, especially women and youth, in decision-making processes and in the creation and implementation of gender- responsive public policies.*

At the beginning of the year, we organized the seminar: **Women and Politics: I Choose Equality!** through which we educated and empowered 18 young women active in political parties and civil society organizations, and who are working to improve women's rights in their local communities. The aim of the seminar was to improve the knowledge and skills of female politicians in gender-aware policy implementation and to empower them to act proactively to defend gender equality. Some of the topics covered were Gender equality; Feminism; Women's participation in decision-making positions; Gender policies: gender-based violence, discrimination in the workplace, reproductive rights; Institutional mechanisms and gender-aware equality policy, Communication skills and presentation; and Connection, solidarity, and support. At the end of the training, we planned activities that the participants of the seminar were obliged to carry out. We monitored the work of the participants through a mentoring program throughout the year.



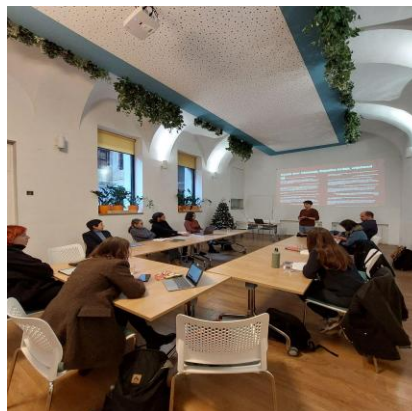
### Libela.org

The two-year project "GenderFacts: establishing a new gender equality fact checker, in partnership with the [University of Rijeka Faculty of Philosophy](#) began in September. The main goal of the project is to strengthen society's resistance to gender disinformation through the development of a gender equality fact checker. The editorial office of the Libela.org portal was established, and partner meetings were held with the University of Rijeka Faculty of Philosophy. At the invitation of the

Agency for Electronic Media, the project was presented at the international scientific conference "Dubrovnik Media Days - Disinformation Research: Current Trends and Perspectives", organized by the University of Dubrovnik.



At the end of the year, two trainings were organized: **"Online training of fact-checkers for verifying the accuracy of information based on scientific methodology"** was held for the Libela editorial office by Brigita Miloš from FFR and **"Education of fact-checkers with the aim of training them to verify the accuracy of information"** held by the Faktograf association. In addition, the editor-in-chief of the portal participated in the training of the organization Agence France-Presse (AFP) called "ADMO digital investigation training". Furthermore, we continuously monitored newspapers regarding disinformation narratives, especially gender disinformation.



On **International Women's Day on March 8**, we participated in the **March 8th March in Zagreb** and the action of the Faktiv initiative "Rest is Resistance - Women's Strike" and stopped working for 10 minutes in a symbolic act.



In cooperation with the association SOS Rijeka - Center for Nonviolence and Human Rights, we held a presentation entitled "**Amendments to the Labor Law**" for persons employed in civil society organizations.

We participated in a round table organized by the Karlovac Women's Group "Korak" (Step) entitled "*Femicide in Croatia - an overlooked crime with far-reaching consequences.*" As part of the round table, we held a presentation on "*The legal framework of femicide - comparative legal regulations and recommendations*".



We participated in the campaign "**Women's safety is the responsibility of the state - #STOP**" that was carried out on August 21 in more than 20 cities across Croatia.

On November 11, we participated in the public action of the Women's Network of Croatia **Against FEMICIDE - Safety and trust** in front of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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At the invitation of the National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society, we participated in the presentation of associations at **the Philea Forum in Šibenik**, where we presented our work on gender equality in Croatia in talks with representatives from foundations in the EU and around the world.



- We participated in the conference **"The Future of Work"** on the occasion of 30 years of cooperation between the World Bank and the Republic of Croatia.
- We held a lecture at the Art Colony organized by the Zagorje Creative Youth Association on the topic of preserving the mental health of young people.



- As members of the Council for Youth of the Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, we participated in meetings and made proposals on the planned implementation measures of the Youth Guarantee.
- We participated in the Women's Network of Croatia conference on how to respond to the needs of women through local public policies.
- We participated in the conference "20 years since the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality" organized by the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality.
- We participated in the conference "Women's politics - the future of the feminist struggle" - organized by the Association Domino.

- At the end of the year, we participated in the seminar "The New World Disorder? From Polycrises to Multilateral Responses" organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation office in New York.



- We participated in a round table organized by the Social Democratic Party Member's of Parliament Club in the Croatian Parliament on the topic of "Equal pay for women and men", where we talked about the causes, consequences and possible solutions in the context of the gender pay gap and the unequal position of women in the workforce.





# Research, Analysis and Advocacy for Gender Equality Program

*As a part of the Research, Analysis and Advocacy of Gender Equality Program, CESI advocates integrating a gender perspective into public policies and adequate allocation of public funds, and is involved in the work of relevant national and local bodies in the processes of adopting relevant regulations and measures.*

*Key aspects of our work include monitoring and advocating for the development of a national legislative and institutional framework for the promotion of women's human rights and gender equality, and providing professional support and information to state bodies and public sector institutions in the implementation of measures and activities that contribute to gender equality.*



As part of the project **Criminal offence of femicide - advocacy for legal changes** of the women's rights organization Domino, we joined the expert working group on the legal framework and proposed legislative solutions for femicide, as well as the development of an advocacy plan, mechanisms and tools for the implementation of the proposed legislative solution. We participated in working group meetings where we discussed criminal legal theory and practice and the potential for improving the legal definition of femicide as a separate criminal offense by passing a special law on femicide. An **expert meeting** was held under the title "**Criminal offence of femicide - advocacy for legal changes**" where we gave a presentation on comparative legal solutions. After the Government came out with a proposal to amend the Criminal Code, we worked on a proposal to define the criminal offense of femicide and introduce a definition of gender-based violence with other



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members of the working group, which we submitted to the Ministry, and which was ultimately adopted.

We participated in a working meeting organized by Fred Matić, Member of the European Parliament, on the topic of regulation of prostitution in the European Union: cross-border implications and impact on gender equality, where we gave insights into the Croatian aspect of this topic and our expert input, as well as presenting recommendations for the standardization of this topic as part of the Directive on combating violence against women.

At the invitation of the European Commission, we participated in a consultation meeting called Discussion with the EESC Fundamental Rights and Rule of Law Group.

We conducted **research on the experiences of women with the health system and the workplace** with respect to the use of sick leave due to abortion or ectopic pregnancy. As a joint initiative with the association RODA - parents in action and the Association SOS Rijeka - Center for Non-violence and Human Rights, a meeting was held with the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, where we highlighted and discussed certain problems that pregnant women, mothers, and parents face when exercising their rights from health insurance, which indirectly affect their employment status and are potentially discriminatory. Prior to this, we participated in a training workshop on developing questionnaires and data analysis organized by the association RODA. Further activities on these topics were agreed upon in cooperation with the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, and meetings were held on the implementation of research and the creation of questionnaires.

As part of the **Initiative of organizations working in the field of violence against women**, we sent a letter with requests to the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy addressing institutional failures that directly affect the financial and organizational sustainability of associations that work with women victims of violence. We participated in a meeting with representatives of the Ministry, where we discussed the inadequate system of financing services for victims of gender-based violence and the importance of improving the capacity of women's organizations to provide counseling services and accommodations for women victims of violence.

At the invitation of the **ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium**, we participated in a working lunch attended by the ambassadors of Norway, Finland, and Denmark, as well as the Deputy Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, on the topic of the legislative regulation of termination of pregnancy.

At the invitation of **the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament**, we participated in a meeting with Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield- the EP's rapporteur for Hungarian issues and assistant Nora Koves. The topic of the meeting was social policy in the context of women's human rights, as well as the topic of social justice.

We got involved in the work and participated in a meeting of the **URBACT local group (ULG) of the City of Zagreb** for gender-aware public procurement as part of the City of Zagreb's project

GenProcure - Gender Inclusion in Public Procurement. The ULG is a local working body founded by the City of Zagreb which deals with the topic of gender equality and its implementation in the public procurement system. The main task of the ULG group is the drafting of an integrated action plan that will try to identify challenges and shortcomings related to gender equality and the development of guidelines and recommendations for gender-responsive public procurement.

We sent comments on the proposed amendments to the **Family Law**, as well as to the proposed amendments to the **Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Act, and the Act on Protection from Domestic Violence** through the public website e-counseling for providing comments to legislative proposals. While welcoming positive legal changes, we pointed out the need to improve several provisions that have proven to be crucial in the fight against violence against women. At the end of the year, a letter was sent to the Government of Croatia, the Parliament and the Clubs of Representatives as a reaction to the final proposal for amendments to the Family Law in collaboration with other women's organizations.

## CESI in the media and on social networks

As in previous years, in 2023, we continued to monitor media content on web portals, television, radio and daily, weekly, and monthly magazines and newspapers. The media report is based on our archive and internal monitoring of activities.

In 2023, we recorded a total of **231 media publications**. Most of these were on the internet and radio where we emitted our broadcast advertisements. We maintained the same level of engagement on social media as in previous years. The CESI website was visited by 15,682 people, while our Facebook and Instagram pages have 15,682 followers combined.

In addition to CESI's official website and social media pages, separate websites and social media accounts have been created for our various projects that offer more detailed information about project activities.

### Follow us online:

Web	FB	Twitter/ 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> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CentarCESI</li> <li>● PortalLibela</li> <li>● Eumogucnosti</li> </ul>	<p><b>Twitter</b></p> <p>@PortalLibela</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● nechupedia.sezamweb.net</li> <li>● nijeuredu.com</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SOStelefonZagorje</li> <li>● mrezapodrskezisKZZ</li> <li>● sezamweb</li> <li>● radnica.org</li> <li>● MojastvarMojizbor</li> <li>● kampanjadvijedjevojice</li> <li>● nasilnevezesubezveze</li> <li>● genderwagewatchers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instagram</b></p> <p>Centar.cesi</p> <p>Mogurecinecu</p> <p><b>Youtube</b></p> <p>Ravnopravnost</p>
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## Team members and organizational development

Anamarija Tkalčec, Program Manager and CESI Coordinator

Sanda Malbaša, Head of Finance and Deputy Coordinator

Sanja Cesar, Program Manager

Nataša Bijelić, Expert Associate

Lana Kučer, Expert Associate

Tena Sambolić Petrišić, Project Manager

Vendi Keserica Tomičić, Expert Associate

Iva Zelić, Expert Associate

Josip Šipić, Expert Associate

This year, we implemented the Strategic Plan adopted for the period from 2021 to 2024, as well as the Operational Plan for 2023. In September 2023, we held a follow-up strategic plan review meeting with the members of the CESI Governing Board and developed the Operational and Financial Plans for 2024. The regular Assembly of CESI was held in December 2023. Since 2022, CESI has been a beneficiary of institutional support from the National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society, which contributes to the stability of the organization's work. We participated in a series of trainings relevant to our field of work organized by various institutions, foundations, and civil society

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organizations from Croatia and abroad. To ensure good governance, we use 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 our fruitful collaboration with the associations SOS Rijeka, Association Domino Split, the Women's Group Karlovac Korak, the Association RODA, the Croatian Association for Rare Diseases and the magazine Zaposlena. We also appreciate the cooperation with the DOOR Association, Požega School of Economics, Varaždin High School, Zagreb Administrative High School, the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, the City of Zagreb, the Women's Network of Croatia, the Faktograf Association, the Pariter Association, the Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka, the Pregrada High School, the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, the Zagorje Network of Associations, the Zagorje Creative Youth Association, and the Home for Victims of Violence in Krapina-Zagorje County: New Beginning. We are also grateful for our collaborations with organizations from across Europe, including the CIG - Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality from Portugal, PpDM - the Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights and LEM Espana - organization for the protection of women's rights from Spain. We also collaborated with the City Library of Krapina and the City Library of Ksaver Šandor Gjalski Zabok, the Poco Loco Theater and the Tirena Theatre.

The Network of Support and Cooperation for victims and witnesses of criminal offenses is implemented in partnership with the Women's Room, which is the coordinator of the program, the Association "Hera Križevci - for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights", the Center for Support and Development of Civil Society "Delfin" Pakrac, Association Deša - Dubrovnik, Association S.O.S. Virovitica - counseling, empowerment, cooperation, Association "ZvoniMir", Association for Support of Victims and Witnesses, Women's Group Karlovac "Korak", Informative Legal Center and Center for Civic Initiatives Poreč.

We also participated in the assemblies of CROSOL- the Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity, of which we are members.

We continued to collaborate with the relevant institutions in Krapina-Zagorje County, including the Croatian Institute for Social Work (CISW) Regional Office Zabok, CISW Regional Office Krapina, CISW Regional Office Donja Stubica, CISW Regional Office Krapinsko-Zagorska, the competent police stations, the Municipal Court in Zlatar and the Municipal State Attorney's Office in Zlatar.

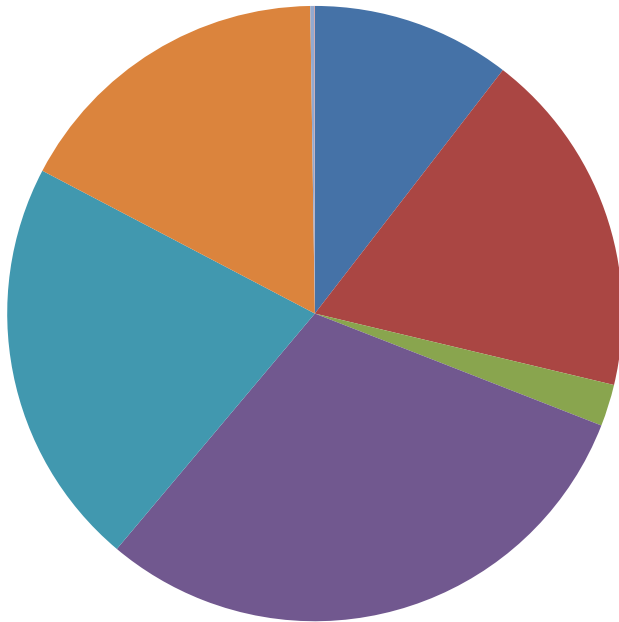
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# Annual Financial Report

In 2023, CESI had total revenues equal to **330,724 euros**. Funds transferred from the previous period were 89,087 euros. Total expenses were 304,461 euros and the surplus income available in the next period is 115,349 euros. The balance sheet as of 31.12.2023. is 459,220 euros.

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>330,724 €</b>	
Revenue from services	34,616.00 €	10.47%
Revenue from project partnerships - EU Funds	60,407.00 €	18.27%
Revenue from donations from the State Budget – EU Funds	7,267.00 €	2.20%
Revenue from international organizations	99,881.00 €	30.20%
Revenue from companies and other legal entities	71,284.00 €	21.55%
Revenue from donations from the State Budget	56,486.00 €	17.08%
Revenue from donations from municipal budgets	663.00 €	0.20%
Revenue from refunds	120.00 €	0.04%

## INCOME 2023.



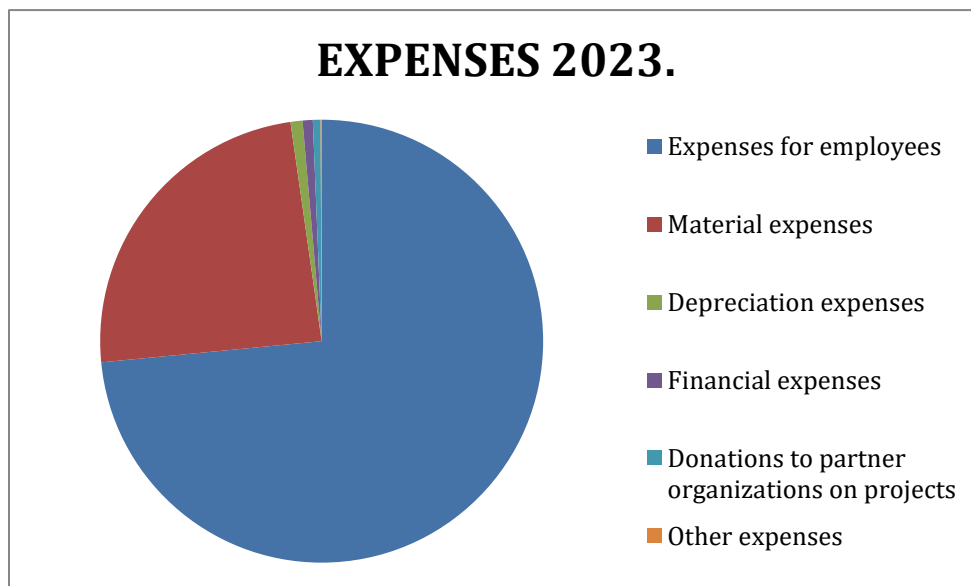
- Income from services
- Income from project partnerships - EU funds
- Income from the state budget grants - for EU funds
- Income from international organizations
- Income from companies and other legal entities
- Income from the state budget grants
- Income from donations from the budgets of local government units
- Other income



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**EXPENSES****304,461.00 €**

Employee expenses	223,697.00 €
Material expenses	73,902.00 €
Depreciation expenses	2,667.00 €
Financial expenses	2,254.00 €
Donations to project partner organizations	1,692.00 €
Other expenses	249.00 €



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## **Our donors in 2023:**

Active Citizens Fund

The Sigrid Rausing Trust

National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society

European Union

Agency for Electronic Media

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family and Social Policy

Central State Office for Demography and Youth

City of Zagreb

Government of Croatia Office for Cooperation with NGOs

Krapina-Zagorje County

