WHO WE ARE

The Bulgarian Fund for Women is the only organization in Bulgaria that raises funds and gives grants to small NGOs around the country working to advance women’s and girls’ rights, to eliminate gender stereotypes, gender-based violence and discrimination, and to achieve gender equality and a long-term social change.

MISSION

The mission of the Bulgarian Fund for Women is to build a strong and empowered women’s movement and develop feminist philanthropy for social change in Bulgaria through mobilization of local and international resources.

VISION

Our vision is a world free of violence, discrimination and inequality, where all girls and women will be able to realize their full potential, will have equal opportunities and access to education, resources and services, and will make informed choices about their bodies and lives.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

-Overcoming gender stereotypes
-Elimination of violence against women
-Political and economic empowerment of women and girls
-Empowerment of groups of women subject to multiple discrimination and/or marginalization
WHY WE ARE WHO WE ARE AND WE DO WHAT WE DO

1 in 4 women in Bulgaria is a victim of domestic violence.

90% of all single parents in the country are women, more than 70% of them are at the threshold of poverty, whereas 80% raise their children alone.

The gender pay gap in Bulgaria is 14%, while women receive 40% lower pensions than men even though women account for more than 60% of all higher education graduates.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION IN 2016

In the past year, BFW made numerous efforts and had various initiatives to mobilize money for women’s rights. But influencing philanthropy is not an easy thing in Bulgaria, especially when it comes to giving for women’s rights, no matter the type of the donor(s). A recent Open Society study revealed that the staggering 80% of Bulgarians do not participate in any forms of social life: they do not belong to professional unions nor parties, sports organizations, local unions etc.; they do not volunteer, do not sign petitions, do not protest; they do not belong to NGOs, do not donate nor support causes they favor. In addition, according to the analysis of the Bulgarian Donor’s Forum for The Philanthropy in Bulgaria in 2015, the foundations (private or public, national and international) continue to be the biggest source of funding for different causes followed by the corporate sector. What they both give most for are social initiatives (more for social help than social change) and education. Individual donors, give money primary for saving children’s and people’s lives. Last but not least, numerous surveys among individuals and corporations in Bulgaria show a worrying trend – women’s rights, LGBT people’s rights and the rights of minorities (especially Roma people) are at the bottom of all charts and tables showing where the money for donations goes.

In such a local context, during 2016, BFW had 3 main directions where it put its efforts to influence philanthropy in Bulgaria and increase the resources for women’s and girl’s rights: 1) advocacy on a political level, 2) donor education when working with corporations and 3) raising awareness on gender inequality when raising from individual donors through different campaigns and initiatives. Significant percentage of the advocacy activities of BFW on a political level went in 2 directions – lobbying for legal changes and influencing institutions to give more money for women’s rights and gender equality in the country. When we were working with corporations, we in fact started from donor education – we initiated meetings, presented several problems regarding gender inequality, proposed 3 projects on which BFW and the company could work on and address a specific issue together. These efforts on our side were made to open the doors for our grantees and other women’s organizations when/if they would fundraise from the corporate sector.

Regarding the mobilization of international resources, or more specifically – on a European level, BFW was an active member of Prospera and participated in all initiatives of the network to influence European institutions
invest in women’s rights and increase funding both for women’s funds and for achieving gender equality. The most recent example from 2016 is the process “Knocking on EU doors” – a multi-year project of all women’s funds based in Europe focused on fundraising from the EU institutions. It has several stages: building capacity of the funds, advocacy on national and European levels, increasing the visibility of Prospera among EU institutions, submitting projects with the final goal of increasing resources for women’s right in Europe.

The total budget of the Bulgarian Fund for Women for 2016 was 164 295 BGN

Our biggest supporters remained the INGOs, followed by corporations within the country.

In-kind donations were in the total amount of 114 835 BGN (not included in the total budget) and consisted of office equipment, travel scholarships, free software, etc.
**MOVEMENT BUILDING IN 2016**

We support financially and increase the capacity of small NGOs to bring to reality projects that advance women’s rights and gender equality:

- Since 2004, the BFW has fundraised more than 1 360 000 BGN and supported over 200 projects of NGOs across Bulgaria.
- In the past 3 years, we have allotted nearly 100 grants for gender equality-related projects to local NGOs.
- More than 5 000 women and girls have been direct beneficiaries by BFW supported projects in 2016 alone.
- We have collaborated successfully with leading national and global companies and institutions on women-related causes.

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**In 2016, Bulgarian Fund for Women supported with grants 28 organizations in Bulgaria.**

*The average grant size was 1 785 BGN.*

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**Main categories of grants**

- **Women’s rights**: 23%
- **Freedom from violence, trafficking and discrimination**: 39%
- **Sexual and reproductive rights**: 12%
- **Gender equality**: 7%
- **Right to sexual expression/LBT rights**: 6%
- **Other**: 13%
AWARENESS RAISING AND ADVOCACY IN 2016

We work to eradicate violence, discrimination, and gender stereotypes on an individual, social, economic, political and cultural level in Bulgaria. Our advocacy and awareness raising efforts during 2016 include:

**Campaign #Every4th**

An awareness campaign, launched in the Bulgarian Parliament in 2015 to bring light to the great number of women victims of domestic violence (shifting the focus from victims to perpetrators), which continued in 2016 as a traveling charity exhibition “The Real Face of Violence” (13 posters by 19 artists traveling through 7 cities).

**Walk a Mile in Her Shoes**

A highly publicized campaign supported by leading Bulgarian NGOs and the European Parliament Information Office to express solidarity with the victims of domestic violence, organized for the 4th time in Bulgaria in 2016.

**Legislative Efforts**

Successful lobbying for the signing of the Istanbul Convention and the actual adoption of the Law on Gender Equality in Bulgaria, made BFW a leading organization in the field of women’s rights.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2016

FEMPOWER: The Feminist Incubator

12 women and girls from NGOs. One week of training in feminism and gender issues, together with practical skills such as advocacy, fundraising, communication. A coalition of 6 NGOs built and their project for “freedom from violence” supported by BFW with $2 940.

#RanoMiE

6 women-leaders of NGOs, 6 girls-volunteers in the NGOs, 3 days of intensive training in feminism and sexual and reproductive rights. 6 projects supported by BFW with 6 small grants and a national campaign “#RanoMiE” as a result of the training. More than 3 000 teenagers direct and indirect beneficiaries of the initiative.

SOFIA PRIDE 2016

BFW supported with a grant Sofia Pride 2016 for a 5th consecutive year. The team and the Board attended the event and for the first time, a member of the Board gave a speech during the opening of Sofia Pride. What is more, the number of people taking part in the Pride grows every year!

WE THANK ALL OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS!