Bulgarian Fund for Women is a philanthropic organization providing financial, technical and other resources to support grassroots women’s groups, activists and organizations in Bulgaria working to empower women and achieve gender equality.

**Fundraiser**
BFW mobilizes financial resources and assets from a variety of donors.

**Grantmaker**
BFW provides flexible support to local groups and organizations through direct grants.

**Advocate**
BFW amplifies women’s voices and claims at various levels.

**Capacity Builder**
BFW provides technical support to grantees to scale up their work strategically.

**Connector**
BFW builds networks for greater influence, power and impact.
**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

1. **Elimination of gender stereotypes**

Gender stereotypes are at the core of inequality between women and men. In order to smash patriarchy, we need to break the gender stereotypes.

*Why breaking gender stereotypes is a strategic priority for BFW?*

*81% of the Bulgarians consider the “primary role” of women to be that of a mother and a housewife.*

*83% of the Bulgarians believe women make their decisions based on emotions.*

2. **Freedom from violence**

Violence against women and girls is a pandemic problem and a grave violation of human rights. It affects women’s general well-being and prevents them from fully participating in society.

*Why elimination of VAWG is a strategic priority for BFW?*

*1 in 3 women in Bulgaria is a victim of domestic violence.*

*28% of the women in Bulgaria have experienced physical and/or sexual violence after turning 15 y.o.*

*Only 14% of all women victims of gender-based violence call the police.*

3. **Political and economic empowerment of women**

Equal political and economic participation of women in society is a guarantee for the democratic development of every country. Gender balance in politics and economy lead to more inclusive policies and increase of competitiveness.

*Why is political and economic participation of women a strategic priority for BFW?*

*In 2017, only 24% of the Bulgarian MPs were women.*

*Gender pay gap in Bulgaria in 2017 was 14,4%.*

*Women receive 40% lower pensions than men in Bulgaria.*

4. **Empowerment of groups of women, subject to multiple discrimination and/or marginalization**

Vulnerable groups of women should be active drivers of social change not passive beneficiaries.

*Why empowering the most vulnerable groups of women is a strategic priority for BFW?*

*Nearly 1 million women in Bulgaria are socially excluded.*

*90% of all single parents are women and 70% of these single Bulgarian mothers are at the threshold of poverty.*

*Trans women in Bulgaria are practically invisible.*
WHO WE ARE

Bulgarian Fund for Women was established in 2004 to address the withdrawal of many international donors from the country due to Bulgaria's forthcoming accession to the EU in 2007 and the continuing need of funding to advance the rights of women.

Bulgarian Fund for Women is the only donor in Bulgaria that raises funds and gives grants to local CSOs, unregistered groups and feminist activists, working to advance girls' and women's rights and achieve gender equality.

Our mission is to build and strengthen a movement of empowered women and organizations and to develop philanthropy as a means for achieving sustainable social change in Bulgaria by mobilizing national and international resources.

Our added value is that we are bridge builders: we have an expert understanding of the context and of the needs of our grantees and we help donors invest their funds strategically for greater and more sustainable impact.

Since 2004 we have fundraised more than 1 000 000 USD and we have supported over 200 projects around the country.
## WHAT WE DO

| **Grant making** | • The funds we raise are invested directly in the activities of small CSOs across the country to support women and girls and advance their rights through different projects. |
| **Fundraising / resource mobilization** | • We raise funds from national and foreign donors through various initiatives. Thus, we support the development of a donation culture and a new vision of philanthropy as a tool for social change. |
| **Support/ capacity building** | • BFW fosters cooperation among business, CSOs and public bodies. We collaborate with our grantees and partners, create consortiums to participate in different initiatives, campaigns, projects and movements. We conduct various trainings for current and prospective grantees and other stakeholders. |
| **Advocacy** | • We raise awareness and build strong partnerships to campaign in support of legislative initiatives or against legal documents leading to inequality and discrimination. |
GRANT MAKING IN 2017

Bulgarian Fund for Women provides money, organizational strengthening and networking opportunities for grassroots groups, activists and organizations to advance women’s rights, fight social injustice and achieve gender equality. We are, in some cases, the first, main and sometimes only source of support for initiatives launched and led by women, girls and trans* people. We act fast and our application procedures are both rigorous and accessible, ensuring that emerging groups can tap into critical funding. We amplify women’s voices in civil society as a means to promote democracy because we believe that gender equality is fundamental for a truly democratic and economically developed society.

In 2017, 4 calls for project proposals were announced:
- Call for projects with a focus on girls and young women
- Feminist Boot Camp call for projects for its participants
- Call for projects on the topic of prevention and overcoming the violence against women and young girls
- Call for projects in support of refugee and migrant women in Bulgaria and for their social inclusion and acceptance by local communities

Over 50 000 BGN were distributed in 17 grants for organizations and individuals from around the country.

53% of the grants were given for projects targeting controversial, traditionally marginalized and/or invisible issues and communities. Second major grant making category was Gender Equality - 35%.

83% of our grantee organizations in 2017 were led by women.

More than 17 000 direct beneficiaries of our grantees’ projects and more than 230 000 people indirectly benefited from different project activities and events in villages, towns and cities in Bulgaria in 2017.

53% of the grants were given to newly established CSOs or individuals (non-registered).

59% of the grants were distributed to support project outside the capital.
In 2017, Bulgarian Fund for Women supported with grants 13 organizations and 4 activists in Bulgaria. The average grant size was 3 058 BGN.
FUNDRAISING IN 2017

The total raised amount for 2017 was 306 500 BGN. Main sources of funding remained international philanthropic organizations, followed by corporations within the country.

OUR MAIN DONORS
OUR DONORS IN 2017

Global Fund for Community Foundations
Societe Generale Expressbank
Volkswagen
Nestle Bulgaria

British Embassy Sofia
The U.S. Embassy
Ministry of Justice
Telus International Europe

Black Rock Bank US
Bulgarian Fund for Women was among the recipients of the 2017 edition of Human of the Year – the annual awards for contribution to human rights and human rights protection of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee. The fund received its award in an all-new category – Advocates of the Year, in recognition of the tireless and dedicated work against gender stereotypes and against gender-based violence.

The BFW received the 2017 Woman of the Year award in the Society category of the GRAZIA magazine contest. The prize was awarded to Nadezhda Dermendzhieva, Gergana Kutseva and Mira Dobreva for their advocacy for equal rights for women and for their active work against gender-based violence.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

2017 started with a donation for women and children – victims of domestic violence. The Bulgarian Fund for Women received a generous donation from Nestlé – Bulgaria for 8 crisis centers, spread in 9 Bulgarian cities.

March for Women’s Rights in Sofia

BFW organized the first ever Women’s March in Bulgaria on 8 of March to express its solidarity with the women in America and around the world. But not only so. The organization wanted to remind that women in Bulgaria have had the right to vote, to study in the university and to work for less than a century. And, as every right, these rights can be taken away, thus they need to be defended every day.

A BFW campaign fights the stereotypes on female drivers

On the 8th March 2017 the citizens of Sofia had the opportunity to take a ride with free “women taxis” as part of the campaign #ДамиКарат (Ladies Drive), supported by the official dealer of Volkswagen in Bulgaria. The campaign took off with the novel to Bulgaria service “women taxi”, thus drawing the attention to the lesser known heroines in the driver’s seat. The message was that being a good driver has nothing to do with gender. The project continued as a women’s platform for sharing experience on all topics related to driving and cars.
Men put on heels to “Walk a mile in her shoes” on 18 March in Sofia

Bulgaria’s fifth edition of the International campaign “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” where men put on women’s high heel shoes to draw attention to the violence against women started on 18th March 2017 in front of the National Palace of Culture in Sofia. The walk was followed by a film screening and an art exhibition in support of the campaign’s messages. The organizers were Bulgarian Fund for Women, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, Resource-Center Bilitis, Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria, the UN Refugee Agency, supported by the National Palace of Culture and Lumiere Lidl Cinema.

BFW’s Cause in the SHAPE Women’s Half Marathon in NYC

Two Bulgarians living in New York had trained to run the 14th edition of SHAPE Women’s Half Marathon on April 30th. They not only crossed the finish line but also stood up for a very important cause – the fight for eliminating violence against women and girls in Bulgaria. They raised 5000 USD from individual donors, which were matched by the Black Rock Bank US.

Feminist Boot Camp 1

In an intensive four-day seminar 12 young women were introduced to the feminist and gender theories and notions, the history of women movements and the contemporary issues of gender inequality and human rights. The camp’s focus was to create a safe space for girls and young women to meet, exchange ideas and experience, establish partnerships and to develop a project on the topics of the event. Three projects, aiming at raising awareness on gender equality, sexual and reproductive rights and LGBTIQ rights, were selected and awarded with total 10 666 BGN.
A fund for art projects by female creators

BFW initiated a Fund for Art Projects by Female Artists to seek support to raise minimum 15 000 BGN. The Fund’s aim is to fight with the insufficient representation of women in professional art and the cultural sector, to shed light on the work of female artists/painters and to increase their access to financial resources. The Art fund seeks also to support projects, which interpret crucial issues related to women today, including those of minorities.

Gender education in schools

The Bulgarian Fund for Women has successfully implemented the project “Raising the sensitivity of the youth on “domestic violence” issues through improving teachers’ capacity for prevention and work on the topic” supported of the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice. BFW held 3 trainings on domestic violence to improve the capacity of teachers from different schools from around the country and launched a handbook and a pilot educational programme adapted for students in elementary, secondary and high schools.

A round table discussion on prevention of violence through education was held as part of the project and marked the international UN campaign 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. Main speakers were a Deputy Minister of Justice, the Ombudsman of Bulgaria, a state expert from Ministry of Education and Science, among others. More than 50 school principals, teachers and other educational professionals attended.
British Embassy's traditional charity quiz in support of BFW

The 2017 British Embassy's traditional charity quiz, hosted by the UK Ambassador to Bulgaria, chose to support the fight against domestic violence and violence against women and girls. Nearly 8000 BGN were raised and donated to the BFW, thanks to the generous support of the quiz’ guests and a number of sponsors, who provided charity auction items. The BFW later launched a call for projects on prevention and combating violence against women and young girls for the overall amount of 22 000 BGN, which was all raised from individual donors.
WE THANK ALL OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS!