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## Report - Working Group Workshop: Women's Network Solidarity - Position of Women in the Textile Industry - Return to Real Base, 16-18 April, 2018 Niš

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### Welcome words and introductory part

The workshop was opened by the President of CATU Niš and Vice President of the CATUS Council Olivera Bobić, who started her professional career in the textile industry, and immediately recalled the situation of the textile company "Nitex", against which the CATU fought for seven months. The fate of the factory has not been publicly defined yet i.e. the trade union no longer knows to whom company actually belongs. The union cannot enter there in any way and can only speculate who the current owner is, although they originally thought the factory was taken over by Benetton. In "Nitex" a large fluctuation of female workers was observed, i.e. the replacements as well as the minimum salaries of employees who possibly have the employment contract. The female workers are constantly complaining about working conditions, stress, constant pressure, domestic work organisers and others. CATUS tried and even managed to register a union in one Benetton subcontractor, however as soon as the employer found out about the union, women begged to withdraw their applications and prevented the establishment of the union in this way. Even with the Turkish investor "Aster Textile" in Niš, the position of women is extremely difficult, and the fear of losing the job is what prevents them from initiating the establishment of the union. The opening of textile



companies in Niš did not lead to an increase in the enrollment of students in textile schools, as textiles were not recognised as a promising branch. Female labour force is noticeable in low-paid sectors of industry and public services. Niš, as a university city, was reduced to the city of cable wrappers due to a very high brain drain rates and the rate of workforce in general.

### Review of the state of the textile, leather and footwear industries in the Western Balkans region

Textile and clothing industries are one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The largest number of employees is in China. 85% of workers in the textile industry are women. It is one of the main industries in the EU. The main export takes place in America. The United States has the most textile customers, while textiles are imported from China. The purchase of clothing has dropped drastically, but Italy is still the EU's leading country in production. Then, there is Spain with the Intidex group (Mango, Zara, Bershka, Pull & Bear, etc.) and the third is France. Germany has focused on technical textiles, while in Belgium more than 30% of carpets are produced. The value of the textile and leather industries of the United Kingdom amounts to over 9 million pounds. The largest exporters and importers of leather as a product that is one of the products with the highest demand in the world are Italy, Hong Kong after China, but also South Korea. The fastest development of this area i.e. the export of leather is recorded in Kenya, Zambia, Albania, Serbia and Turkey. There are 36,000 enterprises in the leather and footwear sectors, which consist of mainly small, family and medium-sized enterprises, small workshops where Italy is at the forefront again. Women's representation in the EU in the leather and footwear sectors is high, accounting for 65% and of course in the clothing industry. One of the problems the industry is facing is low overall labour productivity and lower labour costs relative to the rest of the manufacturing industry, resulting in a steady decline in employment and a growing problem in the engagement of a skilled workforce. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are focusing on production, but large shifts are also reflected in Africa, especially in Nigeria and Ethiopia. The preparation of production is done in Italy and France, and production itself is transferred to other continents. Design and research are done in Sweden, while emphasis is increasingly placed on marketing i.e. how to sell goods. There is a decline in sales and production followed by the famous slogan "I'm the proud 12th owner of this T-shirt".

### **Industry of Serbia**

Serbia does not have the entire processing industry from a raw material to the final product in order to dictate the price. The production of textile products deals with 1950 enterprises, while the number of entrepreneurial shops is two to three times higher. In the first half of 2017, the exports of textile, clothing and leather products amounted to 7.6% of total Serbian exports. Serbia is on the 18th place of textile exporters in the EU. Serbia is the third country in the world in production of socks, behind China and the USA. The textile sector is the third export sector (high quality products, leather processing, short delivery time, great production experience, the long tradition of cooperation with leading world companies). New investments are expected to employ 30,000 new confectioners. There is a problem with the educated staff, because there



is no interest in this field. It is necessary to attract young people to deal with this interest. The fashion department was re-established in Odžaci (there are some pupils - Mango) and therefore dual education has started, although the number of participants in this education sector is insufficient. Production cannot exist without education, and the profession which is no longer mentioned by anyone is a textile machine mechanic. Fashion bloggers and young designers are promoting the Serbian textile industry in the world. Mona, Moon and Legend are mainly export-oriented. The trade union has big problems to enter the mentioned companies and the question is whether it is possible to establish a union with them at all. The data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia state that 61,215 people were employed in this industry in 2017, but statistics did not include undeclared employees.

### **Industry of Croatia**

More than 20,000 people are employed in the sector in over 1,500 companies. 70% of textile production capacities are in the northwestern part of Croatia. The production of damask canvas takes place only in Duga Resa. The textile and leather sectors are the second largest employer in the manufacturing industry. Textile technical materials for the production of clothing and footwear for special purposes are developed in Croatia (Varteks Group, Čateks). The Croatian leather processing industry employed 10,411 workers in 134 companies that generated a total income of HRK 3.78 billion. Exports rose by 1.5% in 2017 (mostly in Germany) while imports were down by 2.8%. Characteristics: prominent export orientation, the high share of female workforce in the structure of employees (82%), openness to cooperation with the world, respecting the delivery deadlines and high quality of workmanship.

### **Industry of B&H**

As regards the textile and clothing sectors, B&H has a long tradition and enjoys a good international reputation. In this sector, there are about 100 companies employing about 20,000 workers, mostly female workers. The assortment i.e. the structure of the products is very wide: heavy and light ready-made clothes, sports equipment, car seat covers, underwear, protective equipment, medical program, etc. Over 90% of companies are export oriented, which means that production is mostly based on Lohn jobs for foreign partners. B&H has no its own production. The characteristics are: experienced and skilled workforce, close to the markets of Western and Eastern Europe, short delivery times, know-how, reputable supplier in German and Italian market and low labour costs. In 2017, B&H imported half a billion KM worth of clothes, of which almost 50% were from Turkey and China. The share of the export of textile, leather and footwear industries in total exports of the Federation last year amounted to 790 090 745 KM.

### **Republic of Srpska**

This sector employs 30% of the total number of employees in the manufacturing industry and accounts for 17.4% of the total exports of the manufacturing industry. There are 166 companies that employ a total of 12,015 workers. There are about 7,000 employees in the shoe industry. The leather industry has recorded positive trends in the last few years. Despite the fact that 80 to 90% of the production in the textile and



shoe industries are done through lohn jobs, individual companies have managed to get on the market and create their own production program, as well as to think about their own brand. The biggest problem was the import of leather in 2017, as the number of leather processors was getting smaller. The shoe industry employs about 7,000 workers, and the factory from Teslić „Škrebić Company" is located at the very top of this industry.

### **Macedonia**

In the country's exports, this sector participates with 13.3%. The textile industry is dominated by lohn jobs, with exports accounting for 93%. 36,000 workers work in roughly 535 textile companies. The leather production and sales have fallen by more than 6%. Macedonia faces the biggest challenges for the textile industry in the attempt to return to the level of the 80s. At that time, there were serious brands that were able to be neck and neck with other world brands. Today's bad management contracts have resulted in a decrease in the number of employees, from 34% in 2014.

### **Industry of Montenegro**

The textile industry is practically extinguished. La Vista Berane with 100 employees who produce tailor made shirts (800-1000 pcs per day). SPARK (Nikšić) specializes in PPC. There are only 5 workshops with 4-5 employees. There is a standardisation of models that still differ from others.

### **Industry of Slovenia**

An increase in clothing production is expected, but at the same time an increase in exports (from 2014 to 2016, there was a sharp decline). There is a small share of textile production in relation to other industries. The textile industry has a long tradition and exceptional quality. Since the end of the 60's, the brands and marketing have been developed, not just as manufacturers but as collections. The Maribor School is famous for its efforts to attract young people with a focus on design and marketing.

### **Strategic mapping and sector challenges**

The very dynamics of this field of production is such that it looks for something different. It is hard to predict what we can expect from customers. Only a satisfied worker can be a satisfied customer. The business itself has to change in order to be competitive. Strategic mapping is a tool for understanding similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses, i.e. competitive position in the market, so the following is compared: price, quality, geographical coverage, product range, distribution channels, etc. Montenegro is strategically best positioned according to the geographical position (unfortunately underused), but Slovenia and Croatia are also well positioned geographically.

### **Threats and weaknesses of the textile, leather and footwear industries in the Western Balkans**

The following weaknesses have been detected: dependence on distributors, clothing, footwear and accessories cooperators, the distribution itself, fashion market saturation, small series, high price, additional problems in production preparation, low wages, the



lack of interest in production professions, huge new investments, stricter environmental requirements for production, as well as the protection at work. Employees must have at least protective gloves on their hands because textile materials influence the skin much. Care must be taken of the health of employees. The threats include: cheap products from India and China, reduced demand, the problems with eco-materials, increased sales of product surrogates, lower labour and product prices, political and economic situation.

### **Learning and growth**

It is necessary to devote the efforts to learning and capacity building in this area. The method of production should be accelerated. Maintaining focus on satisfied customers results in market survival. It should acquire new skills and knowledge as there are many new materials and characteristics today, and only in this way employees would be able to support the growth strategy. 70% of the production errors are in fact the faults in the construction. IT strategic technologies, but also the organisational climate, need to be improved. The customer perspective is the core of the strategy itself, so design, quality, delivery time and so on are very important. Objectives: Reducing production costs, improving process in continuity, process speeds, the utilisation of fixed assets and the efficiency of net working assets. It is necessary to strengthen the awareness of the importance of the clothing industry in the world through associations, trade unions and textile and clothing associations, working on the image of the clothing industry, improving technology and achieving innovation and a new way of thinking. A better organisation of the production process can reduce time losses. By analysing and eliminating the excess movements at work, the efficiency is increased and fatigue is reduced. Organisational problems are related to motivation and too high or too low standards, which certainly affect efficiency. Normative work is a sensitive area of operation, so mistakes are very common. The prerequisites for the standard are in fact the qualifications and good training of workers, then work at a normal pace and in the end performing a specific task with the prescribed method of work. It is very important to meet the production deadline, but at the same time make people's work easier. Movement training is extremely important. Tailors should be taught the right way to do the job. Only a healthy worker can be productive, and in this way the time needed for production is also reduced, and the losses are minimised. Psycho-sociological conditions of work are related to employee satisfaction, fatigue, monotony, stress and exhaustion. For productive and efficient work, the skill is taken as the basic, and then endurance is also measured or evaluated.

It is necessary to help the worker build his/her self-esteem, show workers how their jobs are important, show them which their competences, skills and characteristics are compatible with job requirements, allow them to occasionally compete in skills and knowledge and occasionally train workers' skills.

**[Ppt – Review of the state of the textile, leather and footwear industries in the Western Balkans region, Gordana Čolović, Ph.D](#)**



Clean Clothes Campaign – Profiles of the countries of the region textile industry: workers' rights and working conditions

The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) is an international network of civil society organisations (trade unions, NGOs) that addresses the challenges of the textile industry and supports male and female workers fighting for better working conditions, i.e. respecting their rights. The CCC has done a comprehensive research on the situation in the textile industry and provided an overview of the situation of male and female workers. An increasing part of the textile industry is being moved to the Eastern European region. The CCC's first engagement was in Southeast Asia where the textile industry was located a few decades ago. Characteristic of Southeast Asia are low wages and very low labour costs. After several campaigns and surveys conducted by the CCC, it was concluded that the Southeast Asia labour cost is devastating and that the working conditions are absolutely unacceptable. From there, the campaign in cooperation with the trade unions has started. Living wage is a paycheck concept that is necessary for a relatively decent life and the goal of the campaign is to increase the wages necessary for dignified life for workers in the textile industry. The campaign was relatively slow. In 2011, a building collapsed and 130 workers died. A huge media coverage provided needed support to the campaign.

One of the main features of the CCC is research on working conditions in factories that are suppliers for large world brands. After that, if it is estimated that the conditions are inadequate, the public presentation of the research has started, i.e. a consumer campaign through the pressure on the redistribution of profits that would end with direct manufacturers. Small-scale production is a problem that involves cutting the production process into small ones. All big brands do not have their own production. They even outsource the marketing process.

Regions have different advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of the Western Balkans is the proximity of the Western European market, as well as fast production, fewer production units and relatively fast sales to end customers. Production is thus moving from Southeast Asia to Southeast Europe. According to the research and development of the country profile, 60,000 of the officially registered workers in Serbia about 40,000 are working in undeclared way, and the estimate is that the number will increase to as many as 150,000 workers and undeclared workers. The textile industry accounts for 7.25% of total exports. The Serbian government is attracting potential investors through subsidies with a 10-year tax exemption. Water, electricity and land belong to a wide range of benefits that investors receive.

In 2016, in the media, more precisely in *Vranjanske novine*, a story about poor working conditions in the production of GEOX shoes in Vranje appeared. The manager said to a worker that instead of going often to toilet, she could wear diapers. The CCC contacted the female employees of the *Urgent Appeal* Mechanism - putting pressure on major brands towards direct manufacturers. *UA* is a quick response to workers' requests to support the CCC network in the case of violation of their rights. So far, 450 *UA* cases have been launched in more than 40 countries. Many of the successes of local workers' struggles with the help of *UA* actions have meant the precedents that have had an overwhelming effect on workers in other companies that have faced



violations of labour rights. *UA* has been lasting for 6 months and presents a soft pressure on major brands. It is not a plan to exert radical pressure on big producers, but to do the opposite in a slow manner. Geox is the first case where *Urgent Appeal* was launched in Europe.

After that, a decision was made to conduct a field research on the textile industry in Serbia. The field research took three factories under the magnifying glass and conducted 48 interviews with workers who worked in these factories. The network of subcontracting firms has also been the subject of research where the situation is far worse than in the headquarters. It was difficult to estimate who the main suppliers were and what companies were subcontractors. The devastating results came from those surveys. The workers have also been interviewed about expenses on basic needs such as food, hygiene, housing, culture, holidays and 10% for savings. On average, the workers receive 20-30% of the sum, which is 1/3 of what they really need. It was a free assessment of both male and female workers who are very difficult to estimate the cost of living, and especially how much money is spent on food. The vast majority of mostly female workers interviewed do not go on holiday. Numeo.org gives a relatively good picture of the cost of living: A third is for food, leisure time, etc. and in fact the earnings should be 77,000 dinars. The highest salary is 36,000, and the lowest is 16,000, which means that it is below the agreed minimum wage (the minimum wage was 22,000 dinars during the researched period). Most of the worst cases were reported in subcontracting firms, as workers did not use even a holiday that they were entitled to due to employers' conditionality.

The organisation of trade unions is very difficult since two factories of the three that were the subject of the survey have no union representatives at all, while in one of them there was an attempt to organise a trade union, but most of the workers who wanted to be in that trade union resigned and they switched to another job (about 600 employees). The CCC sent recommendations to employers to pay decent salaries necessary for life. The governments have been advised to limit freezing of salaries since this is transferred to other industries.

The smaller the company is, the more difficult the conditions are. Sandblasting practices (typically for the textile industry) can be deadly, but they do not have to be if the working conditions are acceptable. Many chemicals are used that not only cause allergies, but also a skin cancer of both workers and customers. There are other techniques that may be even more dangerous than sandblasting. The working life of the worker is reduced and these techniques can only be done for several months. One of the professional diseases that is incurable and deadly is actually silicosis. Workers mostly refuse to wear protective suits. It turned out that laser processing is the simplest and easiest, or the work with a stone that should be restored if it is impossible to perform the laser treatment. Soft and worn-out jeans are obtained by sandblasting that creates muddy sand and the workers breath it in. Silicosis is a chronic, professional disease that is characterised by lung fibrosis, and occurs in the long-term exposure and inhalation of mineral dust. Of various types of mineral dust, free silica particles are by far the most common harmful agent that leads to silicosis of the lungs. The condition



for the formation of silicosis is the long-term exposure to these particles of dust. Doctors cannot find it easily. If you „live“ in your workplace, then you can get it quickly.

In Egypt, the biggest percentage of sandblasting is done, but in Turkey for example, the technology is completely forbidden. There are large quantities of vapour from adhesives or other chemicals used to protect textiles from bugs, fleas and rats. Dust is also problematic. Some factories have specialised vacuum cleaners that are not used, but the workers collect dust, although they cannot clean it all. When a control comes, it is burnt and everything shines for control purposes.

The research that the CCC has carried out in the region was actually done for the former Yugoslavia, Romania and Ukraine, and in Georgia there has been no research yet, because there are no labour inspections there, there is no Labour Law and health is not financed by the state. In Georgia, monthly salaries are 8 euros.

The situation in the region between countries is very similar. Large factories cannot be organised, let alone small ones. The conditions are catastrophic and the CCC exerts pressure on major brands and, with reference to corporate responsibility, require higher salaries and better working conditions. Some brands have accepted the initiative, but the CCC cannot monitor the implementation to match their demands because there are no unions, and the CCC cannot rely on inspections. The CCC dealt with a better calculation of the cost of living, because they could not rely solely on workers' responses. Most female workers live in large communities, i.e. there are safety networks. A large number of female workers have additional jobs and rely on family food. This is certainly not acceptable. The CCC has tackled the story of calculating a salary figure for life and insists on paying off earnings from branded production lines that are sufficient for a decent life. The CCC also insists on the redistribution of internal profits, not on the increase in the price of the product. 70% of profits remain in large companies. The pressure on major brands has been enhanced, while small brands are inaccessible. We hope that the increase in the amount of earnings in one company will produce a chain effect on other companies.

### [Ppt – The CCC research, Stefan Aleksić](#)

Male and female representatives of all trade unions spoke on the topic "[Violation of labour rights and gender component in collective agreements and union policies](#)".

The most interesting example is GEOX in Vranje. Due to the fact that the company is owned by Geox, and there has been no relocation of production to a local company, which is mostly the case in the textile industry, GEOX is not a nice place to work. The workload is huge. The pressure of management is enormous, especially when female workers require a sick leave, but also the pressure that is associated with trade union initiatives needs to be added.

The female Commissioner of CATUS from Geox in the south of Serbia presented the details of Geox in Vranje, and they were related precisely to working conditions in the company. The situation in Geox is far from perfect, because there are organisational problems in the factory, where there are more than 1,200 employees, of which 500 are trained workers, and the rest without experience and knowledge, which leads to huge





problems in production. Janjić said it was untrue for male and female workers to wear diapers. All managers are approachable and workers can contact them for help. From 32 to 40 workers are employed on the production line, but the team leader cannot simultaneously replace 5 workers. The amount of salaries is fine for this area and the south of Serbia. The Managing Director gave the green light to the organisation of the trade union. In the opinion of CATUS's Commissioner in Geox, the main problem is workers who are paid to work, but do not perform it. Due to the existing problems and irregularities in the organisation of work, the owner of the company invested half a million euros in the organisational part of the company.

Aleksandar Todić (a branch of trade union IER Nezavisnost) continued on the situation in Geox, saying that TUC Nezavisnost was expelled from Geox and that registration existed, but there were no union members. When they found out about the CATUS, they told them they had nothing to look for in Geox, because Geox already had its own trade union. Todić said that they had found both male and female workers who had not had a contract for several months because the employer had forgotten to extend their labour contract. For 15 days, there was no air conditioning in Geox during the summer of 2017. GEOX is not at all benevolent to the trade unions. Thanks to trade unions and the CCCs who were constantly pressuring and pointing to violations of rights and poor working conditions, the situation began to improve from 2017 onwards.

FTUM President of the Women's Section is active in the textile industry. In Macedonia, there are three levels of Collective Agreements (CA), 1) General, 2) CA at branch level, applicable only to those labour and employer organisations, and 3) the level of enterprise. To non-members of the trade union, the CA is not applicable, but only the rights from the CA. The annual leave allowance applies to all workers, that is, to both those who are and who are not members of the trade union. In Macedonia there is a branch CA for the textile industry. The employers in Macedonia also disagree on the organisation of trade unions in the textile industry where there are still no trade unions.

Montenegrin FTU The rights of women in textiles were presented by the President of the textile, chemical and pharmaceutical industries Vidak Đuranović. Women in the textile and leather industries of Montenegro have experienced a veritable Golgotha. Technology has been moved to China and Korea due to raw materials and prices. 90% of both male and female workers lost their jobs. Today, the rights of women in this sector are no longer violated, because no longer a worker who will work in textiles can be found. Ready-made clothes are mostly located in Montenegro, the activity is low-cost and the job is extremely tiring. Both male and female workers emigrate from the country and there is no qualified labour force for textiles that has been reduced to 50 small companies with 5 to 10 workers in Montenegro. Prices from the Middle East are no longer competitive, as was the case earlier. "La Vista" from Berane is engaged in the production of men's, women's and children's shirts. It has a regional placement and employs 100 male and female workers. Bihor region, which besides Berane encompasses Bijelo Polje, was also a textile region, but there is now a mass exodus. People are no longer interested in the work in the textile industry, among other things, because of the position of the body and the very tiring nature of the job. In Montenegro, there is a branch CA for the textile and leather sectors, but also at the company level.



The President of the textile branch of the Federation of Trade Unions of the Republic of Srpska, Danko Ružičić, also presented the data on the textile industry. 12,000 workers are employed in this branch, and 30-35% are unionised. A large number of both male and female workers are not members of the union. Women reluctantly accept managerial positions due to family responsibilities. The average salary is 200-250 €. There are only company CAs in the Republic of Srpska. The textile is dead, but the footwear and leather processing has come to life. Working conditions are poor, the wages are low, and in small enterprises it is very difficult to organise the union.

Women's Coordinator at UFTUM, Lidija Pejović, provided general information for the Union, i.e. the position of women in Montenegro. There is no special protection in CA for women who are much less paid than men for the same work. Women are also poorly protected in the financial, predominantly women's, sector. The position of women is bad. The President of the UFTUM trade division, Vesna Milonjić-Aleksić, presented the basic characteristics of the trade sector. Around 40,000 male and female workers are employed in trade. Only 10% of the overall union membership (both TUs) is organised in trade unions. People live in fear of losing their jobs, they do not want to engage themselves and therefore cannot be adequately protected. The lowest salaries are in trade. €123 is the minimum payout for which contributions are paid. The average salary is €335. Since the branch CA does not exist, only the general CA protects them.

On behalf of the CATUS, the President of the section of women of the CATU Vojvodina, Gordana Milović, addressed the gathering. She considers the section of women to be very important, because colleagues do not recognise women's problems. In the CATUS, the statute has been amended and the President of the section entitled to vote at the highest level is being elected. Collective bargaining should involve precisely one woman, because of the recognition of female problems. In Serbia, there is no branch CA in textiles but only the CA with employer (a couple of companies have home CAs). There are individual violations of women's rights, but not mass ones. There is no difference in the price of labour when it comes to gender in this sector. In 2009, the Law on Gender Equality was passed which gives priority to discrimination litigation procedures. The transition resulted in the closure of a large number of factories. In Serbia, there is usually no problem with foreign companies, but with domestic management. Textiles have 18,000 members, and large companies like "1. maj", "Rudnik" and others are lost. Existing factories are Italian and German, and where there is no trade union there are efforts to organise employees. In a German company in Indija, which produces seat heaters, there is a union. Female textile workers are paid less for the same work. Gender discrimination is present in the textiles, mostly in boutiques.

The textile industry President, Anton Rozman of the AFTUS, also presented some data that are relevant for the textile industry in Slovenia. Women have lower wages, but the cause is unknown. Women are silent and suffering because they have families and they accept harsh conditions and they work while men do not want to sew. The AFTUS has the Committee of Equal Opportunities for All, and not as in almost all members of the Solidarity Section of Women. Out of 2,000 employees in the textile industry, 85% are women. The AFTUS has expressed zero tolerance for discrimination.



CITUBH with the President Ramiz Omanović as the head of the branch trade union of textiles, leather, footwear and tires, also presented some characteristics typical of the textile industry in B&H. A total of 40,000 workers are employed in the sector - 20,000 in textiles, and 20,000 in the leather and footwear industries, and precisely 90% are female workers. A third of the overall number of employees are women. The minimum wage is 208 € in the Federation. Lohn jobs prevail, i.e. additional jobs. In 2015, the Law on labour was passed. The negotiations on the general and branch CA are taking place, but the negotiations for a branch CA did not bear fruit, because "employers" did not have formed trade unions. A month ago, the initiative for negotiations was restarted and objections were expressed to non-compliant contract articles. There is no branch CA for the textile industry, and it may happen that the general CA will cease as well. In the branch CA that has expired, maternity protection i.e. a child upbringing to which fathers are also entitled was entered. Pregnant women must not be scheduled to work night shifts, nor can women work on difficult tasks in leather processing. Every workplace is paid the same regardless of sex and there are no particularly vulnerable women, but mobbing in the workplace is present. Complaints came from workers where there are no unions. The branch trade union has tried to protect these workers in all ways, but unsuccessfully, among other things, because women find it difficult to report mobbing. The choice of the commissioners themselves or the choice of women in the Committees is problematic, since they give these leadership positions to their male counterparts.

The discussion was continued by Jasmina Marić from TUC Nezavisnost, i.e. education, who is also the President of the section of women and the education sector. In the Main Board there are 19% of women; the Executive Board has only 9% or 1 women, and in the Supervisory Board there are 40% of women. As the pyramid goes down, we find an increasing number of women. Out of 77 cases of legal department, there has been 43 women represented and 34 men. Violence affects everyone regardless of sex, and therefore the campaign Stop violence against men and women in the workplace has covered everything. In addition to this campaign, the TUC has also dedicated itself to establishing a balance between business and family life. Out of 10 branches that the TUC Nezavisnost have in only 5 branches a section of women has been formed. The struggle for organisation and attraction of members is constant and there must be a modus how the union can enter companies and organise male and female workers, especially because of the increase in the number of employees in the textile industry that is predicted in future.

The Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Macedonia (CFTUM) has a total of 60,000 members and 11 branch unions. This is a relatively young organisation founded in 2005 that has a small number of trade union members in the private sector, because it is difficult to get into private companies. 70% of the CFTUM is education. The minimum wage is 200 € and no one can receive less than that amount, which was not the case before.

The discussion revealed that one of the biggest issues was the inability to organise trade unions in companies, the absence of branch collective agreements for this



branch in most countries due to the lack of interest of companies to sign it. In this branch of the economy, the work is extremely tough while the earnings are low.

Milica Marinković, the representative of the Commission for protection of equality in Serbia, introduced the participants with the work of this institution, as well as the number and types of employee complaints. The Commissioner for the Protection of Equality is the institution that provides protection. This is an independent state institution that can sue both ministers and government, as well as individuals and employers. It was formed in 2010 and deals with all areas of discrimination, and it is precisely the sphere of labour and employment that makes up one third of complaints. A higher degree of vulnerability of vulnerable groups is becoming noticeable and they are becoming even more vulnerable in the labour market. Women are mostly discriminated against. The institution of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality has the right to initiate a court procedure based on the principle of urgency (for example: a woman suffering from leukemia who has been fired). This emergency differs from case to case. Jobs throughout the region are gender specific. In Serbia, there were no reported gender pay gap cases, but the Commission for the protection of equality had a case related to an attempt of a colleague to establish a trade union in a trade chain. The employer then measured the time spent in the toilet and otherwise the kidney patient found himself to be fired, but was then degraded to a lower position. The wife was also discriminated against, because her husband founded a union. There were no complaints from the textile branch. It is interesting that the non-representative trade unions had complaints because they were responsible for the damage caused by the trade union action, while the representative ones were not in charge of it. The representative of the Commission for the protection of equality has called on everyone to contact the Commissioner about a complaint if there is a violation of equality of any form.

Family Compliance Directive and European Pillar of Social Rights, Equal Opportunities Network: Resolution on Equal Opportunities for Equal Rights, Myra Rednoss IndustriAll – Europe

In Europe, according to data from 2016, only 23.3% of women were in the leading positions in companies. The difference between women and men is 16% in favour of men, and the difference in pension was as much as 40%.

EKS in cooperation with its members and sectoral federations of trade unions, especially IndustriAll Europe has lobbied for years for the adoption of the Compliance Directive on the Compliance of Business and Family Life at the EU level. The representative of IndustriAll Europe introduced the participants to the positions of the European pillar of social justice and the Resolution on Equal Opportunities for Equal Rights signed in 2016.

Statistically, the period from 20 to 64 years of age is considered to be working age in Europe and at that time there is the most expressed gender inequality in terms of salary payments. EU legislation in this area will strongly influence the equal sharing of leave for a child care. It is far easier for men who take a paternity leave instead of women to get a job with a child, while women decide to leave work. Parents with a child under 6



years of age are more often employed in *part time jobs* and jobs that are done from home. Low representation of women in the labour market is often the result of flexible work contracts, insufficient children care, the lack of institutionalised childcare services after school, and economic inequalities. This Directive should reduce the dismissal of women from work, then reduce the costs of care that fall on health and social services systems, enable fathers to take on their responsibilities in terms of parenting and promote gender equality.

Objectives:

- Increase the participation of women in the labour market
- Possibility of free choice of planning of business and family life
- Support Member States in creating contemporary family policies
- Affirmation of incentive measures

IndustriAll-Europe has formed a working group whose priority is to be in favour of the equal opportunities of all. Rednoss also presented the news on the topic "Trade union organisation and presentation of the IndustriAll campaign at the European level for the clothing and footwear industries".

Industries themselves feminise when the production and price fall. Structural problems are present. The common conclusions of all participants are that it is the union's obligation to fight for signing collective agreements, as well as better working conditions and increasing the salaries of employees in this branch of the economy in the region.

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