



Center for Sustainable
Communities Development

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITY REPORT 2024

INTRODUCTION

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES DEVELOPMENT (CSCD) is an NGO registered in 1995 in public benefit and works for achieving *de facto* equality between women and men in Bulgaria, Europe and globally, as well as to raise the awareness of citizens on EU development policies.

The Foundation has the following **objectives**:

1. Protection of human rights and promotion of social integration and personal realization of women in Bulgaria.
2. Building in the Republic of Bulgaria a balanced society based on: real equality of the individual, without any form of discrimination based on gender; respect for human dignity of each individual and for his/her fundamental human rights and freedoms; the guarantee of equal opportunities for the expression of the individual people in the individual, family, political, economic, social, cultural-educational and other spheres of public life; the equal representation of different ethnic groups and of men and women in the public and private sectors.
3. Advocacy for a lasting entry into Bulgarian society and anchoring in Bulgarian legislation of the common human values and the generally accepted international standards.
4. Protection by all permissible means and mechanisms of the human person as the highest value of civilization and the special role of women in the development of society.

Our values are equality, respect, fairness, transparency and accountability.

CSCD is an associate member of the Bulgarian National Council for Gender Equality at the Council of Ministers; a member of the global WIDE+ network and a co-founder of the Bulgarian Platform for International Development (BPID).

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2024 ACTIVITIES

In 2024, the CSCD activities included the development, organization and implementation of projects to build a balanced society in Bulgaria in specific areas, through participation in international consortia, the partnership with which is a result of many years of hard and successful work of the team.

The approach to project work was feminist, taking into account gender discrimination and applying intersectional analysis.

REPORT ON PROJECTS

One important project was successfully completed and reported in the first months of the year: the **“RAISE Youth - Rural Action for Innovative and Sustainable Entrepreneurship for Youth”** project, funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment - <https://cscd-bg.org/bg/proekti/proekt-raise-youth>.

The team is proud of the fact that, although a Bulgarian financial audit was conducted every 6 months to accompany the reports to the donor, the final summary report was subjected to an international audit, which was completed on time and without any remarks.

STRAND: WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND COMBATING STEREOTYPES

GEAR Project

Проект: Ромската интеграция в контекста на равнопоставеността на жените и момичетата
(2023 – 2025)

DONOR: European Commission (CERV-2022-GE)

Total project cost: 75.488,50 EUR

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IMPLEMENTER: consortium with lead partner Arci Solidarietà Onlus, Italy.

In Bulgaria the project was implemented in Montana region.

Objective: to increase the competence and knowledge of young people of Roma origin and experts working with young people of Roma origin on gender equality issues as a prerequisite for the effective inclusion of Roma in development processes and for overcoming exclusion and discrimination against them.

The main tool for receiving a positive impact was training and putting into practice the acquired skills for online content creation. By Roma youth themselves maintaining **web radio**, the issues that concern today's young people were reaching a wide audience.

Within the project:

1. More than 150 Roma youth aged 11-20 participated in local activities and informal training on anti-discriminatory practices.
2. Over 20 of them continued their training as "leaders of change" on the following topics. "Media communication - online and offline"; gender equality; running web radio
3. Setting up an **editorial office and running a web radio** - "amoRadio"
4. Exchanging experiences with peers from Italy, Belgium and Romania at a meeting in Sibiu, Romania. "Our" web radio became part of the European Roma web radio!

Sibiu meeting of all partners took place in the period 08.04.2024 - 11.04.2024.

GOALS of the meeting:

- a) Young Roma from Italy, Belgium, Bulgaria, and Romania, who are members of the national editorial teams of the future web radio, to meet under the guidance of the project experts to get concrete knowledge for starting the Radio work.
- b) The young people jointly choose a logo for the radio
- c) To explain/understand the content of each program and the frequency of broadcasting
- d) The young people get to know each other with a view to future cooperation during Radio management and its programs.

The Bulgarian delegation involved 14 people, including 11 students of Roma origin from the High school "Otez Paisii" in the village Medkovetz, Montana region (5 M+6 F), where the main project activities were taking part.



All students were very active in the project activities and their selection was difficult – more than 20 training participants were willing to travel. Still, some dropped out due to inability to get the necessary documents signed by both parents to cross the border. So instead of 10, the group included 11 participants.

A bus was contracted with permission to take students abroad; permissions were also taken from the Regional Department of Education in Montana and the school management, from whom CSCD received full support. Appropriate insurance arrangements were also made.

The entire meeting Program was prepared by the Rumanian colleagues.

The morning of the 1st day was dedicated to choosing the Radio name. In a plenary session, all the suggestions were discussed by the youth teams, and the name was chosen after voting: **amoRadio**.

In the afternoon the participants were divided into 4 groups and identified symbols that should be in the logo (sun, house, musical note, etc).

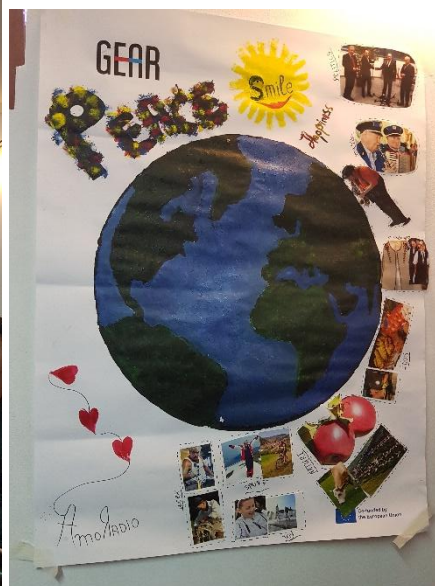
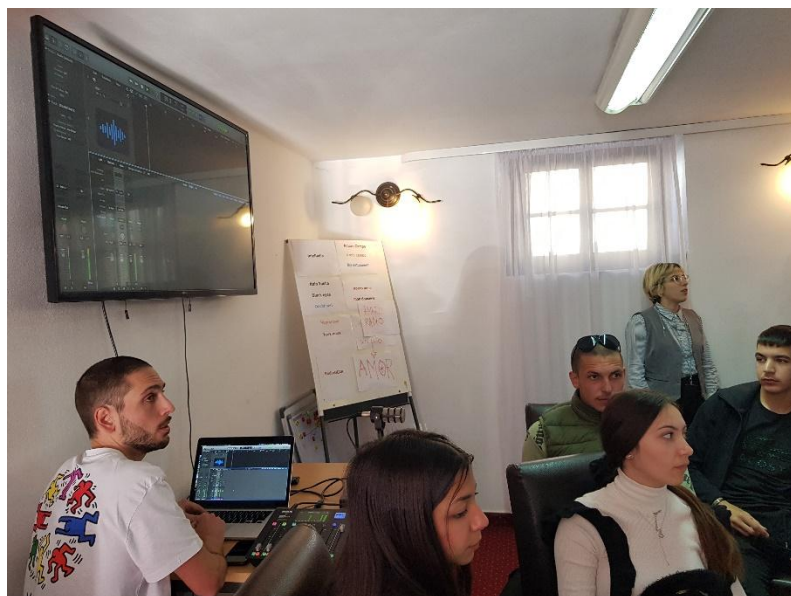
During the 2nd day, the youth worked on content development.

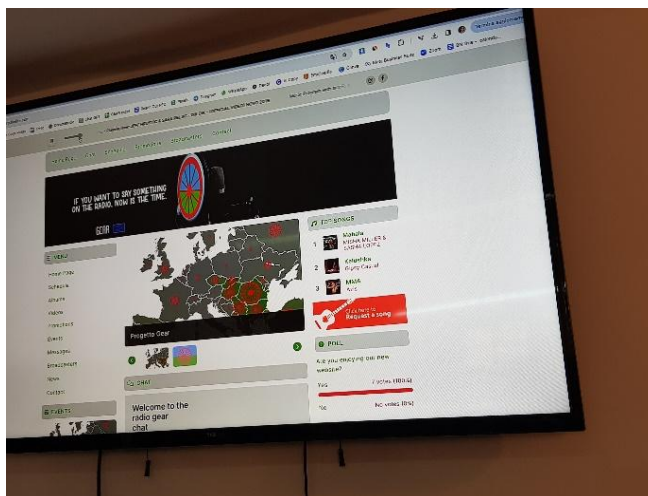
There was an opportunity given to two participants from every group to practice an interview giving, which was recorded for education purposes.





Participants used a variety of different materials, images, words, and colors provided to them to work in nationally based groups to produce posters to present their views on categories, like personal matters (the individual silhouette), global/external themes (the world), cultural or community background (the house) and any other business (question mark).





An expert demonstrates to them the technical management of the radio, with the necessary equipment.

The last part of the training was devoted to forming a list of popular Roma songs to be used in the radio broadcasts. Participants also found out how they can put a podcast on a Playlist.

The evaluation of all Bulgarian participants was that the training meeting was extremely useful and interesting. They also divided the tasks of the editorial team: Ivo - editor; Alexey - spokesperson; and the rest - leading interviews and polls.

Some dissatisfaction was expressed about the lack of an organised common entertainment programme through which the young people could have got to know each other better.

The importance of this event in the lives of these Roma children is evidenced by the following two moments:

- When the bus left the schoolyard, it was seen off by almost the whole school - children and teachers;
- On the way back, a large group of students met our participants in the courtyard again. At their suggestion, the driver played a famous Bulgarian song on the cassette recorder of the bus, after which everyone came down holding hands dancing the Bulgarian national



- dance – “HORO” around the bus! It was very exciting and even – surprising to all. Our Roma youth got back home full of energy!
5. Teachers, youth, health mediators from the public and private sector working with young people of Roma origin will have access to training and materials developed within the project in 2024.

STRAND: DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

COPGENDERED Project (2022-2025)
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<https://wideplus.org/gendercop>

DONOR: European Commission; Erasmus+ Programme

Total Project Cost: 35,400.00 euro

IMPLEMENTER: consortium with WIDE+ as lead partner

The COPGENDERED project contributes to two cross-cutting aspects of the Erasmus+ programme: combating climate change and promoting gender inclusion and diversity.

Project objective: to create **tools** for learning on the issue of the interconnectedness of the climate crisis with gender inequality.

Project activities included:

- Production and printing of an **Information Kit** on the link between gender equality and climate justice in seven languages (English, German, Bulgarian, Danish, Spanish, French and Swedish) on the topics: Introductory Module; Mobility/Sustainable Transport; Extractivism and Women's Activism against Socio-Environmental Exploitation; Energy - sustainable production, inclusive access and feminist perspectives on climate policy and LGBTQI and climate justice.
- **Organizing in Sofia a Conference with international participation in the period 5-7 June 2024.**



On the first day, a meeting of the project participants was held in the morning and in the afternoon all 19 foreign partners visited the Mining Museum - City of Pernik. The topic of extractivism is one of those on which information material was made.

On June 6th - the second day of the international events in Sofia under the COPGendered project, at the Hemus Hotel, CSCD organized a full-day training session with numerous workshops on adult learning methodologies.

Jivka Marinova from the GERT Foundation presented in detail the so-called Participatory Learning&Action methodology, after which the foreign guests presented 8 other inclusive, feminist methodologies. These were tested in small groups to be prepared later by the project partners as part of an Online Trainers Resource bank.

[#wideplus.org/copgendered-project/](https://wideplus.org/copgendered-project/)

On June 7, 2024, the International Conference **“Exploring the Nexus of Gender & Climate Justice”** was held in Sofia, at Hotel Hemus.,

That was the third day of the international activities of the CSCD and the COPGendered project partners in Sofia.

35 women participated, including 17 from the project and WIDE+ Network. Among Bulgarians, there were representatives of the Bulgarian Fund for Women, Amnesty International Bulgaria, UNA Bulgaria, Greenpeace Bulgaria, Levfem, Sofia University – Faculty of Journalism, Feminist Library – Sofia, and other NGOs.

The event coincided with the upcoming double elections in the country on June 9 - for the European Parliament and special elections for the Bulgarian Parliament, which diverted to some extent the attention of the public and the media to the political parties and their campaigns. But it should be noted that the local participants were genuinely interested in the subject, which is generally not very popular in the country.

Successively the following topics were presented to the audience:

- Gender and climate justice
- Climate justice, gender and energy
- Climate justice, gender and LGBTIQ
- Climate justice, gender and transport
- Climate justice, gender and migration



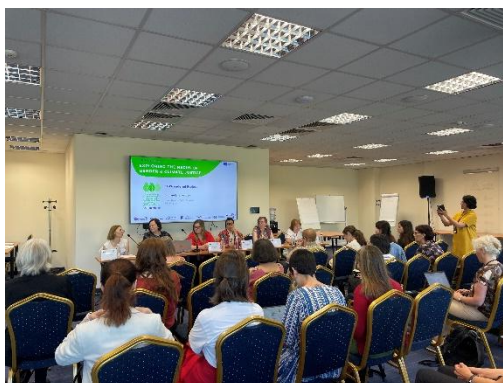
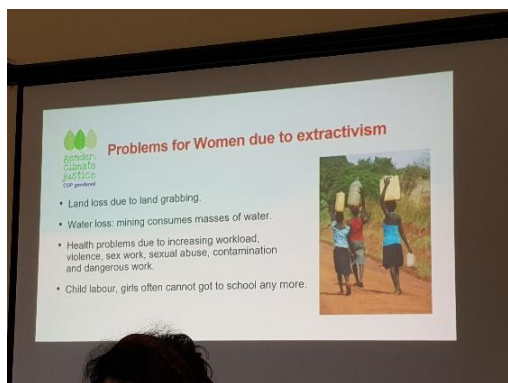
- Climate justice, gender and extractivism

You can consult the relevant information materials issued at

<https://cscd-bg.org/bg/proekti/proekt-copgendered/informatsionni-dokumenti-otnosno-vrazkata-mezhdu-pol-i-klimatichna-spravedlivost>

The event was moderated by Jivka Marinova from GERT and Nancy Borisova from CSCD.

The two films presented on the issues of extractivism - climate justice - gender were also of interest. The Bulgarian one was prepared by the journalist Vesselin Foteva and presented the new situation of illegal exploitation of coal from the closed mines in Pernik and the dangers for people in this aspect.



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- An **Online Hub for trainers** with training methods for adults and institutions on Gender and Climate Justice started to be created, with materials in the national languages of the participating organisations and English (German, Bulgarian, Danish, Spanish, French and Swedish).
- An **Online Platform** for one-to-one training on Gender and Climate Justice will be developed in English.

FUNDING IN 2024

The projects implemented in 2024 were funded by the following DONORS:

the European Commission, CERV-2022-GE, Erasmus+ Programmes,

EEA and Norway Grants, Active Citizens Fund

EEA and Norway Grants, Fund for Youth Employment

Revenue from non-profit activities is as follows:

Financial proceeds from projects and programmes: 198,000 BGN

Financial proceeds from unconditional donations: 13,000 BGN

Total revenue for 2024: 211,000 BGN

CONCLUSION

The year 2024 was another successful year for the CSCD!



Center for Sustainable
Communities Development

The team also had partner calls in 2024/25 and was involved in writing draft proposals to the EC for sustainability and development. Unfortunately, 5 draft proposals were not supported by the EC. Unfortunately, without core funding for the team and office, ensuring sustainability is very difficult.

Stanimira Hadjimitova, CSCD Board Chair

July, 2025