



ЛИБЕРАЛЕН ПОЛИТОЛОГИЧЕН ИНСТИТУТ

LIBERAL POLITOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

In 2004 the Liberal politicalological institute organized in city of Vraca a seminar “Women in politics – policies for women. The liberal perspectives”. In discussion lectures delivered the Minister of labour and social policy, members of the Parliament and the regional governor of Vraca region. The liberal perspective and the challenges toward women’s participation in politics and public life in the time of accessing in EU and forthcoming parliamentary elections in 2005 in Bulgaria were presented at the discussion. The national legal frame in the sphere of gender mainstreaming, civic initiatives and the opportunities of women in Bulgarian labour market were also introduced in the event.

In 2005 the Liberal Politological Institute and “Support for the hearing impaired” Foundation has join forces to start for the first time in Bulgaria, as an initiative of the civil society, the sign language training for students – the project "Make that gesture”. The sign language distinguished considerably from the verbal Bulgarian language. This renders difficulties to the free communication between the people with hearing impairment and the others, in verbal, as well as in written form. The specialists in different spheres of the social life, trained in sign language, in Bulgaria are not much. In practice this put limits to the hearing impaired people’s access to information and the opportunity to achieve a professional advice or help. The project envisage the training of students from four different universities in Sofia. The main aim of the course is young people, who studies and future professional occupations will be related to people with disabilities, to be involved in the active participation in the process of creation of hospitable and sustainable environment for people with hearing impairment in order to facilitate their integration in the civic society. Another subject of the project is the data base of the specialist, by regions and professions, who command a sign language, as



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well as expanding the project among other groups as establishment in Bulgaria of the “good practices” for full integration of people with disabilities.

In 2006 the Liberal Political Institute (LPI) realized the project “Encouraging women’s participation in political life”. Through the implementation of this project, the LPI made a step towards realization of one of its main objective – the development of truly inclusive democratic processes in Bulgaria. The project lasted six months and was realized with the financial support of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), UK. The gender issues were high in the priorities of the WFD. The project’s main objectives were as follows:

- Fostering the process of updating current Bulgarian legislation on gender equality and improving government policies and programs on women in accordance with the EU and UN regulations and practices;
- Promoting more effective cooperation among women’s NGOs, legislators, relevant central and local authorities and business communities and involving their representatives in technical and policy discussions to address the interests and needs of women;
- Raising awareness among the public and among policymakers as well as their appreciation of gender equality issues and of the importance of more significant involvement of women in political decision-making processes, which affect society and country as a whole.

In order to accomplish these objectives, LPI carried out an independent analysis and assessment of the Bulgarian constitution, national legislation and governmental policies regarding sex and gender equality, with the aim of generating recommendations for



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their amendments and improvement in accordance with the Treaties, Directives and policies of the European Union and the respective human rights treaties and platforms for action of the United Nations as well the practices of the member states of these two political entities. Furthermore, it was envisaged to hold seminars in four Bulgarian towns. In these seminars the variety of barriers were discussed, which women face regarding their participation in public and political processes; current gender legislation and governmental policies were presented and analysed. Lastly, strategies were debated as to what more needed to be done in legislation, policy and programs at different levels, in order to foster the process of women' empowerment. As a result, we raised the awareness of the general public and of policymakers about gender equality issues and their appreciation of the importance of a deeper involvement of women in decision-making processes, which affect the country and society as a whole. We also succeeded to promote more effective cooperation among women's NGOs, legislators, relevant central and local authorities and business communities to address the needs and interests of women.

In the same year The Liberal Politological Institute was in charge to coordinate the social campaign on the MTV EXIT initiative's concert for Bulgaria. The MTV tour "End exploitation and trafficking" took place in 8 countries and was attended by approximately 60,000 people and was watched by 95,41 millions households all over the Europe. In this year's campaign Bulgaria was also included – on August in the capital city of Sofia was envisaged the carrying out of a MTV EXIT concert with the participation of international and Bulgarian groups and singers. Sofia was the first place, where the famous musical television MTV stepped in Bulgaria. The event attracted a broad attention and was broadcasted by the Bulgarian National TV as well. The aim of MTV was by using its popularity among young people and in cooperation with the institutions and the leading NGOs made an important step toward raising the



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knowledge and awareness of the society on this problem. We believed, that the higher degree of awareness of the society to the issues, connected with human trafficking, achieved through the activities of the non-governmental sector and the implementation of campaigns such as MTV EXIT, which are attractive to the young people, could effectively support the efforts of the state institutions and all organizations, working in this field.

In 2007 The Liberal Politological Institute implemented a project “Increasing women competency and encouraging woman activity in the politics of Bulgaria”, within the framework of the Year of equal opportunities for all, realized with the support of the European Commission. Main aims of the project were to present and promote the main aims of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All at local level; To develop specific skills and competencies of women who have decided to participate actively in the social and political life, in particular – in the structures and headquarters of political parties, as well as in the bodies of local authorities; To encourage the political parties to give opportunity to women to exercise their right to get involved in the political processes in leading positions; To support the increasing of the percentage of women within the local authorities’ bodies in order equal and balanced political representation to be achieved; To raise the awareness of Bulgarian society to the problem of the hidden discrimination based on sex at local level; Preparing and printing a handbook for the training of management of majoritarian pre-electoral campaigns; Carrying out of 2 trainings in professional management of political campaigns for women having ambition for political engagement and women-candidates for elective positions in two Bulgarian towns (Plovdiv and Varna) - with a special focus on the political image of women politicians and candidates; Media coverage and public explanation of the need of increase the number of women who hold managing positions in the parties’ structures, campaign headquarters, the governing bodies in Bulgaria on the basis of the



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project results; Analysis of the results of the local elections and the project – presentation on the conclusive conference and publication on the LPI’s website. For this project LPI was awarded as a promoter of Best Practices on gender equality by the Minister of labour and social policy during the international conference Youth thinking globally acting locally on gender equality which took place in Sofia.

In 2008 The Liberal Politological Institute provided a training course in “Professional management of political campaigns”, in which participate future political consultants – students in political science from the Sofia University, New Bulgarian University and UNWE and young expert from different fields in the sphere of marketing and PR. Within its framework will be examined three main components of the campaign process – the essence, main rules and concrete techniques of the political communication; the process of positive image building; and the entire organization and management of political campaign. Every module finished with a phase, which has a practical purpose. Within it was strengthened and examined the received knowledge by the trainees on the basis of solving of concrete questions and cases, role games and simulation of different activities of the electioneering process. The main aim of the course was to prepare professionally young experts with the needed know how and practical skills in order they to participate adequately in the managing and implementing future political campaigns in Bulgaria.