



ACTIVE WOMEN ASSOCIATION

In Poland

Welcome!

Active Women Association /since 2002/ is a non-governmental non-profit organization that acts for social inclusion and empowerment of vulnerable groups / youth, seniors, women, minorities/, tolerance, gender equality and civic participation.

Main types of actions: non-formal education, social & media campaigns, networking & coalitions, strategic learning partnerships, lobbying, advocacy, counselling, services.

Since 7 years we have been engaged in European projects and partnerships in favour of non-formal education, Strategic Partnerships of education staff, exchange of experiences with partners, European mobilities, European Voluntary Service, Senior Volunteer Projects.

We are strongly engaged in intercultural activities and intercultural journeys, since 7 years we have run our empowering projects in North Africa, Asia and Europe. We managed to establish many links for transnational cooperation and nowadays we cultivate fruitful partnerships and networking projects cherishing multicultural diversity.

AWA is involved in social media campaigns and non-formal education to raise an awareness of various social issues, e.g. intolerance, violence, discrimination.

Our headquarter is located in the Sosnowiec city center /220 m²/, including offices, counselling rooms, training room, seminar room, library, dining room and lounge. That's why volunteers working with us in EVS service usually have their own room, nice and comfortable space to implement their projects.

We have been cooperating in many partnership projects with Sosnowiec Municipality, local and regional governments in Silesia Region, various Ministries and national administration, other non-governmental organisations in Poland and worldwide, public and private universities /Silesian University, Warsaw University, Humanitas University/ and few high schools in Sosnowiec.

OUR KEY PROJECTS

2015-2017 "Young women for social change" Capacity building in the field of youth Erasmus+ Programme.

Partnership project with organisations from Afghanistan, USA and Poland. The aim is to empower Afghan young female leaders by the implementation of leaders gender-oriented trainings in Kabul. Secondly, the project is oriented towards building the capacity of the organisations in effective running of transnational projects for youth empowerment in developing countries.

2015-2017 "Empowerment through education - gender equality and political leadership" -Strategic partnership of the adult education staff. Erasmus+ Programm. Partner organisations: USA, Ireland, Finland, Czech Republic. Exchange of good practices and know-how in the field of empowerment education for women's political leadership. Production of intellectual outputs: e-platform, research, training programmes, toolkit.



2013-2017 **“Seniors decide! - Seniors Council for civic participation in Sosnowiec city”**. Three editions of the projects. Goal: establish, develop and strengthen civic dialogue institution of Senior Council in Sosnowiec city in Poland. Performed actions: workshops/trainings for effective public activism, setting the standards and procedures for work and cooperation, lectures, civic artistic actions, civic consultancy processes, community building methods, conferences, dance balls&celebrations, bike civic participation. Great success and achievement on European scale! Financing: ASOS Fund /Ministry of Social Affairs in Poland/.

2013-2015 **“Empowered women change the world” - Senior volunteer project, LLP Grundtvig Programm**. 5 weeks-long exchanges of 12 senior women 50+ and their voluntary work in favour of local community in Active Women Association in Poland and Anafi Association in Rome /Italy/.

2015 - AWA joined Silesian network of organizations for prevention of violence and information/counselling for violence victims **We react - against violence**.
www.mapa-reagujemy.slask.pl.

2014 **Mobility / Visit and Exchange of Adult Education Staff in Madeira Island / Portugal/ / 3 months**. Type of activity: job shadowing, training assignments, trainings for local leaders, counselling on fundraising. Participant: Monika Sobańska - Vicepresident. LLP Grundtvig Programm.

2012-2017 **The European Voluntary Service (EVS)** - Youth in Action, Erasmus+ Programme, provides young Europeans with the unique chance to express their personal commitment through unpaid and full-time voluntary activities in a foreign country within or outside the EU. In this way, it seeks to develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people, thus contributing to reinforcing social cohesion in the European Union and to promoting young people's active citizenship.

We have hosted 8 volunteers from Georgia, France, Turkey, Latvia, Spain who run the project in gender education and women's rights in Sosnowiec. Since 2012 we have sent as well 25 young people to do voluntary service in European and Partner countries.

2010 - 2015 **Women Expeditions in the world: Arte Morocco and Arte Bornholm**

Arte Morocco is an expedition for women who are curious of the world, different cultures and their customs. Women who are open for a new adventures and experiences during common tour across Morocco. They will climb to the top of the highest mountain of North Africa Jabal Toubkal (4167 meters high). Later participants will visit Marrakech and take part in the Gnaoua Music Festival at the Ocean in Essouira.

Arte Bornholm project joins both: bike trekking across Danish Island, entertainment, creativity development and artherapy in outdoor. Except for wandering across the island women create natural art in Scandinavian landscape- on the cliffs, stone rings, valleys and Vikings' castles. The expedition is addressed not only to women's muscles but also to women's imagination, women who like wandering and discovering their ability to create.

2012-2015 - **Come back to Paradise - intercultural expedition to Bali and Gili Islands /Indonesia/** In paradise landscape of Bali and Gili Island, participants experience spontaneous dance, laugh and taste exotic tradition of places. They visit Bali Art Gallery, have massages in Spa centre, meet Shaman, see Ramayan performance, walk to Agung volcano-Gods' Mountain(3142meters high) and sightseeing the most important temples: Tanah Lot, Pura Luhur Uluwatu and Pura Goa Lawah. The purpose of this excursion is to experience balinese mentality and magic culture, develop joy of life and sensuality.



2013-2014 **The giraffe language - language of the heart** - promotion of non-violence communication / NVC/ among young people in Sosnowiec city, according to Marshall Rosenberg method NVC. Project co-financed by Youth in Action Program / Action 2 - Youth Initiatives/. Activities: NVC trenings, dissemination workshops for youngsters at schools, Compassion Work Group. Project nr: PL-12-135-2013-R1.

2010-2012 “Let's make politics female - educational activities enhancing women participation in public life”, LifeLong Learning Partnership, LLP Grundtvig Programme.

The project lasted two years and brought together partner organisations from four different countries: Active Women Association from Poland, Women´s Committee of the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia from Finland, Fórum 50 % from the Czech Republic and AENAO from Greece. The aim we all shared was to increase women´s participation in politics. By sharing our knowledge and experience, by learning from each other and from others and by creating a vivid network across the four countries. We had the great opportunity to learn more about each others countries, the position of women in the society and in politics, about its culture and much more.

More: www.femalepolitics.eu

2012: Grundtvig Workshop "Decided, so I'm - empowerment of woman over 50 years old". LLP Grundtvig Programme.

The purpose of the project “Decided, so I am” was support women 50+ to become active participants of social life using all their rights, opportunities and available resources. We invited 18 women aged 50 and more who are already either at the end of their work career or already retired, who raised their children and are not anymore responsible for home environment. Workshop consisted of 5 days empowerment training 7 hours per day. Activities were focused on individual development of participants in area of gender awareness, networking and building support groups. Training was led by gender trainers experienced in empowerment and cooperating with Active Women Association for the last couple of years for improvement of women rights.

2011 Active Women Association has become a **member of Multi-Agency Interdisciplinary Team for domestic violence prevention in Sosnowiec city**. In Sosnowiec, the prevention of domestic violence is under the responsibility of the social policy department of the city, which coordinates all municipal activities in this field in coordination with a local partnership involving the various specialised departments of the municipality (education, health care, youth), the police and civil society organisations, Active Women Association among them. Special team and work group has been trained and working together with the aim of reducing domestic violence and support victims with efficient help of various agencies. Sosnowiec is also involved in the “blue card procedure”, a multi-agency approach aimed at reducing and preventing domestic violence. For many years the system of multi-agency support has been developed and functioning successfully.

2011 - **Social campaign against violence Freedom from fear** run in the partnership with Municipality in Sosnowiec city. Project was co-financed by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs within the national programme “Support to the local communes in developing system of domestic violence prevention”. Activities: dissemination campaign in media, outdoor, public means of transport; anti-violence festival for citizens, conference, educational movie, etc.

2011 **Female Face of Politics - enlargement of women political networking in Silesia Region**. Total: 300 participants. Trainings in public competences / hard and soft/ for female politicians



elected in local elections, enlargement of the network of female politicians and the supporters of women's political agenda. Project was co-financed by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

2010/2011 "**Women's elections, women's decisions**" - project referred to strengthening of women candidates in local elections, the aim was to increase female participation in the decision-making processes. We organized trainings in public speaking, brand marketing, electoral campaign management, gender issues and goals and motivation. We have built female networks of women politicians in Silesia region. Participants: 50 candidates in 2010 local elections. Project was co-financed by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Poland.

2008, 2009, 2012 - The "**Circle of Creativity - wake up your creative personality**" was a series of workshops designed for people seeking alternative forms of leisure and self-development, eg. Vedic Art - intuitional painting, body work, arte recycling, creative singing, spontaneous dance. The project was designed to encourage beneficiaries to explore their potential and develop creative interests by experiencing a variety of methods and self-development.

- 2009 - **Kinoko - Socially Engaged Film Club** - the project included a series of meetings for young people from secondary schools in the Silesian region. Aimed to encourage young people to get to know the social problems associated with: gender equality, sexual minorities, cultural and religious differences, refugees and migrant workers, trafficking and stimulate debate on these subjects. Meetings included presentations introducing the subject of documentary films belonging to the film library of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and moderated discussions to sensitize young people to the problems of contemporary Europe. Project was co-financed by the EU's Youth in Action Program.

- 2009 - "**Working mother, still loving mum**" - a project for mothers returning to work after giving birth and raising a child. The project participants could benefit from various forms of support - motivational workshops, individual consultation with the guidance counselor and psychologist, training in time management, creative problem-solving, negotiation, reconciliation of social and professional, and personal development. A childcare was provided. 230 women has attended in a series of workshops. The project was co-financed by the European Union under the European Social Fund (PO KL Measure 6.1.1).

- 2009 - "**For the common integration - support of local activists in the community Brenna**" - the project was aimed at rural leaders in the district of Brenna. It included a series of five two-day workshop, during which participants gained knowledge on how to mobilize community residents and encourage them to act. The workshop was devoted to the issues of skills and development of leadership for effective cooperation, innovative methods of social change and respond to problems that arise among people and raising funds for social activities, planning project was co-financed by the European Union under the European Social Fund.

- 2008-2016 - **Family Rights Information Center** - the project was completed much of the assistance, support families and contribute to the spread of the rights of citizens. The main task of the center was to help dysfunctional families, who suffer from consequences of alcohol abuse and domestic violence, by delivering them free law counseling and psychological advise. The project was financed by the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Municipality of Sosnowiec. The center also started a support group for women in the course of a divorce or after a divorce.

- 2008, 2009 - **Feminostrada- film review on women's issues** - presenting works beyond the boundaries of conventional cinema. The annual festival screened several films and makers of fine artists and blocks of short films from the festival Davis Feminist Film Festival, showing notion of femininity in history, age, ideas, stereotypes and psychology.



- 2004, 2008 implementation of the project **Eyes wide open- prevention of violence against women and girls**, as a part of "16 Days Action against Gender Violence Co-financed by Ministry of Labour and social Affairs in Poland and Women Fund OŚKA. The aim of the project was to weaken violence against women and girls in Silesia through non-formal education, street happenings and counselling by strengthening the feeling of safety and promotion of anti-violence attitudes and assertive behavior among people being in the risk of violence group. Target group: 50 women from Silesia region. Activities: trainings for self-defence and , assertiveness, manifestation/ city march, media campaign.
- 2008 - "**Select the third sector and work with passion! - Dissemination of project results Cyber-hand in Silesia.**" Project aimed to encourage young people - mostly students and graduates of the Silesian University - to work in associations and foundation, and show that the professional work of non-governmental organizations can be creative and important - because its effect is to change the world for the better. The project was conducted preliminary meetings and presentations at universities in Silesia on the third sector and its characteristics, workshops on planning and management of social change presents specific work in the third sector and its benefits. This was followed by planning of community projects. The project was co-financed by the European Union under European Social Fund / EQUAL/.
- 2006, 2007 - **Regional Coordination of Action Competition Acacia**, which resulted in 16 women throughout the country received the award for promoting the development of civil society. More info: www.akcjaakacja.org.pl
- 2007 - implementation of the project "**You are not alone**" - support for single mothers at risk of **social exclusion** ", funded by Kompania Piwowarska in the campaign "It's Worth."
 - 2007 - to joined the nationwide public campaign "**Done - appreciated - many worth ...**" to appreciate the domestic labour of women. Association worked as regional coordinator in the province of Silesia. More: www.kasakobiet.oai.pl. For very active input in the campaign Mrs Sobańska, president of the Association of Halina was awarded the Diamond Brushes ☺
- 2006, 2007, 2005 - the project "**Academy of Leaders and Social Animators**". The project has been organized training in social skills for 30 women who want to work in the third sector and public life. Created as rapidly running club leaders, whose task was to initiate events and social projects in Silesia. The project was granted by the Civic Initiatives Fund of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.
 - 2006 to today - the coordination of the "**Blue Network**" - the objective: to develop and strengthen the network of assistance for victims of domestic violence. The project was subsidized by the Phare 2003 - Co-Grants Fund for Institutional Development.
www.porozumienie.niebieskalinia.pl
- 2005 - action "**Safe taxi for women**" - to carry out the autumn edition of the project started in March 2004, the project was organized discount taxi rides for women after 10. p.m. In order to ensure safety of women returning home in the evening taxi drivers taking part in the campaign are required to pay women at home or wait until the woman to the house entrance.
- 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 - organization of the **Silesian-edition of the Development and Entertainment Festival for Women PROGRESSteron**. During the festival, organized 300 workshops, lectures and presentations prepared especially for women, for their personal and professional development. (eg. self-defense, assertiveness, public speaking, intelligence, financial, health, art



therapy, choreotherapy,). The festival was held simultaneously in 10 Polish cities, including Katowice and Sosnowiec, where the event was organized by the Association of Active Women. In Silesia about 1000 women took part in this venue. The festival took place thanks to the financial support of the City Council in Sosnowiec, and the Marshal's Office in Katowice.

- 2005 - 2008 - implementation of tasks **Partnership for Development "FENIX - strengthening the social economy"**, **"under the EQUAL Community Initiative**. Project with the Helping Hand Foundation and three partners. The project is created in Silesia social cooperatives for the unemployed or threatened by unemployment due to maternal or paternal duties.
- 2005 - Accession to the project **"Cheer up. Integration and reintegration of women the labor market"** - PHARE 2002 Economic and Social Cohesion Development of Human Resources. Project aimed at the integration and reintegration of women. The Association was a local ambassador and co-organizer of the project.

Key staff of the organisation

Monika SObańska - sociologist, social activist, international Cooperation Manager and project coordinator in Active Women Association, Vicepresident of the organisation in years 2005-2016; youth educator and NGO trainer with 10 years of experience, fundraiser, university lecturer and trainer in project planning, creativity development, NGO management. She has large experience in coordinating of volunteers projects with youth and seniors, team management and development of European initiatives. She has coordinated almost all European Initiatives in Active Women Association. She has got fluent English linguistic competence, and Certificate of Advanced English. President of brand new MEDEINA Foundation for natural empowerment.

Agnieszka Pietrzak - economist, accredited coach, coordinator of few educational projects of European mobilities, member of Active Women Association, vicepresident of MEDEINA foundation, NGO trainer and instructor of physical activity. Fluent English enabling her to work professionally in this language. Member and founder of Association of Health Promotion. She has large experience in volunteers' coaching in European and local projects.

Halina Sobańska - PHD in political science and humanities, social activist, feminist, President and founder of Active Women Association, city counselor and local politician. Project coordinator and expert in women's rights, equal opportunities and gender trainings.

They attended great number of national and European trainings, seminars and meetings developing their skill and competences in training people, coaching, project coordination and management, mentoring, team management, partnership and networking, new media, ICT and finances.

Organization cooperates with wide range of specialists: experts, trainers, coaches, counsellors, mentors with whom implements its local, national and transnational projects.

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