

Saatja: Kırstal Bölgelerdeki Kadın Hareketi Derneği (BIZ DE VARIZ)

<info@bizdevarizdernegi.org>

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Adressaat: Maret Maripuu <maret.maripuu@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee>

Koopia: Vadim Ivanov <vadim.ivanov@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee>; Kadri Maasik

<kadri.maasik@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee>; Meeli Miidla-Vanatalu <Meeli.Miidla-

Vanatalu@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee>; Priit Laos <Priit.Laos@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee>; SKA

Info <info@sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee>; <vaike.pahn@gmail.com>

Teema: Turkish and Estonian Civil Society Cooperation

Tähtsus: Kõrgeim

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Tähelepanu! Tegemist on väljastpoolt asutust saabunud kirjaga. Tundmatu saatja korral palume linke ja faile mitte avada.

Number : 2026/36

Subject : Turkish and Estonian Civil Society Cooperation

Date : Türkiye, Rize, March 19, 2026

Dear Mrs. Maret MARIPUU

Social Insurance Board

Director-General

Dear Mrs. Maripuu

Our association, in partnership with the Estonian Disabled Women's Association (Estonia), the Lithuanian Women's Society (Lithuania) and the Gender Studies, o.p.s. (Czechia), implemented the "Civil Society Dialogue for Empowered Women" project in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Estonia (The brochure for this project is attached.). This project was supported by the European Union. The project was implemented between 01.04.2021 – 30.01.2023.

The aim of the project is "Overall objective: to strengthen the position of women in Rize and improve the information exchange and sustainable cooperation between Turkish and European CSOs. Specific objectives: (1) To ensure information exchange about Women-friendly Cities and "women with disabilities" approach of women's CSOs between Turkish and Estonian CSOs; (2) To establish the "women in local governance e-platform"; (3) To inform the Turkish public on the EU and the European public on Turkey."

The project has been successfully implemented in Türkiye, Estonia, Czech Republic, and Lithuania.

The International workshop with subject of "Women's Rights with Disabilities in Estonia" for lively and colourful society dialogue among NGO was done in Estonia. The International

workshop was held in two phases. At the first stage, travel observation and examination works have been implemented. During those examination works, presentations have been performed by the people who know well the point. At the second stage; group works and presentations called as indoor area work were done. This workshop provided to attendants to make strength democracy and law subject to estimated political dimensions. Women's Support Center and Eesti Puuetega Naiste Ühenduste Liit (EPNÜL) served as a role model for Turkish participants. The International workshop not only has increased the information and capacities of the participants but also provide an opportunity to them for practicing as a part of solution. So, they have increased their self-confidence.

Achievements of the project:

1. Better information sharing about Project partners and opportunities and difficulties due to enlarging of EU in future were shared through negotiations.
2. A dialogue has been established between EU Member States and Türkiye where "concerns and views will be discussed sincerely and clearly".
3. Entering of Estonia to EU, learnt lessons, Lecturing about points like rights of disabled women, Activities of NGOs with women subject in EU and Estonia, Gender Equality in Estonia and EU Countries.
4. Estonian participants have had the opportunity to get to know Türkiye closely.
5. Estonian participants have learned about the works Turkey has done during the EU harmonization process.
6. Better information sharing about the project partners opportunities and difficulties due to enlarging of EU in future were shared through negotiations.
7. Tallinn Women's Support Center served as a role model for Turkish NGO representatives, and a women's shelter as well as a women's incubation (counselling) center were established in the province of Rize, the Republic of Türkiye.
8. A civil society dialogue was established between Estonian and Turkish women's support centers and shelters, and a joint project was developed.

Our project team in Estonia is very successful. Disciplined and dedicated. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Vaike Pähn (Tallinn Women's Support Center). The PowerPoint presentations were particularly impressive. The participants loved them. They served as role models for the participants.

Mrs. Pähn delivered presentations on the operational functioning of women's shelters in Estonia, particularly the Tallinn Women's Support Center. Mrs. Pähn's presentation attracted significant interest among Turkish and Lithuanian participants. Turkish participants, in particular, demonstrated a strong interest. In the final session of the workshop, a brainstorming session entitled "Laying the Foundations of Civil Society Dialogue between Türkiye, Estonia, and Lithuania in the Field of Women's Shelters" was held upon the request of Turkish and Lithuanian participants. Under the guidance of Mrs. Pähn, presentations were delivered on the institutional functioning of women's support centers and shelters across Estonia, with particular reference to the Tallinn Women's Support Center. Turkish and Lithuanian participants also delivered presentations outlining the opportunities and challenges in their respective countries.

Subsequently, discussions and exchanges of views were held with the participation of all attendees. During this brainstorming session, it was strongly envisaged that Türkiye, as a candidate country to the EU, would take Estonian women's shelters as a role model and establish both a women's incubation (counselling) center and a women's shelter in the Black Sea Region of Türkiye (with the province of Rize designated as the pilot area). Motivation on this matter has

increased. In addition, it was decided to develop a project to establish a civil society dialogue between Estonian and Turkish women's support centers and shelters. We are currently working on this project proposal.

We are in constant dialogue with Tallinn Women's Support Center and Eesti Puuetega Naiste Ühenduste Liit (EPNÜL). We are currently preparing a joint project proposal. The purpose of this project is "to strengthen the voice and actions of local civil society for climate justice and inclusive climate local governance in Türkiye by engaging with the most vulnerable, excluded and disadvantaged groups of society, such as disabled women."

We want to implement this project to create a bigger synergy in the project site and to increase the sustainability of the project. With the contributions of Estonia Missions and EU Missions that put value on 'Disabled Women's Rights' a great synergy and the multiplier effect will be generated.

I respectfully submit this information to your attention.

Annex: Project brochure

Berrin YEGEN MOLLAVELIOGLU
President of the Board of Directors



phone : + 90 464 213 22 02
e-mail (1) : info@bizdevarizdernegi.org
e-mail (2) : bizdevarizdernegi@gmail.com
web (1) : www.bizdevarizdernegi.org
web (2) : http://www.bizdevarizdernegi.org/e-platform-tr/e-platfortmoplanti.html
youtube : @bizdevarizdernegi
address : Çarşı Mah., Hacı Eşref Cad., Boştan İş Hanı, No:16/302, 53100 Merkez
Rize, TÜRKİYE