

**FEMINIST ALLIANCES FOR A NEW CIVIL SOCIETY**  
**CSW65 Virtual NGO Forum – March 23rd 2021**

This event was framed in a discussion and debate among three Italian feminists co-editing the Position Paper called “The Change we WANT”, as well as a Serbian feminist activist and the policy officer of *Euromed Rights*, which is a regional NGO that promotes Human Rights and Democracy in both parts of the Mediterranean Sea. This event looked at transnational feminist solidarities in a context of global backlashes against gender equality and reflecting on the challenges of global feminism.

The event started with the opening words from Marcella Pirrone from the feminist organization *D.i.Re – Donne in Rete contro la violenza*, and followed by the intervention of Claudia Pividori:

Claudia Pividori – *D.i.Re Human Rights and Feminist Activist and Lawyer*

“The Change We Want” is a Position Paper created and submitted to build together a strong political stance, to voice the change needed in Italy in reference to the 1995 Beijing Feminist Declaration 25 years after it was signed.

The Position Paper is a strong competence based approach with a strong political stance to express demands and the change we want in Italy reflecting upon the Beijing Declaration. It is stated that having ambition is not enough to conduct all the actions needed for the implementation of these strategies, we need public policies and institutional mechanisms that put gender at the core to achieve this level of diversity as well as equality.

Giovanna Badalassi – *Analyst and Expert of Public Policies’ Evaluation - Gender Budgeting*

Achievements have been conducted by women but the neoliberal patriarchal order is still standing, neoliberal economic order is a destructive platform that enhances violence against women. There is a perspective that economy is the enemy of women, but it could be an ally when funding projects for empowerment.

How can we transform money from enemy to ally? We can do it by raising awareness that we need feminist empowerment to develop a new order of economic values, this new order should be based mainly on the care sector, as the pandemic showed that this crisis was mainly a care crisis and not merely an economic crisis.

Women are strongly invested in the pandemic. Women have demonstrated to be key actors in all of the economic sectors. The world will need to develop a care section on all of the economic sectors and women should and will have the leading role in this.

Luisa Bosisio Fazzi - *European Disability Forum Board Member for the Italian Disability Forum*

There 5 main issues faced by women and girls with disabilities:

1. *Intersectional discrimination on disability*: creates unique situation of discrimination, women and girls with disabilities become one of the most marginalised groups in the world.
2. *Sexual and reproductive rights*: women and girls with disabilities are perceived as asexual or hypersexual. This had lead to denial of sexual and reproductive rights for these women; they're denied contraception and abortions and are administered forced sterilization.
3. *Violence*: women and girls with disabilities are more vulnerable to violence. They face a particular form of violence: forced sterilization, denial of food or water, rape, domestic violence. The perpetrators might be family members, care givers and strangers.
4. *Legal capacity*: recognition before the law is still widely violated; they continue to experience the denial of their legal capacity.
5. *Right to political space and involvement in decision making processes*: women with disabilities count with no political representation, rendering them invisible.

Marina Toschi – Gynaecologist Activist PRO-CHOICE Italian network

We all want the right to choose our own sexuality. The issue of conscience objection regarding abortions is a very important one: it means doctors can object and not follow the law in Italy. Many women in countries like Italy don't get to have medical abortion because people, especially sanitary personnel like doctors and nurses don't agree to comply with the law. Currently, in Italy we have data that show that 500 demands of abortion that have not been met.

The Concluding Observation of the United Nations CCPR of the Voluntary termination of pregnancy stands that the Committee is concerned about reported difficulties in accessing legal abortions owing to the high number of physicians who refuse to perform abortions for reasons of conscience and their manner of distribution across the country, resulting in a significant number of clandestine abortions being carried out (articles. 6, 17 and 24).

The State party should take the necessary measures to guarantee unimpeded and timely access to legal abortion services in its territory by establishing an effective referral system for women seeking legal abortion services.

Currently, the situation in Poland where there is a total ban for abortions is a threat for the rest of Europe, it is inhumane and cruel.

Lucille Griffon – Programme Officer on Women's Rights and Gender Justice at EuroMed Rights

The Government Organised NGOS called GONGOS are a new figure that governments use to create pressure on civil society, especially regarding issues like gender rights and equality, and migrant and minorities rights. The discourse spread by GONGOS who oppose to the rights of these vulnerable groups really affects many countries and has consequences in the lives of the LGTBIQ communities (for example).

The discussion centred on the idea that there are many lobbyists and EU parliamentary women working jointly with the EU Commission towards a ban of conscious object on sanitary personal, due to the consequences this brings regarding the denial of Women's Human Rights.