

Women4Advancement

The project “Equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making for women advancement”

Membership Support Regranting Scheme 2024 / RE-GRANTING AGREEMENT No. MASF2024-006

The 51% Minority – Part of Romanian 50/50 Campaign

Romania’s experience on how to promote women in politics

1. Main theme	Gender balance in politics and decision making
Related themes	
2. Implementing country	Romania
3. Implementation level	National
4. Main goal and objectives of the good practice	To promote equal representation of women in decision making bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To raise awareness on violence against women in politics barrier of women’s participation. - To promote women’s participation in local elections by build their confidence and presence in the political arena
5. Target group/groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women and men politicians, experts from academia’s, international experts; CSOs representatives, the diplomatic community - women from local communities interested in local politics
6. Name of lead organisation/body implementing the practice	Romanian Women’s Lobby Association (ROWL) NGO - national coordination in Romania of the EUROPEAN WOMEN LOBBY (EWL)
7. Partners, if relevant Please also indicate the country and type of organisation/body	NDI – National Democratic Institute, Romania Branch NGO - national
8. Period of implementation	October 1, 2023 – Mai 31, 2024
9. Funding/Financial resources and other resources	Romanian Embassy of the Netherlands
10. Description of good practice and its activities	
<p>The 51% Minority is an action that is part of a wider spectrum of RoWL activities aimed at increasing the number of women politicians, and the number of women and young women elected to decision-making positions, Romania being one of the countries that is in a bad position in terms of it concerns the number of women elected. Women occupy 20% of decision-making positions in local or regional assemblies and 18.5% seats in the current Romanian parliament (i.e., 18.5% women in the Chamber of Deputies and 18.4% in the Senate). The poor results recorded have many causes: a legislation that does not encourage women's participation, online violence against politically involved women, but also the lack of a framework that promotes women from communities to get involved in local decision-making.</p> <p>Two types of activities were proposed:</p> <p>Activity 1 – Violence against women in politics (VAW-P) „#Violence against #women in #politics. Chasing solutions" - conference on violence against women in politics, with</p>	

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<p>speakers from the wider European region and the US - aims to bring the focus on the phenomenon of violence against women in politics, a phenomenon widely occurring, but neither discussed nor solved. Organized in partnership with the Romanian Democratic Institute, the Conference featured case studies from different countries and shared best practices of overcoming online violence, a main barrier of women’s participation in politics. The event offered an opportunity for men to openly talk about how the violence against their family members, who are women, affected their daily lives during and after the electoral campaigns.</p> <p>The conference was preceded by one-to-one meetings or cross-party consultations with the women’s groups/organizations, to discuss about strategies they can use to attract more women as members/supporters, and as candidates, and was organized in the premises of the Romanian Diplomatic Institute.</p> <p>Activity 2 – Training for women candidates</p> <p>RoWL, in cooperation with NDI, recruited and trained women candidates for the four 2024 local elections cycles, to help women build their confidence and presence in the political arena. Topics such as campaign strategy and management, campaign team, message development and delivery, and online violence/safe campaigning were delivered. Six sessions were organized in different regions of Romania, with the participation of women coming from different backgrounds and having different political options.</p>	
<p>11. Impact/results of monitoring and evaluation of good practice</p>	<p>A1. The conference was a success. The quality of the speakers: members of the Romanian parliament, women ministers, women and men ambassadors, men politicians, academics, NGO representatives and the number of panels with a big thematic impact, attracted the attention of the participants and generated intense discussions.</p> <p>A2. After the training sessions, more than 50% out of the more than 150 participants registered for the electoral competition. Of these, 10 were elected to local or regional councils.</p>
<p>12. Lessons learned</p>	<p>A1. Even if the conference itself was a success, the participation of women in the decision-making processes remains a challenge. It is important that the circle of allies who want to solve the problem has been widened, however it is important that the subject is on the public agenda and for this, a continuous effort is necessary in which more women's organizations participate, more voices from civil society but also many voices of politicians regardless of gender. Even if the subject itself does not attract the media, it is important to find ways to attract influencers or public figures to the cause. Several events of this type are important to explain the phenomenon and to widen the circle of supporters of gender equality in political representation.</p> <p>A2. Recruiting participants was a challenge. It was difficult to gain the confidence of women to participate in the training sessions. We used the contacts from the local communities to generate trust in the experts who supported the training sessions. Again, the allies were the decisive factor of success. We spoke with those who face the problems at the local level and who believe that a different approach to local politics can determine the well-being of the residents. Building bridges between those who believe in common causes has proven to be an important factor in achieving success.</p>
<p>13. Success factors of the practice</p>	<p>A1 The panels underlined the important role of men’s political leadership in support of Romanian women’s political participation. Also, increasing awareness, more women politicians, quota and role models (women and men) help to overcome stereotypes and ensure women’s & men’s equal participation in decision-making as well as in caretaking.</p>

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	<p>Men allies were very important. The invitation of men public figures among the speakers showed not only the importance of the theme but also the ability of RoWL to gain trust and to unite stakeholders around the idea of having more women in decision-making processes.</p> <p>A2. The mobility of the trainers was a success factor; the fact that the training was face to face, in accessible locations for the participants and the topics were adapted to the level of understanding of the participants led to a dynamic interaction. Women were encouraged to discuss the problems of women from the communities they come from, about the experiences they have participating in political life. The experts presented good practices in solving various problems and encouraged women to build cross-party solidarity.</p>
<p>14. Ways in which the practice could be improved</p>	<p>A1. Online violence against women happens in local communities, that's why it's important to act at the grassroots level. The resumption of conference/seminar/workshop events where the speakers are respected figures in the communities: academics, local politicians, members of NGOs, other visible stakeholders in the communities can generate an improvement in the general climate.</p> <p>A2. The key factor is the number of interactions. The more such events are organized, in as many communities, we can increase the degree of confidence of more women in their ability to succeed as women politicians. Another idea for improvement is to invite to these events some women who have succeeded through their merit in communities similar in size and complexity.</p>
<p>15. Advice and recommendations for those, who wish to implement this good practice</p>	<p>Build alliances with stakeholders who believe in such ideals.</p> <p>Knowing the problems that affect women's lives at the local level, in the communities where the women participating in the training come from, is important to create a real relationship. Placing these problems in the context of the existing legislation and presenting some possible solutions by participating in the electoral processes create the prerequisites for a successful session.</p>
<p>16. Source of good practice, contacts, references</p>	<p>Romanian Women’s Lobby Association www.rowl.ro https://www.facebook.com/share/p/BLh8Kdjr7qvgkxaK/ https://www.facebook.com/share/p/DKg54HDXC3gxcEQm/ https://www.facebook.com/roxanaminzatubrasov/posts/pfbid02vdvaS6FjiMuut6iETc6jJqiChmru3iZ9DXMX9m25zC2amcmM42e1cGhG4Yebeszh/ https://www.facebook.com/share/p/HHgZQkYwcTeFMx5D/</p>