

Tallinn University

LIFE Project Portfolio

”Borders & Bridges: Exploring Activism Among Migrant Women in Estonia”

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Overview

Introduction

Looking at the current state of the political world, the topic of immigration and finding a safe refuge have been rising in Europe. In the span of 2024 Estonia has taken in 20,000 immigrants, with half of them being Ukrainian refugees (Statistics Estonia, 2024). This project aims to shed light on the question of immigration, integration and activism among migrant women in Estonia.

“Borders and Bridges: Exploring Activism Among Migrant Women in Estonia” aims to examine the immigrant women's activism, how they challenge social injustices and contribute to their communities. Migrant women in Estonia are often underrepresented in both public discourse and mainstream activism. Despite systemic challenges such as language barriers, social exclusion, and discrimination, many immigrant women are key drivers of social change – working with different networks, participating in NGO projects and organizing community events. Their activism intersects with issues such as gender equality, refugee support, and minority rights.

Since women are massively arriving in Estonia, especially as a result of the war in Ukraine and global displacement, the project's topic is both timely and socially pertinent. Our goal in our work is to provide visibility for the lives of these women and record their activist solutions.

Terms of reference

Division of work

Throughout the short span of the project we have split the work into three different groups, each consisting of 6 people. Group 1 focused on social media analysis, fieldwork study and organizing events aimed at immigrant people. Group 2 has dealt with analysing interviews and working out a thematic analysis of the data. Group 3 has worked on the analysis of events connected to immigrant women's activism practices.

Project goals

The project's main goal is to explore migrant women's activism in Estonia and understand their role in promoting social change.

Sub-goals:

1. Analyze how migrant women use digital platforms for activism.
2. Identify the challenges they face and how they overcome them.
3. Increase public visibility and appreciation of their efforts.
4. Strengthen social inclusion through direct community engagement.

Expected Results

- A more nuanced public understanding of migrant women's activism.
- Greater visibility of their contributions in academic and public discourse.
- Encouragement of more inclusive and intersectional activism in Estonia.
- Importance of the Topic and Societal Impact.

Methodology

- Conducting interviews with women who engage in grassroots activism.
- Attending the screening and discussion of the film "Miss Representation" (2011) hosted by IWNE and a Zoom meeting with MONDO NGOs representatives and volunteers.
- Application of thematic analysis to determine the recurring patterns from the field observations and interviews.
- Playing a part in event organising.
- Analysing existent event organising strategies.

Engagement with the stakeholders and sustainability of the project

Stakeholders

According to our LIFE project goals, our primary aim was to establish a baseline comprehension of how migrant women in Estonia participate in activism. Although our stakeholder engagement was modest in nature, we attempted to connect with groups like the International Women's Network in Estonia (IWNE) for interviews and hear their views. These talks helped us shape our

thematic focus and allowed us to identify the biggest challenges migrant women face in their participation in civil society.

Although no long-term partnership was formally finalized in this short-term project, the work we have done establishes the groundwork for future partnership. We have presented our approach and outcomes in a form that is accessible to future student groups or researchers who may wish to follow up on this work. This includes advice on how to approach migrant-led organisations in an ethical and respectful manner.

In terms of sustainability, we recommend sharing our detailed analysis and main findings with IWNE and other relevant stakeholders, subject to their interest. The Institute of International Social Studies (IISS) at Tallinn University can act as an intermediary for keeping project materials preserved and ensuring continuous continuity. Since the results of this project are included in an academic curriculum, Tallinn University also has the ongoing responsibility to preserve them and make them available for use in the future. Ownership of individual deliverables, like interviews or publications, will be based on the consent agreements during data collection.

Activities and Stakeholder Engagement

Our project work included small-scale qualitative research and participatory observation. We reached migrant women through IWNE (International Women's Network in Estonia) and were also able to participate in a public event, where we conducted informal interviews.

Primary stakeholders: migrant women interviewed and participating through the event.

Secondary stakeholders: NGOs like IWNE and MONDO, Tallinn University students and staff.

While we did not formalize long-term partnerships, our project initiated connections and produced insights that future LIFE groups or researchers can build upon. We have also documented our methods and ethical approach to working with migrant-led organisations, providing useful guidance for continued respectful engagement.

Sustainability

As previously mentioned, in line with our LIFE project objectives, our main focus was to create an initial grasp of migrant women in Estonia's activism. Although our stakeholder engagement was quite limited, we made efforts to contact organizations such as the International Women's Network in Estonia (IWNE) and conduct interviews and seek their opinions. These conversations were at the heart of establishing our thematic interest and helped us to determine the key issues migrant women encounter when participating in civil society.

In terms of sustainability, we recommend sharing our detailed analysis and main findings with IWNE and other relevant stakeholders, subject to their interest. The Institute of International Social Studies (IISS) at Tallinn University can act as an intermediary for keeping project materials preserved and ensuring continuous continuity. Since the results of this project are included in an academic curriculum, Tallinn University also has the ongoing responsibility to preserve them and make them available for use in the future. Ownership of individual deliverables, like interviews or publications, will be based on the consent agreements during data collection.

Summary of results

Each group has worked on a separate problem and chosen a different approach to the topic. In this section, all groups present a short summary of their work. Full reports can be found in annexes 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1, action plans in 1.2, 2.2 and 3.2.

Summary of the work Group 1

Our group members organized an event for Ukrainian refugees, which gave us the opportunity to use the knowledge we gained to educate others. During our work we focused mainly on the social media aspect to give a new insight into the project. In summary, we have done social media analysis, fieldwork and participant observation, organized an event and have done theoretical research.

During our research we have performed a social media analysis in the course of which we explored digital platforms (websites like IWNE, Mondo, Hea Kodanik, and WOW) to identify recurring themes, hashtags, and campaigns. This allowed us to map out how digital activism works in practice and how migrant women use it to mobilize support and awareness. It gave us an understanding of how they present their work to the outside world, how they organize events and promote activism.

We attended an event in Mondo which was a screening of the film “Miss Representation”, which gave us an opportunity to talk to both migrant and Estonian activists to understand how they take part in events and advocate for the causes they are passionate about. At the event we exchanged contact information with migrant women, who were not activists, however it did not work and we could not get into contact with them in order to conduct interviews. Further, as a part of fieldwork and participant observation we attended a women’s activism event hosted by the International Women’s Network in Estonia (IWNE), which helped us gain insight into lived experiences, strategies, and challenges of migrant women activists and also had an interview with Mana Taheri together with groups 2 and 3.

Our group also organized a local support event for Ukrainian refugees in Estonia. In the event we showed a film about migration and also did a lecture about different aspects of life. The event served both as a space for practical aid and as a platform to highlight the strength and solidarity within migrant communities.

As a result we contributed to sharing stories and key messages gathered during the project to a broader audience, helping raise visibility and promote understanding of migrant women's social impact. Each team member contributed through either digital research, real-world engagement, or communication work. Our collaborative approach ensured that multiple forms of activism were captured and acknowledged.

Summary of the work Group 2

During our research, in order to achieve the project's objectives, we have collected and worked out theoretical frameworks, conducted small-scale interviews, observed and participated in an event hosted by the International Women's Network in Estonia. In addition to that, we have also utilised AI in order to transcribe the interview with one of the prominent IWNE members. To continue with our progress, we have divided into different roles in order to collect, analyse and connect the data to our theoretical framework. Our goal was to amplify the voices of migrant women and analyze the intersection of activism, integration, and identity in Estonia, with main research question being "How do migrant women in Estonia interpret inequalities and advocate for social change?"

Throughout the course of our project, we conducted several interviews with migrant women at the International Women's Network in Estonia's film-screening event in collaboration with MONDO NGO, as well as with Mana Taheri from IWNE. Our thematic analysis revealed several key topics: stereotypes, language barriers, community building, advocacy, and activist practices. Integration and language challenges were commonly mentioned – difficulties in learning Estonian and being excluded from conversations due to linguistic limitations were widely noted. Mana Taheri highlighted the burden of stereotypes, saying, "You are already judged and criticized without you knowing that they don't know the reality." Advocacy emerged as a tool for

addressing these barriers; respondents spoke of using activism to spotlight issues from their home countries and promote awareness.

Common practices included organizing events, collaborating with NGOs, and engaging with the government. However, there were concerns about insufficient funding and governmental support, and the term “activist” itself evoked mixed feelings – some rejected it, while others embraced it. Social media was used strategically, even turning issues into trends to gain visibility. Despite limited resources, building strong networks in Estonia remains possible, with events proving beneficial for integration. Taheri described how initiatives like Refugee Day 2024 created free platforms for migrant women to showcase their work and feel more included.

Personal trauma was also a strong motivator for activism – participants spoke of using their voices to represent others and reclaim power. As one woman stated, “I remember sitting in the car, holding my daughter, and realizing how lucky we were to be here...” Our findings are supported by academic frameworks such as Dean & Aune (2015) on feminist activism and Freedman (2008) on migrant women's political engagement, affirming the connection between activism, identity, and social change in the Estonian context.

Summary of the work Group 3

Nowadays, social media is an important tool to connect with people all over the world. In the case of activism, many non-profits organizations take advantage of the accessibility of social media to promote their events, gatherings and projects. Therefore, the Group 3 research aims to analyze migrant women activism in social media, with the main research question: How is social media used for the benefit of migrant women activism? The analysis centered on the message organizations are advocating for, inclusion, language used in their posts and how posters are used as visual resources to gather attention from the target audience. Also, difficulties organizations encounter in their advocacy efforts through social media.

Moreover, the group also performed a literature review of three articles that presents the study cases of the use of social media for advocacy by women’s organizations. The study cases were located in Peru, Estonia and Finland, and Morocco. These articles reinforced the analysis on the

impact of social media regarding sisterhood, sharing experiences and visibility that are key goals for non-profit organizations targeted to women and migrant women across the world.

The main findings gathered from the analysis of social media were inclusion and accessibility, where organizations promoted a safe space for women and the majority of the events were free or had special offers for members, to promote membership for the organization. Another one was cultural and emotional impacts, sharing was the key word for this analysis. Many organizations promote the sharing of culture, exchange of traditional customs and sharing of experiences among the participants, to establish connections between women with different cultural backgrounds. Lastly, local connections was a topic relevant for the group's findings. The cultural difference among Estonian society and foreigners can make it difficult to create connections with locals. Bigger non-profit organizations that are already established in the country and have a history of advocacy are more likely to be supported by locals. On the contrary, smaller organizations have more challenges to be seen and heard not only from locals but also for migrant women. However, with consistency and collaboration, these smaller organizations are hoping to create a trustworthy environment for both local and migrant women and reach a wider audience.

Conclusions

Group 1 conducted a comprehensive social media analysis, which concluded 4 different NGOs. The analysis of Mondo, Hea Kodanik (NENO), WOW Foundation, and IWNE reveals a dynamic ecosystem of organizations working to support inclusion, empowerment, and gender equality—each in their own way contributing to the advancement of migrant women. While IWNE is uniquely dedicated to the direct needs of migrant women in Estonia, the work of Mondo in livelihood development and digital inclusion, WOW’s global advocacy for gender justice, and Hea Kodanik’s efforts to strengthen inclusive civil society collectively create a supportive framework where migrant women can thrive. These organizations not only address the practical challenges migrant women face—such as employment, language, and access to services—but also empower them to be visible, heard, and active participants in society. By offering safe spaces, leadership opportunities, and platforms for storytelling and civic engagement, they pave the way for systemic change and a more equitable, inclusive future.

Group 2 set out to examine the lives of migrant women in Estonia and how they live everyday activism. Despite not necessarily describing themselves as activists, their actions – such as mobilizing events, supporting others, and creating awareness – hold significant political effects and implications. Drawing on feminist theoretical insights from Dean and Aune (2015) and Freedman (2008), we interpreted these actions as part of a wider struggle inflected by migration, inequality, and exclusion. This project taught us that activism is not necessarily through protests or formal roles – it can be subtle, personal, and care-driven. It unsettled our presumptions and made us consider the importance of visibility, solidarity, and structural change.

Group 3's research goal was learning about migrant women activism in Estonia, specifically through social media. The research involved analyzing social media posts on Facebook and Instagram as well as interviewing migrant women. The research has shown three largest non-profit organizations that work in this area: Indian-Estonian Women Sõprus, International Women's Network in Estonia (IWNE), and Mondo. Social networking sites and closed messenger groups are used by the organizations to advance cultural exchange, empower migrant women, and fight social injustices. Event posters were examined to demonstrate prevailing

strategies like campaigning on international issues, uniting activism and entertainment, using visually appealing posters with hashtags and emojis, etc. Events tended to aim to create safe spaces and community through cultural and emotional bonds. Group came to a conclusion that advocacy for migrant women in Estonia is a continuous process with growing willingness by the local communities to create intercommunity understanding.

References

Statistics Estonia. (2024, January 18). *1,366,491 people – Estonia's population grew due to immigration, the number of births fell.*

<https://stat.ee/en/news/1366491-people-estonias-population-grew-due-immigration-number-births-fell>

Annexes

Annex 1.1 Group 1 full report

Overview

This project examines the activism of migrant women in Estonia – how they advocate for social change, challenge inequality, and contribute to building inclusive communities. While activism is commonly associated with public protests or political movements, in this context it includes everyday efforts to raise awareness, provide support, and engage others in advocacy, often through grassroots and digital platforms.

In this project our group was given the task of conducting a social media analysis to better understand how activism works in social media and how migrant women use social media to find events and information. In addition we took part in a movie screening in Mondo and organised an event for Ukrainian refugees that discussed their rights and opportunities in Estonia as well as interviewed Mana Taheri from the IWNE (International Women's Network in Estonia). For the analysis we looked at Mondo, Hea Kodanik, WOW (World Women Organization) and IWNE websites and wrote an extensive report on all the websites that included areas of focus, organisational identity and structure and their impact and uniqueness. For the project we wrote down our groups sub-goals and expected results.

Sub-Goals:

- Analyze how migrant women use digital platforms for activism.
- Identify the challenges they face and how they overcome them.
- Increase public visibility and appreciation of their work.
- Strengthen social inclusion through community engagement.

Expected Results:

- Better understanding of migrant women's activism among the public.
- Greater visibility of their contributions in social and academic contexts.
- Encouragement for more inclusive and diverse activism in Estonia.

Problem, methodology and resolution

Problem

Migrant women in Estonia face multiple challenges when it comes to participating in activism and public life. These include limited visibility, language barriers, discrimination, and social exclusion. Despite being active in advocating for gender equality, immigrant rights, and community inclusion, their efforts often go unnoticed by the wider public and institutions.

Methodology:

Our group focused on social media and for the analysis we chose four websites of NGOs that are connected to activism and actively advocate for rights etc. In the data analysis we focused on an introduction into the NGO and what is their main mission. Secondly, we looked into their organisational identity, meaning where are their roots and what are their visions, missions, principles and areas of focus (programmes, target groups, partners). Third, we looked at their organisational structure- their team and social enterprise. Lastly we analysed their impact and uniqueness. The data we collected was very useful and gave great insight into how important those websites are for migrant women. They share information, give a voice to advocate for themselves and fight for inequality as well as much more.

Analysis of the websites used for activism

1. Mondo

1.1. Introduction

Mondo is an Estonian non-governmental organisation (NGO) dedicated to reducing global inequality and fostering sustainable development. Since its establishment, Mondo has grown into a respected actor both locally and internationally. The organisation operates in 12 countries abroad and in Estonia, focusing on a broad spectrum of development programmes. These include education and health, livelihood improvement, environmental resilience, and digital competence in partner countries, as well as global education initiatives within Estonia. Mondo's work is driven by a vision of a world where everyone, regardless of their background or location, has the opportunity to live a valuable and dignified life.

1.2. Organisational Identity

1.2.1. Roots and Vision

Mondo was founded in Estonia on 12 November 2007 by a group of nine individuals from diverse professional backgrounds. These founders shared a common belief in the power of cooperation with communities in lower-income countries and the importance of raising awareness about global challenges among Estonians. The name “Mondo,” which means “world” in Esperanto, reflects the organisation’s commitment to fostering a more equal and interconnected future for all.

Over the years, Mondo has evolved into a strong and unique organisation—small when measured against global giants, but significant and influential within Estonia. The organisation’s growth is rooted in its ability to combine a local perspective with a global outlook, ensuring that its initiatives are both relevant and impactful.

1.2.2. Mission and Principles

Mondo’s mission is to support and empower vulnerable communities around the world, while also raising awareness of global inequality and providing opportunities for individuals and groups to take action against it. The organisation envisions a safe, caring, and sustainable world where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive.

Mondo’s work is guided by several core principles:

Long-lasting Partnerships: Building and maintaining strong relationships with local organisations and communities is central to Mondo’s approach.

Sustainability: Mondo prioritises sustainable solutions that have a lasting positive impact.

Measurable Impact: The organisation is committed to tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of its programmes.

Alignment with Global Goals: Mondo’s activities are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Estonian foreign policy priorities.

1.3. Areas of Focus

1.3.1. Programmes

Mondo's activities are organised into several key programme areas, each designed to address specific needs and challenges in partner communities:

Education and Health: Mondo works to improve access to quality education and healthcare, particularly for children and youth in developing countries. This includes building and equipping schools, training teachers, supporting scholarships, and improving health infrastructure and services.

Livelihood: The organisation supports economic independence and resilience by providing skills training, vocational education, and psychosocial support. Special attention is given to women, youth, refugees, and people with special needs, helping them to build sustainable livelihoods and improve their quality of life.

Environment: Mondo is committed to enhancing the resilience of communities to climate change and environmental challenges. Initiatives include the introduction of renewable energy solutions, climate adaptation projects, and the promotion of climate justice and environmental awareness.

Digital Competence: Recognising the growing importance of digital skills, Mondo works to bridge the digital divide by offering digital literacy training, developing computer classrooms, and providing access to technology in underserved areas.

Global Education: Within Estonia, Mondo focuses on raising public awareness about global issues, fostering global citizenship, and encouraging active engagement. The organisation provides educational materials, training, and events for youth, teachers, and the wider public to promote understanding and action on global challenges.

1.3.2. Target Groups

Mondo's programmes are designed to reach and benefit a diverse range of target groups, including:

Children and Young People: Especially those who are refugees, internally displaced, ethnic minorities, or living with disabilities.

Women: With a particular focus on those living in least developed countries (LDCs) and post-conflict regions, where women often face additional barriers to education and economic participation.

Local Partners: Grassroots civic organisations that play a crucial role in implementing and sustaining development initiatives.

Estonian Public: Efforts are made to engage the general population in Estonia, increasing awareness and involvement in global issues.

1.3.3. Geographic Reach

1.3.3.1. Partner Countries

Mondo has established a presence in 12 partner countries, each selected based on specific needs and opportunities for impactful collaboration. These countries are Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Ukraine, Georgia, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Burma (Myanmar). In each of these countries, Mondo tailors its programmes to address local challenges and priorities, working closely with community members and partner organisations.

1.3.3.2. Local Cooperation

Collaboration is at the heart of Mondo's approach. In all partner states, Mondo works hand-in-hand with local organisations, leveraging their knowledge and expertise to ensure that programmes are culturally appropriate and sustainable. Mondo has established its own offices in Uganda and Ukraine, which serve as hubs for coordination and support. The organisation also maintains strong relationships with more than 30 local partners and operates offices in Tallinn (Estonia), Kampala (Uganda), and Kyiv (Ukraine).

1.4. Organisational Structure

1.4.1. Team

Mondo's team is composed of over 35 dedicated experts with backgrounds in development cooperation, humanitarian aid, and global education. The team's multidisciplinary expertise allows Mondo to design and implement programmes that address a wide variety of challenges, from education and health to environmental sustainability and digital inclusion. The

organisation's staff are supported by a network of volunteers, partners, and supporters who share Mondo's commitment to creating positive change.

1.4.2. Social Enterprise

In addition to its core programmes, Mondo operates a social enterprise called Mondo Crafts. This initiative supports communities by selling ethically produced crafts in Estonia. The profits generated from these sales are reinvested into the communities where the crafts are made, providing economic opportunities and empowering women artisans. Mondo Crafts is a unique example of how social enterprise can be used to create sustainable, community-driven development while also raising awareness among Estonian consumers about global issues and ethical consumption.

1.5. Impact and Uniqueness

Mondo stands out for its unique approach to development and humanitarian work. By combining its roots in Estonia with a strong international presence, Mondo has created a model that is both locally grounded and globally relevant. The organisation's commitment to partnership, sustainability, and measurable impact has earned it recognition as a leader in the field.

Mondo's innovative social enterprise model, exemplified by Mondo Crafts, demonstrates how economic empowerment and social impact can go hand in hand. Through its diverse programmes and initiatives, Mondo not only supports vulnerable communities but also engages the Estonian public in the global effort to reduce inequality and build a more just and sustainable world.

This expanded version provides a more detailed and comprehensive overview of Mondo, its mission, programmes, structure, and impact, while maintaining clear organisation into chapters and subchapters.

2. Hea Kodanik

2.1. Introduction

Hea Kodanik, officially known as the Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organisations (NENO, or Vabaühenduste Liit in Estonian), is Estonia's largest and most influential umbrella organisation for public benefit nonprofit organisations. Established in 1991 as the Estonian Foundation

Center, NENO initially served as a service provider for foundations, but rapidly grew to open its membership to associations in 1994, marking a significant expansion in reach and impact. Today, NENO unites over 100 active member organisations from across Estonia, representing a diverse array of fields including social welfare, legal advocacy, education, environmental protection, equal rights, and rural development.

NENO's mission is to give voice to and advocate on behalf of Estonian public benefit organisations, supporting their interests at both national and local levels. The organisation is dedicated to promoting a vibrant, sustainable, and impactful civil society, and it does so by focusing on advocacy, capacity building, and civic awareness. NENO's work is not limited to its direct membership: its information and support network reaches approximately 4,000 organisations, serving as a key element in Estonia's nonprofit sector.

One of NENO's most notable achievements is the initiation and ongoing leadership of the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept (EKAK), adopted by the Estonian parliament in 2002. EKAK is a landmark document that defines the complementary roles of public authorities and civic organisations, sets out principles for cooperation, and establishes mechanisms for joint policy-making and implementation – making Estonia one of the first countries in the world to formalise such a framework.

Beyond policy, NENO is known for its robust programs and initiatives, including the organisation of Estonia's largest nonprofit training events, annual recognition of civil society activists, and the development of good practice agreements between the nonprofit sector and public authorities. The organization also coordinates public consultations, participates in legislative processes, and has been instrumental in the establishment of funding mechanisms such as the National Foundation for Civil Society.

NENO is headquartered in Tallinn's Telliskivi Creative City and is led by an experienced team of professionals with backgrounds in public administration, advocacy, communication, and nonprofit management. Its leadership and staff are committed to promoting transparency, ethical standards, and good governance within the sector. The organization is governed by a Supervisory Board elected by its General Assembly, ensuring that its strategic direction remains closely aligned with the needs and aspirations of its diverse membership.

In addition to its core activities, NENO fosters inclusivity by actively engaging volunteers, including those facing economic, educational, or social barriers, such as refugees. Its collaborative spirit extends to partnerships with other NGOs, public sector bodies, and international networks, further amplifying its impact both within Estonia and beyond.

Through its comprehensive approach Hea Kodanik (NENO) has established itself as an indispensable force in the advancement of Estonian civil society, continually working to strengthen the role, identity, and sustainability of the nonprofit sector.

2.2. Organisational Identity

Hea Kodaniks' core identity is strongly embedded in the vision of a robust, impactful civil society where individuals are empowered, capable, and motivated to drive societal change through participation and collaboration. The organisation's mission is to foster an environment that supports civic engagement and to strengthen the capacity of nonprofits so they can operate effectively and sustainably within this environment. Hea Kodanik's identity is shaped by several defining features:

Advocacy and Representation: NENO is fundamentally an advocacy organisation, dedicated to voicing and defending the interests of Estonian public benefit nonprofits. It works to guarantee that the nonprofit sector is acknowledged as a key partner in influencing public policy and fostering a democratic society. NENO's advocacy extends to both national and international platforms, where it actively participates in networks and alliances to strengthen the civic space.

Commitment to Public Benefit: The organisation unites nonprofits that serve the public interest across all fields – social welfare, culture, education, environment, and more. NENO's work is not limited to its members; it works to benefit the broader public by promoting transparency, ethical conduct, and good governance throughout the sector.

Promoting Civic Participation: Central to NENO's identity is the belief that a healthy democracy relies on active, informed, and engaged citizens. The organisation invests in raising civic awareness, supporting volunteerism, and nurturing a culture where people are willing and able to participate in community and societal affairs.

Promoting Cooperation and Capacity: NENO is committed to building strong networks and partnerships among nonprofits, public authorities, and the private sector. It emphasises collaboration, mutual learning, and shared leadership as keys to driving effective social change. The organisation provides training, resources, and support to enhance the skills and sustainability of its members.

Ethical Standards and Transparency: Guided by a code of ethics, NENO upholds high standards of transparency, openness, and integrity. It ensures that its own activities, as well as those of its members, are conducted in a manner that builds public trust and sets a positive example for the sector.

Inclusivity and Diversity: NENO embraces diversity in its membership and activities. It brings together organisations with different backgrounds, worldviews, and missions, believing that such diversity enriches civil society. The organisation is also committed to including volunteers and participants from marginalised groups, such as those facing economic or educational challenges and refugees, ensuring that civil society is accessible to all.

Strategic Leadership: Through its leadership, NENO has contributed significantly to the establishment of the legal and policy frameworks that support Estonia's dynamic third sector.

2.3. Areas of Focus

Advocacy and Policy Influence: NENO is a leading advocate for a supportive legal and policy environment for nonprofits. It works closely with government bodies, the parliament, and other stakeholders to ensure that the interests and needs of civil society organizations are reflected in legislation and public policy. One of its landmark achievements is spearheading the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept (EKAK), a strategic framework for state-civil society cooperation.

Capacity Building and Support: Recognizing the diverse needs of its members, NENO offers a wide range of training programs, workshops, and consultancy services. These initiatives cover topics such as organizational management, fundraising, legal compliance, communications, and volunteer engagement. The aim is to strengthen the operational capacity and sustainability of nonprofits across the country.

Raising Civic Awareness: Hea Kodanik is deeply committed to fostering a culture of civic participation. Through public campaigns, educational programs, and media engagement, the organization works to raise awareness about the importance of civil society, volunteerism, and active citizenship. It also celebrates outstanding civic initiatives and individuals, helping to inspire broader community involvement.

Good Governance and Ethics: NENO has developed and promotes a code of good practice for nonprofits, encouraging transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct. It provides guidance and resources to help organizations implement these standards, thereby enhancing public trust in the sector.

Networking and Collaboration: The organization acts as a hub for collaboration, bringing together nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, and international partners. It organizes conferences, forums, and working groups to facilitate dialogue, share best practices, and develop joint initiatives.

2.4. Organisational Structure

Hea Kodanik has a comprehensive and participatory structure which establishes to promote effective governance, active member engagement, and operational efficiency. This structure represents the principles of transparency, democracy, and collaboration, which are fundamental to Estonian civil society.

General Assembly (*Üldkoosolek*): The General Assembly is the highest decision-making body within NENO. It is composed of representatives from all member organisations and typically convenes once a year. The General Assembly's responsibilities include amending the statutes, setting or modifying the organisation's objectives, electing members of the Council, and approving the annual financial report. The General Assembly ensures that all significant decisions are made democratically and that the organization's direction reflects the collective will of its members.

Council (*Nõukogu*): The Council acts as the strategic supervisory body, guiding the organisation's long-term direction and overseeing the implementation of its mission. The Council is also responsible for decisions that fall outside the scope of daily management, such as

approving major policy positions, evaluating the executive team's work, and providing strategic advice. Council members are elected by the General Assembly and typically include prominent figures from the Estonian nonprofit sector.

Executive Team (Meeskond): The day-to-day operations of NENO are managed by the Executive Director and a dedicated staff team. The Executive Director is responsible for executing the strategic plan, coordinating programs, and representing the organisation externally. The executive team includes specialists in communication, advocacy, member support, and administration.

Programmatic Structure: NENO's activities are organised into three core programs that reflect its mission and serve its members:

1. **Membership Program:** Focused on guiding and supporting member organisations, protecting their interests, and involving them in shaping NENO's development and policy advocacy.
2. **Development Program:** Provides training, capacity building, and consultancy to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of member organisations.
3. **Information and Support Program:** Serves as the main information provider for Estonian nonprofits, publishing newsletters, magazines, and handbooks, and offering advisory services.

Committees and Working Groups: To address specific issues and advance sectoral priorities, NENO establishes thematic committees and working groups. These bodies may focus on areas such as policy development, ethics, or sectoral innovation. Members and experts are involved in these groups to ensure diverse perspectives and expertise inform NENO's work.

Membership Base: NENO unites over 100 active public benefit nonprofit organisations from across Estonia, covering a wide range of fields including social services, education, environment, legal rights, and rural development. Its broader information network reaches approximately 4,000 organisations, making it the largest and most influential coalition of nonprofits in Estonia.

Leadership and Legacy: NENO's leadership history reflects its stability and influence. The organisation has been guided by a series of experienced executive directors, with each bringing expertise from both the nonprofit sector and public service.

Collaboration and Partnerships: NENO shares office space and collaborates closely with other leading NGOs in Estonia, promoting a culture of partnership and mutual support. It is also active

in European and international networks, representing Estonian civil society abroad and learning from global best practices.

Volunteer and Support Network: Beyond its formal staff and governance bodies, NENO benefits from the contributions of volunteers, trainers, and consultants who support its programs and events. This broad engagement enhances the organization's capacity and ensures that its work is grounded in the needs and experiences of the nonprofit community.

2.5. Impact and Uniqueness

Hea Kodanik has made a significant and lasting contribution to the development of civil society in Estonia. Key areas of impact include:

Policy Leadership: NENO's management in developing and implementing the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept (EKAK) has set a benchmark for how governments and civil society can collaborate effectively. EKAK has provided a stable foundation for dialogue, partnership, and mutual accountability between the state and nonprofits, ensuring that the civic sector's voice is heard in national decision-making.

Capacity Building: Through a comprehensive array of training programs, mentorship schemes, and resource development, NENO has strengthened the operational and strategic capabilities of hundreds of organizations. Many nonprofits credit NENO's support for their ability to grow, professionalize, and achieve greater social impact. This has led to a more resilient and innovative nonprofit sector, better equipped to address Estonia's evolving social challenges.

Civic Engagement: NENO has played a pivotal role in fostering a culture of civic participation and volunteerism in Estonia. Its public awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and recognition programs have inspired thousands of citizens to become active participants in their communities. By highlighting the achievements of civil society leaders and volunteers, NENO has helped to normalize and celebrate civic involvement as a core part of Estonian identity.

Sectoral Development: The organization's work has contributed to the overall development and sustainability of the nonprofit sector. By advocating for fair funding mechanisms, transparent governance, and ethical standards, NENO has helped build public trust in nonprofits. Its research

and data collection efforts have also provided valuable insights that inform both policy and practice.

International Recognition and Collaboration: NENO's active participation in European and international networks has positioned Estonia as a leader in civil society development. The organization regularly shares its experiences at international forums, collaborates on cross-border projects, and brings global best practices to Estonia. This has not only raised Estonia's profile but also ensured that the country's civil society remains dynamic and connected to broader trends.

Hea Kodanik (NENO) distinguishes itself through several unique qualities and approaches:

Comprehensive Representation: As the only nationwide umbrella organization for public benefit nonprofits in Estonia, NENO unites a diverse range of organizations across all fields—social services, environment, education, culture, health, and more. This breadth allows it to represent the collective interests of the sector while also addressing the specific needs of its varied members.

Innovative Policy Frameworks: NENO's role in initiating and maintaining EKAK is rare not only in the Baltic region but also internationally. The framework's participatory approach, which involves both government and civil society in its development and implementation, serves as a model for other countries seeking to strengthen state-civil society relations.

Commitment to Inclusivity: NENO is dedicated to ensuring that all voices are heard within the nonprofit sector, including those of marginalized or underrepresented groups. The organization actively works to involve young people, minorities, people with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged individuals in civic activities and leadership roles. It also supports the integration of refugees and newcomers into Estonian society through volunteer opportunities and community projects.

Promotion of Good Governance: NENO is a leading advocate for transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct within the nonprofit sector. Its code of good practice and ongoing training initiatives help member organizations maintain high standards, which in turn builds public trust and credibility.

Catalyst for Collaboration: Beyond its advocacy and support functions, NENO serves as a catalyst for cross-sectoral collaboration. By bringing together nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, and international partners, it fosters innovative solutions to complex social issues and encourages the sharing of knowledge and resources.

Recognition and Celebration: NENO places a strong emphasis on recognizing excellence within the sector. Its annual awards and public acknowledgments celebrate the achievements of organizations and individuals, helping to motivate others and raise the profile of civil society work in Estonia.

3. WOW

3.1. Introduction

The WOW Foundation is a global movement celebrating women, girls, and non-binary people, aiming to build a gender equal world through arts, culture, and conversation. Established in 2018, it continues the work of the WOW Festivals launched in 2010 by Jude Kelly. The foundation works across six continents, creating spaces for empowerment, advocacy and collaboration.

3.2. Organisational Identity

WOW is a UK-based charity that amplifies voices often left unheard, tackling gender injustice and inequality through public events, educational projects, and advocacy. It engages communities globally to confront issues such as gender-based violence, equal pay, and representation.

Advocacy and Representation: WOW elevates issues facing women, girls and non binary people by bringing them to public forums through festivals and workshops. It encourages public discourse and invites collaboration from individuals, organisations, and institutions to influence policy and cultural change.

Commitment to Public Benefit: As a registered charity, WOW prioritizes public benefit by providing accessible spaces for dialogue and celebration. Through storytelling, performance, and workshops, WOW reaches diverse audiences, particularly marginalized and underrepresented voices.

Promoting Civic Participation: WOW encourages active citizenship by engaging audiences in political and social issues affecting gender equality. Events like WOW Think Ins and festivals promote intergenerational learning, community mobilization, and awareness-raising on civic responsibilities and rights.

Promoting Cooperation and Capacity: WOW partners with a variety of global and local organisations to co-produce festivals and initiatives. This collaborative model fosters organisational capacity-building and ensures that content remains relevant to specific cultural contexts.

Ethical Standards and Transparency: The foundation upholds values of integrity, respect, and openness. Through transparent governance and operations, including a publicly accessible list of trustees and partners, WOW demonstrates its ethical commitments.

Inclusivity and Diversity: As its core, WOW is committed to inclusivity. Its programming reflects intersectional feminism and prioritizes voices from across socioeconomic, racial, and gender spectrums. The foundation works towards dismantling structural inequalities.

3.3. Areas of Focus

WOW's work covers several focus areas:

Festivals: Large-scale public events in cities worldwide.

Education: Programs in schools and communities that address gender inequality.

Campaigns: Advocacy initiatives that drive systemic change.

Conversations: Public talks and panels on urgent global issues.

Global Network: A platform connecting grassroots and global efforts.

3.4. Organisational Structure

Founder: Jude Kelly MBE, Former Artistic Director of Southbank Centre. Founded the WOW Foundation to continue the legacy of the WOW Festival.

Executive Director: Colette Bailey, oversees strategic direction and day-to-day operations.

Programmatic Structure: Director of Festivals & Programmes (Beatrice Hendry & Domino Pateman); Senior Marketing & Communications Manager (Helena Jaques-Morton); Head of Communications & Marketing (Charlie Marshall); Office Coordinator & Executive Assistant (Jeannie Scott); Trust & Foundations Manager (Laura White)

Governance: Chair (Sandie Okoro CBE) and Board of Trustees, which includes experts across arts, law, and international development.

Partners: WOW works with international cultural institutions, non-profits, and corporate partners to fund and support its activities.

3.5. Impact and Uniqueness

Civic Engagement: WOW connects communities through festivals and year-round programming, offering platforms for dialogue on gender equality, often in underrepresented locations.

Sectoral Development: By nurturing creative leadership among women and marginalised groups, WOW contributes to long-term change in the cultural and non-profit sectors.

International Recognition and Collaboration: WOW festivals have been hosted on six continents in cities such as Istanbul, Beijing, and Brisbane. Each local WOW adapts to its cultural context while contributing to a unified global voice.

<https://thewowfoundation.com/about-wow/wows-around-the-world>

Recognition and Celebration: WOW is known for honoring the achievements of women and girls in all walks of life. Events frequently include awards, storytelling, performances, and networking opportunities that celebrate resilience and progress.

4. IWNE

4.1. Introduction

The International Women's Network in Estonia (IWNE) presents itself as a grassroots organization focused on empowering women, particularly those from migrant backgrounds. From the outset, the homepage communicates the organization's mission clearly and effectively.

With a simple yet powerful slogan, "embrace, empower, equalize," IWNE sets a tone of warmth, inclusion, and support. The layout is user-friendly and the language is approachable, inviting both potential participants and supporters to learn more about their mission. The welcoming tone of the site helps to bridge the initial gap many may feel when engaging with a new organization, especially one centered around social empowerment.

4.2. Organisational Identity

IWNE defines itself through community engagement, with an identity rooted in inclusivity, empowerment, and cultural diversity. It is not positioned as a top-down NGO but rather as a network that values shared experiences and active participation. The organization highlights its dedication to creating safe spaces for women where they can build relationships, share stories, and develop leadership skills. This identity is reinforced through both the visual and textual content of the website, which frequently showcases real people, events, and collaborative efforts.

Through its storytelling, blog content, and use of inclusive imagery, IWNE comes across as a dynamic, responsive, and people-focused organization. It offers an alternative narrative to the often impersonal and bureaucratic face of traditional aid organizations by emphasizing community connection and mutual learning.

4.3. Areas of Focus

Diversity and Integration: One of IWNE's central aims is to support the integration of migrant women into Estonian society. This is done through promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding. The website reflects this through its event listings, which include intercultural dialogues, language exchanges, and community meetups that serve as bridges between different social groups.

Gender Equality: IWNE recognizes that migrant women face compounded challenges, not only due to their gender but also because of their migrant status. The organization works to dismantle systemic barriers and advocate for equal opportunities. This area of focus is evident in their programming, which includes workshops on leadership, rights awareness, and skills development.

Empowerment: A key theme throughout the site is self-growth and empowerment. IWNE offers a wide range of workshops, mentoring programs, and storytelling events designed to build self-confidence and encourage active participation in both community life and the public sphere.

4.4. Organisational Structure

The structure of IWNE appears to be flexible and community-oriented. While the website does not provide detailed charts or formal hierarchies, it suggests a horizontal structure based on collaboration and volunteer engagement. There are regular events and recurring activities that seem to be organized by different members of the community, which points to a participatory model of operation.

Additionally, IWNE maintains a blog and a section with interviews of migrant women, offering personal insights into the lives of those the organization serves. These stories provide authenticity to the website and reinforce the organization's core identity as a space for dialogue and mutual support. They also offer visitors a chance to better understand the real-life experiences and challenges that migrant women in Estonia face, fostering empathy and deeper connection with the mission.

They also have folders with documents that include statutes in 2 languages. This is really important from a legal perspective.

4.5. Impact and Uniqueness

What makes IWNE particularly unique is its focused dedication to migrant women in Estonia—a demographic that is frequently overlooked in broader social initiatives. The organization addresses both practical needs (such as language acquisition and job-readiness training) and emotional ones (like confidence-building and community belonging).

The impact of IWNE can be seen in its recurring programs, cultural events, and ongoing documentation of women's stories. The website's content illustrates not just a support network but also a growing movement that helps migrant women become active, visible, and valued members of Estonian society.

In this sense, IWNE is more than a community group, it acts as a catalyst for change. Its initiatives aim not only to support individual women but to shift broader public attitudes about gender, migration, and diversity. By doing so, IWNE contributes to the creation of a more inclusive and socially cohesive environment in Estonia.

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Annex 1.2 Group 1 action plan

PROJECT ACTION PLAN

LIFE PROJECT: BORDERS AND BRIDGES: EXPLORING ACTIVISM AMONG MIGRANT WOMEN IN ESTONIA

SUPERVISOR(s): MALIHEH KESHMIRI

TEAM MEMBERS: CARMEN MALENE LINDSTRÖM, DARINA KIRILAŠ, EMILIA CELINA MILLER, JAANA-MARIA FROŠ,
RAGNE-LIIS MÖTTUS, ROMI-LI MAAJÄRV

Tasks	Deadline	Student(s) responsible	Status
Finalize the action plan	March 6th	All	Done
Choose 3 interview questions	March 6th	All	Done
Find an event	March	All	Done
Visit the event and collect the data (interviews)	March 5th	Emilia, Ragne	Done
Social media analysis	Should start ASAP	Jaana-Maria, Malene, Romi-Li, Darina	Done
Divide parts for writing the midterm report	March 12th	All	Done
Write the midterm report	March 22nd	All	Done
Make the slides for presentation at the midterm session based on the midterm report	March 23rd	All	Done
Submit the presentation and report for midterm session	March 23rd	Emilia	Done
Midterm session	March 27th	All	Done
Organise an event for Ukrainian Refugees	April 25th	Jaana-Maria, Darina	Done

Write a short overview of the final report	May 10th	Emilia	Done
Write the overview of the collected data and analysis of it (social media+interviews)	May 10th	Malene, Romi, Jaana-Maria, Darina, Ragne	Done
Write the conclusion and reflection	May 10th	Malene	Done
Proofread and finalize the report	May 11th	All	Done
Upload the portfolio and presentation	May 12th	Emilia	Started
Final presentation	May 14th	All	Not started

Annex 2.1: Group 2 full report

Overview

Description of the terms of reference and goals of the project - general introduction to the topic, ideas and the division of roles within the team.

“Borders and Bridges: Exploring Activism Among Migrant Women in Estonia” aims to shed light on different forms of activism practiced by migrant women in Estonia, and to further examine their strategies and target groups whilst engaging with social issues, such as social inclusion and gender equality. This topic is especially relevant in the current political climate with lots of people, most importantly women, migrating to Estonia to find political asylum and refuge. The central question of our research has been changed according to the data we collected, it was therefore the following: **“How do migrant women in Estonia interpret inequalities and advocate for social change?”**. To add onto that, we have also taken into account the additional questions like “What are the most common activism practices used by migrant women in Estonia?” and What kind of impact their activism has on both migrant and local communities?

During our research, in order to achieve the project’s objectives, we have collected and worked out theoretical frameworks, conducted small-scale interviews, observed and participated in an event hosted by the International Women’s Network in Estonia. In addition to that, we have also utilised AI in order to transcribe the interview with one of the prominent IWNE members. To continue with our progress, we have divided into different roles in order to collect, analyse and connect the data to our theoretical framework. Each group member has contributed significantly to the project: our group leader Serena Särav and Hõbe Ann Rooste have worked with the theoretical framework connected to the project; Karoliina Elisabet Rantanen and Helena Minerva Tihkan transcribed the interviews and analysed the common themes in the data; Ceily-Liisa Saar contributed to the data search and Taisiia Nistiurina helped with compiling the information into the report.

Problem, methodology and resolution

Being a part of a bigger project, our group has focused more on the personal experiences of immigrant women in Estonia. Looking at the political situation in Europe it is certain that a

significant number of vulnerable people are to enter Estonia due to war conflicts in Ukraine and outside of Europe. Because of these rising statistics, attention to migrant women's struggles and how it is dealt with is needed. In order to investigate the immigrant women's activism, we had to attend an event hosted by the IWNE members in collaboration with Mondo NGO called "Miss Representation". Additionally, alongside our supervisor, we had an interview with one of the members of IWNE. During our research we have discovered that the main problems immigrant women face are discrimination, social exclusion and difficulties with integration in Estonian society. In order to contribute to the cause against the current struggles women face, we will assess and bring out the most important issues faced by women.

Thematic analysis

Main research question: How do migrant women in Estonia challenge their inequalities and advocate for social change?

Additional research questions:

- What are the challenges migrant women face in Estonia?
- What are the key motivations for advocacy among migrant women in Estonia?
- What are the most common activism practices used by migrant women in Estonia?
- What kind of impact their activism has on both migrant and local communities?

Common key themes from our interviews:

1. Intersectional challenges faced by migrant women

Social and structural exclusion

Our findings underline that migrant women in Estonia frequently encounter social and structural exclusion, most notably due to language barriers and cultural differences. One of our interviewees highlighted that exclusion could manifest in different ways and platforms. Many view Estonian society as "*closed off*", further making it difficult for migrant women to form concrete relationships and integrate with Estonians, thus leaving them feeling alienated, excluded and disconnected. One of the biggest obstacles migrant women in Estonia face is overcoming the language barrier, which renders social integration and job searching difficult. It is difficult to secure a decent job, navigate the bureaucracy, or become a part of society without fluent

Estonian. While some manage to integrate through social activities such as sports or education, the overall process remains alienating for many.

The effect of stereotypes and media misrepresentation

Another recurring theme is the prejudice and criticism migrant women in Estonia face due to stereotypes. Migrant women feel the constant need to defend their identity and background, resulting in a universal feeling among migrant women of being misunderstood and misrepresented, particularly by mainstream media and public discourse. This experience can lead many to take on the emotional and educational labour of “repainting the image for accuracy”, thus correcting misinformation, providing accurate local sources and news channels to challenge the reductive narratives. This illustrates Freedman’s (2008) assertion that migrant women have to endlessly prove themselves.

Gender discrimination in employment and public life

One of the highlighted issues in our data is the discrimination based on the intersection of gender and migrant status, creating specific vulnerabilities for women in the labour market. Both local and migrant women face gendered barriers, yet migrant women are further disadvantaged by ethnicity, race, religion, or immigration status. The testimony noting that this is “*relevant to this day*” indicates a pattern of discrimination, rooted in both cultural and institutional practices. Highly qualified women find it hard to get employment, one of the participants mentioning having to remove impressive degrees from their resumes for fear of appearing “overqualified” or intimidating to employers (*Rose has education from Stanford in human rights, but has to remove that from her CV to not threaten the employers - she does not get a response when it is in her CV* – notes from Hõbe’s & Helena’s interview on March 5th).

Additionally, the same participant emphasizes their personal economic struggles surrounding the visa, which only adds to the general hardships. Visa requirements for maintaining income could be impossible, and migrant women are constantly stressed and insecure with this. Furthermore, social exclusion and institutional indifference make integration for migrant women in schools and workplaces more difficult. There are those who report discrimination and fragile support systems, particularly in school settings where students and school staff themselves engage in exclusion.

Political bias and unequal support

Another critical issue raised is the disparity in support received by different migrant groups. The member of the International Women's Network in Estonia admitted that some refugees receive more visibility and institutional support in Estonia than others (the example of Ukrainians in comparison to Palestinians or Syrians). While the geopolitical proximity or shared historical experiences could play an immense role in this, it could also reflect on racialised and politicised hierarchies of worthiness, where some groups of people are prioritised more or seen as more "deserving" of care, protection and solidarity than others. This unequal treatment highlights how migration policies and societal reactions are influenced by racial, religious, and political biases. Thus, prejudice against migrants persists, and discrimination and stereotypes affect non-European women more severely.

2. Key motivations for advocacy among migrant women

Many migrant women turn to activism through personal, often traumatic experiences, which then becomes a source of deep emotional and political commitment. For instance, Rose's background with domestic violence and academic career propels her to uplift others, especially those without a platform or voice. Advocacy, therefore, becomes a means of reclaiming power and creating systemic change (*"I strive to be a good representative for my country and work towards a more equal society."* – excerpt from an interview with Rose) Another activist recalls experiencing survival privilege, which could be characterized as trauma-informed advocacy, rooted in survival, empathy, and a sense of justice.

"What motivates me to continue advocating for social change is the understanding that, while I am in a safe environment here in Estonia, many others don't have the same privilege. I remember sitting in the car, holding my daughter, and realizing how lucky we were to be here while so many people back home had just lost their lives. That moment really stayed with me and made me even more determined to keep doing what I am doing" – excerpt from Karoliina's & Ceily's interview with an anonymous interviewee on March 5th

Numerous migrant women are motivated by the desire to represent their communities with dignity and challenge harmful stereotypes, whilst also emphasizing the importance of amplifying the voices of the voiceless, especially those displaced by war. This motivational factor reflects a collective consciousness, in which broader community empowerment comes from engaging in activism as a means of agency.

Some participants reported being motivated by alliances with other like minded people and collaborations with organisations, government, etc as well, fostering solidarity, community building, and sustaining hope for social change. Seeing your efforts being rewarded and bearing fruit serves as a powerful external motivator, reinforcing the internal drive to act. As has been the case for one of the members of the International Women's Network in Estonia who reported seeing positive changes in institutional practices and cultural perceptions, perceiving Estonia's small size and political agility as huge advantage points for making an impact regarding migrant women's rights. Advocacy, thus, is sustained by passion and belief in the cause, even when the work is time and energy consuming.

3. Common activism and advocacy practices among migrant women in Estonia

Migrant women in Estonia are involved with activism in many different ways. Some embrace the label of activist outright, working for NGOs and dealing directly with policies. Others do not feel ready yet to be counted as activists or don't want to claim the label. Nevertheless, many of them use the platforms they have to raise awareness about silenced voices and create social change, by advocating, attending and hosting different migrant-focused events, having media coverage, facilitating intercultural dialogues, building communities, or collaborating with other activists and organisations. This supports Dean and Aune's (2015) perception of feminist activism changing its form, nowadays taking place in less formal, decentralized, and localized forms as seen from our participants' practices.

"I address these challenges by finding people who are willing to work towards a better, more equal society and collaborating with other activists." – excerpt from an anonymous' interview

Despite the challenges, social life and community networks are important in aiding migrant women. Grassroots networks, NGOs, and informal networks help newcomers integrate by

providing social contacts and aid. The networks offer emotional and material support, which helps with adaptation. Although there are institutional difficulties, some migrant women can establish networks with policymakers and gain access to government discourse on migrant rights. Their participation shows that change is achievable, but it has to be carried out with persistence and robust networks.

More mentorship, training, and awareness programs can also improve integration, whilst dismantling walls of prejudice. Among the primary findings from the interviews is the need for closer cooperation between voluntary action and government institutions. Increased collaboration could contribute to higher funding, better-programmed policies, and better advocacy for migrant women's rights. Through enhanced integration policy and the fight against institutional discrimination, Estonia can develop a more united society for all migrants.

4. The impact of social advocacy on migrant and local communities

Social advocacy in Estonia, particularly through migrant-led NGO, has a multidimensional impact on both migrant and local communities. International Women's Network in Estonia has shown initiative and made significant impact in bridging the gap between host and migrant community through education, interpersonal connections, hosting and participating in cultural events, etc. Rather than integration being a one-sided expectation for migrants to "adjust accordingly", International Women's Network in Estonia strives for empowerment through diversity, gender equality, and integration, by hosting discussion events and educational workshops, as well as collaborating with local organisations and communities.

One of the key impacts of social advocacy is its transformative effect on the local community. For instance, locals deconstructing harmful stereotypes can help with the normalisation of multiculturalism, broadening societal mentalities and thus fostering solidarity. One of the members of the NGO recalls the positive and rewarding feelings from gaining locals' trust, considering the historical context of Estonia and its post-Soviet inheritance. They emphasize the importance of education, openness, expanding mentalities, and learning how to react to foreign concepts, one of the possible solutions being hosting regular integration events in different institutions all over Estonia.

“You know, I feel that at some point, if you are trying to help migrants to settle down in a different society which is not their local society. It needs to be the embedding needs to happen in the society in a way that how they both can feel home again. You know, you cannot create an Indian society for Indians. You cannot create an Iranian society for Iranians in Estonia. You know, you cannot do that, but what you can do, you can make a balance or breach the good introduction that these, like these two communities, actually get together, to forget the stereotypes, to get to know each other. And I think, yeah, that's really important. We come across these more and more. And I feel that the government approach is actually good to encourage us, and such an organization to go over this gap.” – excerpt from collective Mana Taheri’s interview on March 6th

The collaboration between migrant-led NGOs and Estonian ministries signal a growing institutional awareness of the urgent need to address racism, discrimination, and xenophobia. Social advocacy altogether has successfully pushed migrant issues into the policy spotlight and inspired ministries to take concrete actions, such as conducting interviews with migrants and organizing national conferences. This has led to government grants and funding to support the International Women’s Network in Estonia’s activities, which acts as a form of state recognition of the legitimacy and value of migrant-led work.

Theoretical framework

This framework employs the writings of Dean and Aune (2015) and Freedman (2008) to interpret the lives of migrant women in Estonia and to analyze their political and activist engagement. The above mentioned authors offer a means to view feminist activism not only as protests or action events, but as something that is intimately part of everyday life, and more often than not, shaped by migration, structural issues, and individual histories.

Dean and Aune (2015) suggest that feminist activism is re-emerging and changing across Europe. They add that activism nowadays is more likely to take place in less formal, decentralized, and localized forms. This can be seen from our interviews with migrant women in Estonia. These women do not wish to be identified as activists but still take part in feminist activities, for example, starting NGOs, attending political demonstrations, or creating support

groups. For example, one respondent outlined activism as a 24/7 role to represent her community and to bring about social change, whereas another – albeit reluctant to identify as an activist – actively engages in campaigns for gender justice on a regular basis. Such instances are indicative of the range of feminist practices that Dean and Aune (2015) trace across the continent: practices that may not be valued as activism precisely due to their shaping by migration, precarity, and marginalisation.

Freedman (2008) adds to this by providing a transnational feminist analysis, demonstrating how migrant women's activism is configured by global disparity, strict state regulations, and racial exclusion. Our research supports this: respondents would often speak about the language divide, institutional hurdles, and economic insecurity as substantial obstacles to social engagement. One woman, for instance, was forced to take down her Stanford degree in human rights from her CV so that potential employers in Estonia would not perceive her as a threat. This is a clear instance of the precarious situation most migrant women find themselves in. Other women reported having to prove themselves repeatedly, educate locals, or fight against stereotypes. This goes to show Freedman's (2008) assertion that migrant women have to endlessly prove that they belong, can speak, and can do.

In spite of these challenges, the women we interviewed do important and often life-changing work. They go to events, form networks, and seek out creative ways to help others in their communities. These actions, though never thought of as "activism," are intensely political. Following the work of Dean and Aune (2015) and Freedman (2008), we consider these practices as being within the wider context of feminist struggle. This is a struggle that crosses borders, resists exclusion, and troubles the dominant discourses of who gets to be an activist.

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Annex 2.2: Group 2 action plan

PROJECT ACTION PLAN

LIFE PROJECT: BORDERS & BRIDGES

SUPERVISOR(s): MALIHEH KESHMIRI

TEAM MEMBERS: CEILY-LIISA SAAR, HELENA MINERVA TIHKAN, HÖBE ANN ROOSTE, KAROLIINA ELISABET RANTANEN, SERENA SÄRAV, TAISIJA NISTIURINA.

Tasks	Deadline	Student(s) responsible
Selecting research questions	28.02	Everyone
Creating an interview plan	30.02	Everyone
Film screening (IWNE) –Telliskivi	05.03	Helena, Hõbe, Taisiia, Karoliina, Ceily-Liisa
Tartu women's day event - canceled	06.03	Helena, Serena, Karoliina, Ceily-Liisa
Data collection (interviews & observation notes)	07.03	Everyone
Presentation and report	18.03	Presentation: Serena, Taisiia, Karoliina Report: Everyone
MID-TERM SESSION	21.03	Everyone
(Mana Taheri) Interview transcript	16.04	Karoliina
Theoretical Framework (2 - 3 articles)	30.04	Serena
Data Analysis (thematic analysis from observation & interview notes)	30.04	Karoliina, Helena
Final Report	10.05	Taisiia, Helena, Serena
Conclusion	10.05	Ceily-Liisa

Portfolio and presentation be uploaded on ELU website	11.05	Everyone
Final presentation	14.05	Höbe, Helena - from group 2
Self reflection	21.05	Everyone

Annex 3.1 Group 3 full report

Introduction

Since the goal of the project is to have a deeper understanding of the immigrant women activism in Estonia, we have incorporated diverse ways of data collection. As the scene of activism in Tallinn is not highly mainstream and easily spottable, we are planning to gather our data not only through participating in activist events and interviewing participants but also analyze social media content, which is more obtainable and a plentiful source of information. Group 3 research focus was on the use of social media in migrant women activism, as most of the information in today's digital world, much of the communication and information surrounding activism events and gatherings takes place on online platforms. Social media plays a significant role in connecting migrant women from all over the world as it has no geographical boundaries. This research is an important part of the project, as it shares the noticings made on how digital activism functions in practice, what are the pros and cons of sharing activism through social media and how migrant women try to reach a wider audience.

The main research question: How is social media used for the benefit of migrant women activism?

Additional research questions

- What message are migrant-led organizations advocating for, and how?
- How are migrant women trying to include people in events?
- What language and posters are they using to promote events?
- What are the difficulties for reaching the audience?

Work division

The whole group took part in the weekly meetings that took place face-to face with the project supervisor. During the first few meetings, the group members focused on getting to know each other and dividing tasks to ensure an effective workflow. All group members contributed in gathering potential interview questions from which 3 of the questions were chosen. The group worked together to finalize the project's action plan, aligning on goals, roles, and timelines. In addition, everyone added their work done for the mid-term presentation, helping to reflect the group's progress accurately. All members attended the feedback session to receive input on their work and discuss improvements, with Ester presenting on behalf of the group. Each member contributed with their relevant part of the project for the final portfolio submission. All members were responsible for submitting an individual reflection to conclude the project, summarizing their contributions, challenges, and learnings.

Individual responsibilities:

Nora Viikmaa, *Anthropology*

Role in the group: Finding events from online platforms, planning and conducting an interview, analyzing data

Grith Kesamaa, *Law*

Role in the group: Conducting literature review, finalising through mid- term report, presentation and portfolio

Jana Nazarova, *Liberal Arts in Humanities*

Role in the group: Conducting literature review, finalising and proofreading mid-term report

Katriin Kabanov, *Asian Studies: Chinese language and culture*

Role in the group: Analysing Facebook events and posters, responsible for submitting our groups mid-term report and presentation.

Kamilla Viks, *Sociology*

Role in group: Finding events on Instagram. Analyzing Instagram and Facebook events and posters.

Ester Elizabeth Heredia Gonzalez, *MA Anthropology*

Role in the group: Analyzing Instagram and Facebook events and posts and also the use of the posters to promote events. Presenter of mid-term and final report.

Methodology

For migrant women, in particular, online platforms offer a space to share their stories, find solidarity, and mobilize support in ways that traditional media often overlooks or underrepresents. We used Facebook, Facebook Messenger and Instagram to find organizer pages, group chats and events and for the purpose of finding recurring themes, we analyzed 15 different events advertised in Facebook and Instagram. For this, thematic analysis was used. By examining how migrant women utilize platforms like Facebook and Instagram, we aimed to understand not only the mechanics of online organizing, but also the emotional, social, and cultural dynamics at play.

In addition, we conducted two semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insight into the lived experiences behind the online presence. One interview was conducted collaboratively with two other groups and featured Mana Taheri, an Iranian representative of the International Women's Network. The second was conducted online with Alisa, a Japanese-Italian event organizer and member of the Women's Circle collective. These conversations enriched our understanding of the motivations, challenges, and hopes of women leading and participating in (digital) activism today.

Interview questions:

- Describe your migration and integration journey to Estonia.

- What's the goal and motivation for your activism?
- Have you had any major setbacks and how do you deal with them?

Literature review

The literature review takes a look at research done before, looking for the ways social media is used in the field of migrant women activism.

“Women’s Solidarity and Social Media: Sisterhood Concept in #LasRespondonas, A Facebook Group In Peru” by Juan Bossio

In the context addressed by Juan Bossio and Illari Diez, Facebook and other similar sites are strategically “occupied” by social movements, such as the case of the Peruvian feminist group #LasRespondonas. The group is based upon the concept of “sororidad” or sisterhood as an essential ethical, political, and pragmatic dimension of feminism in the present day (p.500). Sororidad urges members to build good relations, create political solidarity in opposition to oppression, and get involved in acts of support in favor of empowerment (p.507). The community encourages important feminist debate, facilitates denunciations and allows members to make requests and offer help for issues ranging from gender violence to economic matters (p.501).

"Social Media and Participation in Different Socio-political Contexts: Cases of Estonia and Finland" by Airi-Alina Allaste & Kari Saari

This article discusses social media participation, particularly among young people and new migrants, in the contexts of Estonia and Finland. Social media in this case is usually characterized by individualized, self-expressive action motivated by “connective logic”, where

sharing personal opinions in online networks is a form of personal expression and self-confirmation instead of being rounded in pre-existing collective identities (p.4). Petition signing is among the common online activism activities, which has at times been viewed as an “easy” alternative to express support for impact, yet as “useless” or “low-risk” activism by some (p.8). Commenting allows individuals to comment on ideas, stay informed or argue, although active commentation is less common and individuals may exercise self-censorship due to fear or negative consequences, misinterpretation, or reputational loss (p.4). Liking and sharing are used with a view to stating opinions, constructing social identity or adding weight to matters of importance (p.11).

The article “Counter-Narratives about Sub-Saharan Migrant Women in the Digital Public Sphere” by Kenza Oumlil

This article was published in Arab Media & Society in August 2023, looks at how sub-Saharan migrant women in Morocco are using digital tools, especially YouTube, to share their stories and push back against common stereotypes. These women are creating their own narratives online to be seen and heard in ways that traditional media often ignores.

The article focuses on the YouTube channel Planet Migrant, started by Cameroonian journalist Hassan Yemcheu. This channel gives migrant women a chance to talk about their real-life experiences, including issues like domestic violence, health, entrepreneurship, and raising children without legal papers. Instead of showing them only as victims, the platform highlights their strength and complexity.

The article also points out that visibility online can be both good and risky—it can lead to empowerment, but also to unwanted attention or judgment. Still, Oumlil sees Planet Migrant as an important step in helping migrant women be seen as active and intelligent participants in society. She calls this “epistemic justice,” meaning the right to be recognized as someone with valuable knowledge and opinions.

In addition, the article explores how sub-Saharan migrant women in Morocco experience migration through motherhood. Many women migrate to secure better futures for their children,

despite the emotional pain of separation and criticism from their communities. They often justify their decisions as sacrifices made for their children's well-being and safety, even though they struggle with feelings of guilt, disconnection, and fear of being forgotten

The analysis part of the article focuses on how well the Youtube channel and the videos are promoted and how well they reach desired audiences.

Firstly, it is noted that there is a huge impact on the fact, that the Youtuber behind the channel is a man. Even though he is a migrant himself, being a man limits his ability to fully understand and show the complex experiences and personal stories of migrant women.

The channel's small audience and low engagement reflect broader challenges in alternative media, where content tends to be marginalized and lacks professional quality.

"The camera work was also basic, with some repetitions in the videos that could have been removed during post-production. Furthermore, Yemcheu often cuts off the speeches of the women featured in his videos to keep the videos short." (p. 41)

The channel presents a limited perspective—favoring regularized, visible migrants over the undocumented and often excluding deeper, intersectional issues of race, gender, and class.

"In contrast to the previously cited gender studies scholarship, which has revealed that gender-based violence, sex work, domestic work, and the challenges of motherhood during the migration journey are central concerns, Planet Migrant has failed to engage properly with these issues, favoring instead to promote images of successful and "integrated" migrant women. In contrast, the interview conducted with Yemcheu revealed that he is aware of some of the challenges that women face. Yet, they do not take center stage in his media productions." (p. 36-37)

Despite this, Planet Migrant serves as a politicized platform advocating for migrant rights and integration, often through appeals to Moroccan leadership. In addition, it is mentioned that the use of French makes it accessible to Moroccan and francophone viewers but excludes anglophone migrants.

Even though the channel doesn't have a huge audience, Oumlil explains that it's still very powerful. It allows these women to speak for themselves and claim space in public conversations. She describes this as a kind of "digital resistance," where marginalized groups use the internet to support each other, share knowledge, and be visible on their own terms.

Findings

The findings part of the report brings out the main organizers and interest-groups and analyzes the advertisement choices of events which are all connected to the topic of migrant women activism, and interviews conducted with Mana and Alisa.

Organizers and presence on social media

There are three main organizations that regularly organize migrant women activism-related events. One of them is Indian-Estonian Women Sõprus, which is brought to life – as the name suggests – by both Indian and Estonian women to share culture and strengthen sociocultural bonds. IEWS's description matched with our research codewords (migrant women, cultural connections, etc.) and popped up in Facebook searches quite fast.

The second is the International Women's Network in Estonia and its intention is to empower migrant women, standing for diversity and equality. Mana Taheri, one of our interviewees, is also part of this network, contributing to speaking up for diversity, integration, gender equality, and women empowerment. The NGO organizes events and workshops and partners or collaborates with other organizations and was introduced to our project by our coordinator.

Third page is an Estonian initiative Mondo, which acts as a bridge between Estonia and international communities in need. It aims to relieve inequalities across the world through education, thus also organizing events in Estonia on related topics whilst working together with activists and migrants. Mondo's events are often organized in collaboration with IWNE, thus it was easy to find a way to their website and Facebook page.

Finding events organized by individuals or groups other than those three organizations was rather tricky, as the events that are not organized by big NGOs are advertised to specific groups and in smaller circles or get lost in social media. Finding gatherings through Facebook events page was not particularly successful as it requires constant presence and events can get lost in the feed easily.

To get closer to the groups where possible events would be promoted, one of us also joined three private group chats that matched with the project focus. These groups were directed towards expat women in Tallinn and locals who are interested in creating cross-cultural connections – Tallinn Women’s Collective, Girl Gone Tallinn and Women’s Circle. The goal of these groups and events is to create a safe space for women, thus carrying a feminist undertone and likely offering a good platform for promoting migrant women activist gatherings. Through these groups we also found one of our interviewees Alisa, who is a Japanese-Italian event organizer currently working in Tallinn, part of the Women’s Circle and also involved in organizing LGBTQ+-friendly dating events.

Analysis of posters/events

Overall, we analyzed fifteen events on Facebook and Instagram. We used a thematic analysis method to identify codes and grouped similar codes together under five different themes. The analysis focused on three main aspects: what message are migrant-led organizations advocating for, and how? How are they trying to include people in these events? What language and posters are they using to promote these events? The main themes that occur are as follows.

Advocating for global issues

Both platforms highlight different global issues such as gender inequality, climate change, and human rights. These topics are mentioned in the event description and are central to the goals of the organizers. Many of the events draw attention to the inequalities and difficulties that women and refugees experience both during immigration and in their home countries. For example, the movie screening event organized by MTÜ Mondo highlighted that climate change mainly impacts equatorial regions, and the event by IWNE brings attention to safe and accessible

abortion. This suggests that migrant-led organizations are creating spaces where they can freely express themselves, focusing on different topics that also have an emotional and intellectual purpose.

Activism through entertainment

Not all events were explicitly political or activist, as for example events organized by the Indian-Estonian Women Sõprus are not political in their nature but emphasize cultural communications, while carrying a feminist mindset or a strive for cultural exchange and connections in their advertisement and values. Our interviewee Alisa's events are also not political in their advertisements but are strictly a safe space. Her main focus and goal is to create a space for people to connect, as she has experienced the crave for connections herself. The majority of events advertised in private Facebook and Messenger groups are organized for entertainment purposes. Many gatherings would focus on teaching women different skills, educating on different topics or, instead, emphasize enjoying each other's company in a fun setting.

Affective and empowering language use

The language used in event descriptions on both platforms was in many ways empowering. Statements like *“Join us for a series of motivational talks, cultural performances, and interactive activities designed to empower and connect women from diverse backgrounds”* and *“Let's learn, grow, and celebrate the strength of women”* reflect how migrant women are finding empowerment in diverse connections.

Many event descriptions include affective expressions. Zizi Papacharissi (2015) argues that in the modern political environment, affective expressions communicate frustration with the oppression that is based on capitalist economic hierarchy that pre-determines privilege that is fixed and non-negotiable. Therefore use of affective expressions is not only a way to bring attention to certain issues, but a necessary means to express frustration and emotions. *“Let's create a world free from violence and full of choice”* and *“We are about friendship, not about*

networking, business, sales” are examples that demonstrate the wish to build a community that is about choice and breaks barriers of the existing capitalist system.

Poster designs and trends

The event posters were designed to reflect the theme of the events and highlight their nature. Most of the posters were colorful, eye-catching and rather fun, which reflect the main purpose of the events, to be united and to celebrate it. The posters were created in a way that highlighted the caption of the event and the illustrations. On the posters were also included organizations logos that helped to create the events.



(Event poster by Women’s Circle, <https://fienta.com/et/sexual-wednesday>)

Many posters illustrations demonstrate community. Those illustrative pictures capture different people being together for a common goal which brings attention to diversity and inclusion.



(Picture by Tallinn Women's Collective,

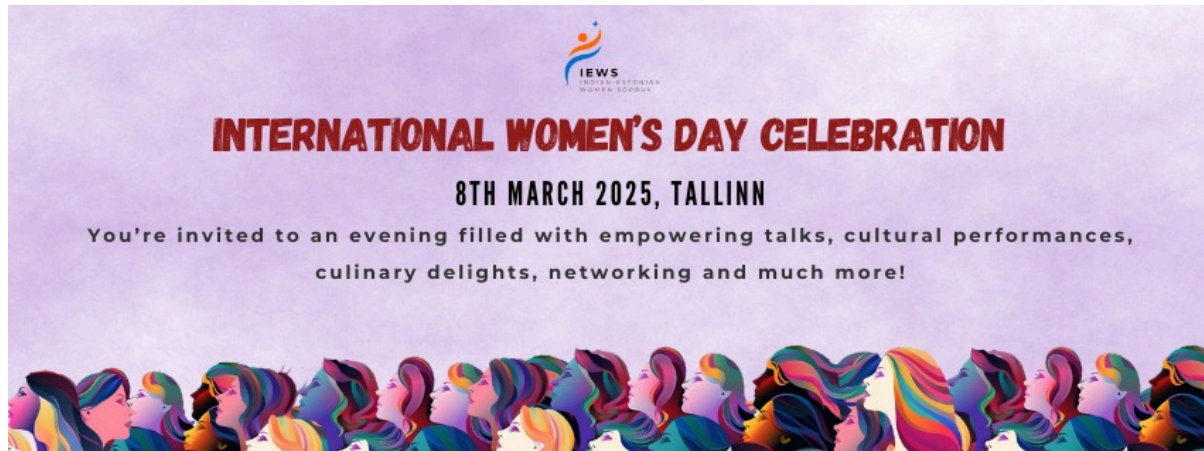
https://www.facebook.com/groups/213282824338265?locale=et_EE)

A clear pattern in all event descriptions was the use of emojis. Emojis made the tone of the text more friendly and aligned with the trend that is common on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. Another common element, though not present in all posts, was the use of hashtags. This was mainly common on Instagram. Some hashtags that appeared under the post of IWNE, brought the attention to growing issues, like #EndViolenceAgainstWomen and #MyVoiceMyChoice. Other hashtags were used to promote the events, like #tallinnevents, and #GreenHorizonFest. Hashtag usage is also a common trend on Instagram and through this, migrant-led organizations can target their content to the right audience.

Inclusion and accessibility

The fact that the events are free is a pattern that appeared in many post descriptions. This way, it is easier for migrant women and refugees to participate, by removing financial barriers, no one has to miss the events. It is also important to mention that “free event” was, in many cases, not highlighted on the Instagram or Facebook posters, which could potentially be a useful addition. That way, users would immediately notice it, and it might draw more attention to the event.

Certain events were created more specifically for targeted audiences. For example, the organization IEWS (India Estonia Women Sõprus), made the International Women's Day celebration event only for women.



(Event poster by Indian Estonian Women Sõprus-IEWS, <https://fb.me/e/2WnjpzBZq>)

This shows that communities are creating safe spaces for migrant women that will allow them to express themselves freely. However, it may also exclude migrant LGBTQ+ people who do not identify with a binary gender but could benefit from it or want to be part of the community.

Cultural and emotional impact

Many events included cultural and emotional elements to create community cohesion and encourage participation, such as watching a film, tasting foods from different cultures, discussions, dancing, and more. For example, screening films that represent Indian culture, tasting Iranian and Turkish food, or learning Bollywood and Estonian folk dance moves are some of the ways migrant-led organizations are trying to unite local and migrant women and encourage them to learn more from each other's cultures. This shows that it is necessary for migrant women to bring their own culture into Estonian society and to be seen and empowered by it.

The events encouraged participants to have open discussions and share personal stories. Experts from different fields were often involved in the events to share their knowledge with the community. Such joint discussions, in turn, create stronger relationships within the community and show the strength of migrant women. As Kenza Oumlil (2023) argues, sharing experiences is a way to show migrant women strength and complexity. Events that emphasize sharing and visibility, also give a voice to migrant women and refugees who are often marginalized in Estonian society. Papacharissi (2015) argues that for most users, political interest is activated through avenues that are of a cultural nature, and these involve offering access to more information, providing ways to remix and play with information, and supporting spaces where people may discuss this information further. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook provide an access for these avenues that are of a cultural nature. Thus, it can be concluded that migrant-led organizations, through cultural and emotional communication, either intentionally or unintentionally, also may activate political interest in the users viewing the content.

The importance of local connections

Although the variety of different migrant women led events is wide, not all gatherings reach a larger audience and success. The main difficulty for activists and event organizers in Tallinn is the passivity of Estonian people. For migrant women, this applies to finding friends among locals and also promoting events, as Estonians tend to be reserved and introverted, making it hard to create connections outside the expat group. This was brought out by both of our interviewees. The difficulty to integrate and connect with Estonians creates unequal starting points for immigrant women, as the reasons and environments for relocating are different. For example, Mana was brought to Estonia through education in the university, creating a fertile ground for making local connections. Alisa, on the other hand, got a job offer in an international company, which might bring many expat pals but perhaps not so many local friends.

As Alisa and Mana both stressed, to succeed, one needs to be proactive and consistent, in order to lay a ground for people to trust you. Mana's organization IWNE (International Women's Network in Estonia) collaborates a lot with Estonian-run NGO Mondo, which offers a better

chance of reaching a wider audience, mainly through advertising in both English and Estonian and having a stable base of locals who already follow the activities organized by the Estonian NGO. Mana brought an example of the International Refugee Day organized in Tartu in 2024: the event was shared in local news, which helped to create opportunities for immigrant women with finding a market for their products. In addition, Mondo has helped to shape the image of IWNE for the local audience. As locals already know the main channels for reaching a bigger audience, this puts migrant women activists with local ties in a more favorable position to succeed and reach their goals.

On the contrary, events organized by individuals or smaller groups run solely by migrant women, were – as already said before – advertised mainly in private groups or pages with a smaller number of followers and were thus very hard to find. For example, the Sexual Wednesday event was cancelled due to lack of interest – but as it seemed, it was mainly advertised in messenger chats and failed to reach a bigger audience. But, as our interviewee Alisa commented on the setbacks, to create a trusting bond with the target group, one needs to keep creating new opportunities for the likely interested audience to let them know there is always next time. Thus, the cultural barrier between migrant women and locals demands consistency and strength for creating trust but success seems also more likely with the guidance and support of local enthusiasts and organizations.

Conclusions

In Estonia, migrant women have access to information for non-profit organizations through their webpages, or using Facebook and Instagram. The three main non-profit organizations targeting migrant women are: Indian-Estonian Women Sõprus, International Women's Network in Estonia and Estonian initiative Mondo. These last two organizations often work together. The aim of these organizations are exchange of experiences and cultural customs, empowerment of migrant women and education to relieve social inequalities. Another channel used by organizations, beside social media profiles in Facebook and Instagram, are close messenger groups. In Estonia

there are several, for the sake of this research, one member of the group joined three: Tallinn Women's Collective, Girl Gone Tallinn and Women's Circle. These types of messenger groups have a more intimate connection. Each social media page and messenger group have their guidelines of behavior to emphasize on the goal to create safe spaces for migrant women. Many pages advocate for the LGBTQ+ community too.

The findings from the social media poster analysis were:

Advocating for global issues, events to draw attention to inequalities and difficulties migrant women experience in their home countries and in Estonia.

- Activism through entertainment, events to promote cultural exchange, communication, education and recreational activities.
- Affective and empowering language use, social media profiles use language to promote empowerment to break the barriers imposed by the capitalist system.
- Poster designs and trends, the posters are designed to catch the eye of the reader. The information in the post uses emojis and hashtags to make them visible.
- Inclusion and accessibility, each post presented the information in a clear way, However, some events are targeted only to women, that can leave aside members of the LGBTQ+ that identify as non-binary.
- Cultural and emotional impact, events to create and environment for cultural exchange and/or emotional exchange.

Another key finding was the importance of local connections. Often cultural backgrounds clash with each other due to their behavioral differences. In the case of migrant women in Estonia, the lack of connection with locals can affect them to be able to integrate with the society. There is a need for a bridge that can connect local women with migrant ones to promote a better understanding of the challenges and difficulties migrant women experience. Advocacy is still a work in progress. Little by little the government and local organizations are opening their doors to promote a better understanding between locals and migrant communities.

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Annex 3.2 Group 3 action plan

PROJECT ACTION PLAN

LIFE PROJECT: BORDERS AND BRIDGES: EXPLORING ACTIVISM AMONG MIGRANT WOMEN IN ESTONIA

SUPERVISOR(s): MALIHEH KESHMIRI

TEAM MEMBERS: JANA NAZAROVA, ESTER

ELIZABETH HEREDIA GONZÁLEZ, KATRIIN KABANOV, GRITH KESAMAA, NORA VIKMAA, KAMILLA VIKS

Tasks	Deadline	Student(s) responsible
Collect questions for interviews	February 26	Everyone
Choose 3 questions for interviews	March 20	Nora
Guest speaker, gathering data	March 20	Ester
Finish the action plan	March 13	Everyone
Making the mid-term presentation	March 20	Grith
Make an overview of the data collected from first interview	March 22	Ester (guest)
Make an overview of the data collected from event(s) and social media	March 22	Kamilla
Mid-term report	March 22	Jana
Proofread the mid-term report	March 23	Jana
Filling in the mid-term presentation	March 23	Everyone
Submit midterm report and presentation	March 23	Katriin
Midterm Feedback Session	March 26	Everyone Presenter: Ester
Event by Feministeerium and G-Spot Bar – cancelled	March 29	Kamilla, Jana, Ester

Event by Women's Circle – cancelled	April 2	Nora
Conduct the second interview	April 10	Nora
Social Media research	April 10	Kamilla
Collect literature and make a theoretical part for the final	May 1	Grith, Jana
Data analysis	May 1	Katriin, Kamilla, Nora
Summary of report and conclusion	May 10	Ester
Proofread the report	May 10	Grith
Make the final presentation	May 10	All groups
Fill in the portfolio	May 10	Everyone
Upload portfolio including project report and final presentation	May 11	Katriin
Final Presentation	May 14	All groups Group 3 presenter: Ester
Self reflection	May 21	Everyone