



## 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the Women Parliamentarians' Network in Serbia

In Belgrade at National Assembly on November 4<sup>th</sup> was held the 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the Women Parliamentarians' Network. The CEE Gender Network Executive Director Sonja Lokar participated at working group 2 which had close to 300 participants.

The discussion after the introductory speeches was lively and the proposals were coming from the women from all walks of life: NGOs, women MPs, and from the councillors and officials from the gender equality mechanisms at local level. More than 25 women took floor to present their success stories, their challenges, their suffering, and their vision of the future work of the Network. This working group offered a rich insight in the best practices of women political networks from different parts of the county.

This working group ended up by formulating **four priorities** for the Network's future work:

- The most important alliance this Network needs to improve and strengthen is the alliance with women voters, those who are still not organised, connected. (Strengthening of the foundation of the movement)
- Gender equality mechanisms, especially gender sensitive statistics and analyses need to get strengthened and properly resourced.
- Women parliamentarians' and councillors' networks need to enter into dialogue on policies and legal solutions in the earliest possible phase, when their proposals and interventions have much better chances to succeed than in the moment when bills and proposals of policies and budgets enter in the legislative procedure in the assemblies.
- It is crucial to put in place a permanent mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of now legally binding gender responsible budgeting in order to forge women's consensus on priorities women would like to see included in the budgets at all levels.
- Vertical and horizontal communication in the Network needs to be strengthened and made much more accurate and transparent. Direct cooperation between the national and local Networks is the best way to raise the visibility and effectiveness of the efforts of active women in the autonomous region and at local levels. One of the practical possibilities to improve this communication is to set up an electronic platform for the exchange of success stories and timely informing of all actors in the Network about the issues of common concern.