

Reflection on the Seminar

The seminar was, all in all, a total success for me. I had a really great time and many meaningful learning moments. One of the most valuable parts of the experience was meeting new people from different regions and with very different personalities. I especially enjoyed interacting with women from Poland and the Czech Republic. These encounters gave me new perspectives on different topics and reminded me how enriching cross-border exchange can be.

One of my key learnings from the seminar is that I should not be afraid to share my thoughts and speak in front of others. I realised that even though we are all different in many ways, we are united in our will to change something. This shared motivation created a strong sense of empowerment, both individual and collective. Another important learning was becoming more aware of the different situations people are in. Women are not disadvantaged only because they are women, but often also because of their cultural background, social class, or religion. This perspective challenged me to think more carefully and more intersectionally about inequality and privilege. It helped me understand that empowerment needs to include awareness of these layered realities.

One of the agenda points I was most excited about was the Pecha Kucha presentations, and they turned out to be one of my favorite activities of the weekend. There were many inspiring contributions, and creating my own Pecha Kucha was both a challenge and a meaningful opportunity. I chose to speak about Bisan Owda, a young journalist from Gaza, who has inspired me as a person and as a woman to be resilient and confident. Preparing and presenting about her strengthened these feelings even more. Through the seminar, I also noticed personal growth. I feel more confident when it comes to speaking up and sharing my opinions, not only in the seminar space, but also in public discussions and in my university classes. This is a big win for me. The last workshop, led by Helene Banner, was another strong moment of reflection. It encouraged me to focus more on my own intentions and to act according to my own expectations, rather than constantly trying to meet the expectations of others. This is something I want to carry with me beyond the seminar.

There are still questions that remain open for me. One of them is: *Where are the women?* When we talk about politics, we often think of paid positions and formal power. But so many women do important and beautiful work in activism and in everyday life, for example by caring for children and shaping the next generation. In a capitalist society, value is often tied to paid work, but unpaid care work and community work are just as valuable and political. Another open question is how to get access to jobs in the political field. What are realistic entry points, and how can young women like me find ways into political spaces and institutions?

Overall, the seminar strengthened my confidence, broadened my perspectives, and deepened my motivation to be part of change. It reminded me that empowerment grows when we learn together, listen to each other, and support one another.

Kosovare Qerkinaj