WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

HINDERING FACTORS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN EU-FACILITATED DIALOGUE: KOSOVO – SERBIA DIALOGUE AS A CASE STUDY

A qualitative interview research on perceived factors that hinder women to participate in EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia

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ABSTRACT

It is a common understanding that women continue to be strikingly under-represented in peace processes despite the emerge of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) which assesses the important role of women and their full involvement in promotion of peace and security. Through key informant interviewing as the main methodology, this study looks into different understandings and explanations given by current and former government officials from both Kosovo and Serbia, EU officials, and representatives of civil society. This provides a variety of perspectives on the questions of if and why women are excluded from the ongoing peace process between Kosovo and Serbia. The findings indicate that there are particular challenges such as discriminatory and patriarchal attitude towards women, lack of women in politics and public administration, economical dependency are some among many factors that hinder women from being present at the negotiation table.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EU – European Union

EEAS – European External Action Service

ELPO – European Peacebuilding Liaison Office

GIZ or GbmH – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

HR/VP – High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission

ICJ – International Court of Justice

KLA – Kosovo Liberation Army

KWN – Kosova Women's Network

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

UN – United Nations

UNGA – United Nations General Assembly

UNMIK – United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

UNSCR – United Nations Security Council Resolution

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1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) considers itself to be an important global actor in assisting with help in mediating different parties towards compromising in situations of crises (EPLO, 2013, p. 2). The use of peace mediation as a main tool in conflict prevention has brought EU a considerable track record of successful involvements and outcomes in a number of cases both in the European neighbouring countries and beyond. The EU adopted "Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities" in 2009 that is the first policy document of its nature where the organisation recognized its important role as peace mediator globally but stressed to enhance the ability of the union to play a more active international role in this area. The document introduced five important guiding principles advancing EU's role in mediation, where one among those was the principle of promoting women's participation in all stages of mediation process (Council of the European Union, 2009). The EU has committed itself to enhance the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) in its external actions, a resolution that reaffirms the importance of women's participation in i.a. peace negotiations (UNSCR, 1325; Council of the European Union, 2008).

At the same time prominent political leaders and representatives of women's organisations around the world have continuously highlighted the importance of a gender approach in peace processes. A gathering organized by the Swedish foreign minister, Margot Wallström, hosted female peace mediators and representatives of civil society, foreign governments, the UN and the EU (Government of Sweden, 2015). Discussions concluded that women in recent years (1992-2011) constituted only ten percent of the negotiators and around four percent as signatories (Government of Sweden, 2015).

Despite the fact that EU in the recent years has developed policies for empowering women to participate in negotiation tables, women remain strikingly under-represented. The ongoing EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia is often described as historical in the face of the fact that the negotiations are a reflection of an existing major gap and challenge in ensuring women's participation. Hence there is a lot of criticism addressed by women's civil society organisations towards EU as a mediator and Kosovo and Serbia as negotiators for failing to open the doors of inclusiveness to women. Noting a recognition from the EU for the importance of women's participation in peace processes what are the factors that after all prevent women from winning seats at the Kosovo-Serbia negotiation table? How do we understand the gap between the aspiration of EU's commitments to include women and its concrete achievements on the issue?

2. THEORIES ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE PROCESSES

Since political actors involved are in charge of determining who participates in peace negotiations, is women's participation in peace processes related to women's political participation. Therefore, working towards more gender-balanced policies, as suggested in the next coming sections bellow, means stronger opportunities for women to participate in peace processes. The aim is to successively concentrate the discussion to the specific case by starting with women's political participation, proceeding the discussion to the subject of women's participation in peace processes, and getting closer to the case by discussing the EU's involvement in peace processes.

2.1 Political participation of women

Political equality and political participation are both perfectly compatible to democratic ideals, yet is political participation in practice unequal. This means unequal influence in politics which is regarded as a serious problem for the representative democracy, making it dependent on citizen's participation. Moreover, unequal representation is systematically bias in advantage of certain societal groups whose privilege are defined by their wealth and education (Lijphart, 1997, p. 1). Most studies regarding understandings on liberal democracy representation have primarily argued that ideas are the core of representation (Phillips, p. 1, 1995). How adequate a representation prevails, is considered to depend on voters opinions and preferences. In the other side, feminist research considers identities to be an important component of a representative democracy pointing out women as a minority in national parliaments worldwide (Krook, p. 155, 2010). In a democracy, different components of a community are required to be represented. Thus, the attempt to understand the factors that obstructs women's participation in the political sphere must be part of the debate and be seen as a democracy problem in order to provide solutions that solve the issue.

Regardless of an increasing recognition by international community of women's exclusion from political structures, yet do women hold 23% of national parliamentarian seats around the world, which is also the highest level ever reached (Worldbank, 2016). This reaffirms that participation in political structures and processes among women remains insignificant.

Chances for women to seize seats in a national and local parliaments is discussed by Miki Caul (1999, p. 80) through a the perspective of party characteristics. The number of women nominated for parliament seats, the ranking of women on party lists, and the actual number of women parties send to parliaments, differ from party to party. Political parties play an important role as a direct pathway for candidates to get elected in, affecting the composition of national and local

parliaments. Hence, political parties characteristics need to be studied to understand the influence on women's encouragement/discouragement different political parties produce. This is explained by looking at four main factors: (1) organizational structure, (2) ideology, (3) women party activists and (4) gender-related candidate rules.

Examining the party organization as a structure, three aspects must come into consideration according to Caul (1999, p. 80): centralization, institutionalization and location of the candidate nomination. Specific degree of these three combined components may constitute higher chance for women's political participation. A political party is centralized when the distribution decision-making power is concentrated to its leaders. The more centralized a political party, the more accountable its leaders can be hold and in its turn the higher are the chances to get response from pressured leaders for a gender-balanced representation (Matland and Studlar, 1996, p. 709). Simultaneously, a high degree of institutionalization in accordance with gender-friendly rules, gives easily marginalized groups as women the possibility to understand the selection process. Last but not least, localized nominations are considered to be an easier pathway for women to work their way up after first establishing themselves through community work.

Studies suggest that ideology is a valid explanatory factor to women's political representation. Duverger (1995, p. 127) contends that leftist parties are more likely to support women's candidacy in elections than right parties given the fact that left parties espouse egalitarian ideologies. Simultaneously, Rule (1987) suggests that rightist parties are less likely to nominate women because of the traditional view these parties hold on women. However, Caul (1999, p. 82) argues that the traditional left-right ideological continuum may be too simple to describe how ideology affects women's representation and therefore the impact of party ideology on women's representation must be examined over time.

There is an assumption that there is a lack of desire and willingness of party elites to select female candidates (Krook, 2010, p. 155). Therefore women as activists are needed within political parties so that through demanding a greater representation they can lobby for other women as candidates for the parliament. Sainsbury (1993) compares this to the case with Swedish parties where women's direct activities increased the number of women as member of parliament. Additionally, political parties can bring a chance by implementing formal rules in form of either quotas (mandatory) or targets (recommendation), or by increasing the number of women through gender mainstreaming which is a slower process in comparison to the former.

Giovanni Sartori (1968, p. 273) defined electoral systems as "the most specific manipulative instrument of politics". Therefore the electoral system has been designated as one among many other factors that play a central role in influencing the opportunities of women to gain political representation. Majority (or Plurality) and Proportional Representation (PR) are the two main types of electoral systems which also can in many cases occur in form of a mixed model. In majority systems only one candidate can represent a constituency which favours major parties. Proportional representation in the other hand, tend to favour multipartism. It is more inclusive since all political parties receive seats in proportion to the number of voted gained which hinders any single political force to retain a monopoly (Pappalardo, 2007, p. 722). Previous research has well-established the theory that party-list proportional systems tend to produce higher percentage of women as legislators than single-member district systems (Matland and Studlar, 1996; Rule, 1987; Duverger, 1955). Rule (1987, p. 479) argues that the greater district magnitude (the number of representatives per district), the higher chances do women and other under-represented groups of the society have to gain representation.

Contemporary studies (UN Women, 2012; Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012) emphasize that increasing women's political participation through tackling with concrete issues mentioned above, is the best way to ensure women's representation in peace processes.

2.2 Challenges posed to women in the pathway to participation in peace processes

"The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security." (UNSC Resolution 1325, 2000).

The adoption of UNSC 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security is a resolution considered to be the very first of its nature (UN Women, 2012). Nonetheless, there is still a major gap between the aspirations for commitment towards achieving women's inclusion in negotiations and the reality where the absence of women in peace processes is striking.

There are two main forms of inclusiveness for women in negotiations. One of them is the inclusiveness of women themselves appointed by the group leader to represent a certain group's

interest in the talks. The second form is the inclusiveness of women's groups such as civil society organisations. UN Women considers the inclusiveness of both women themselves and of women's organisations in negotiations as the ideal scenario since first of all there is a correlation between more inclusiveness and a higher likelihood that the outcome of the agreements will produce sustainability and a second reason presented is the strong correlation between the inclusiveness of women's organisations and a higher awareness of gender in the outcome of the agreements (UN Women, 2012, p. 4). Research on the issue has argued that there is a worrying trend since more than 50 per cent of peace agreements fail within five years of signature. This poses the question of weather peace agreements address the underlying questions that cause conflicts (Amedzrator, 2014, p. 10). During the negotiation process women are considered to possess four main participating roles: as signatories, mediators, witnesses and women in negotiating teams (UN Women, 2012, p. 4).

There are several challenges posed to women which hinder them from rightfully being part of peace processes. Subordination is seen as a product of patriarchal attitudes which marginalizes women from the decision-making sphere since early stage of life where men make the final decisions in the family. Women become voiceless and subservient. The same patriarchal attitude is shown in peace processes where men see women's participation as a violating culture and tradition which in its turn could undermine women's interest in seeking representation at peace processes (Beauvior, 1974, p. 28; Aning, 1998).

A second hinder is the physical and psychological scars that war violence leaves on women. According to a study conducted by the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo (Ormhaug, Meier & Hernes, 2009, p. 3) *"men are more likely to die during conflicts, whereas women die more often of indirect causes after the conflict is over"* – a conclusion based on the author's acknowledge on the lack of adequate data on a global scale. The study underlines that this issue merits more attention as it represents the impact of armed conflicts on women. Simultaneously, speaking of violence in terms of rape, women constitute a majority of those directly affected by this phenomena which traumatizes women and in long term dissipates their efforts to restore peace to the community and undermine their sense of societal belonging (Chinkin, 2003, p. 10).

Thirdly, the marginalization of women can be a product of the economic dependence and corruption. The global pay gap between women and men has expanded from year 2006 till year 2015, as at the same time women's wages have increased with 58 per cent. Conducted in 145

countries, a study report from the World Economic Forum (2015) shows that women's earnings are 62.5 per cent lower than men's. So there is progress done in increasing women's wages but the gap has become even larger. Women need to be financially independent to firstly be able to make personal decisions and secondly consider the level of engagement they want to hold in peace processes. Being dependent on men limits their choices and options during peace processes. Serious obstacles to women's empowerment are post-war poverty and lack of economic independence and corruption as a particular aspect of economical and political sphere. Women's access to education is very limited which in its turn reduces their opportunities for participation in peace processes (Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 8). Since women lack of economical resources, they are considered to be most prone to accept money or small gifts during election campaigns. Simultaneously, in many cases women are seen as potential 'intruders' and therefore have been kept outside the circle of corrupt stakeholders. (Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 45;103)

UNICEF (2008) shows that worldwide more male than female are enrolled into secondary schools. Lack of formal education is a result of i.a. the lack of support girls get in comparison to boys who have better chances of getting a formal education while girls are expected to stay out of school and improve the economical situation of the family. In both Kosovo and Serbia, education attendance among female is lower than male. (UNICEF, 2003, p. 8; EU, 2012, p. 8). Another issue is considered women's lack of possession of adequate technical knowledge in the grassroot level. Women are expected to demonstrate that they are knowledgeable and able to translate their local expertise into peace negotiations but the lack of technical skills makes it difficult for women to operate on the international scene as mediators (Amedzrator, 2014, p. 16).

Women are often portrayed as naturally more careful, peaceful, sensitive, empathetic and anti-violence in comparison to men who are viewed as masculine, makers of war, perpetrators of violence, not only by media but even by the research field (Galtung, 1996, p. 40-43). But these views have been heavily criticized by other researchers since they may be a factor that explains why women have difficulties in getting access to peace processes. Karam (2001, p. 22) argues that the reason for such misportray depends on the patriarchal structures adding that women are rather as active actors as men. According to Ruddick (1990) women are not as peaceful as they are portrayed nor men as warlike. She explains that women "are not predisposed by their hormonal balance to pacifism any more than men are predisposed to warmongering" (p. 151).

Women can face obstacles from fellow women or even be absent in the fight for fellow women's inclusion. The term "crab mentality" is used by Amedzrator (2014, p. 16) to describe women's tendencies to undermine fellow women instead of encouraging each other to take up leadership positions. This in the end results with a marginalization of women by fellow women. In the case of peace negotiations, women that are part of the negotiation team or that lead the negotiations, are often criticized for ignoring women's civil society and therefore lose their support (GIZ, 2014. p. 18). Simultaneously, the assumption that women work against other women is explained differently by other researchers. In a research conducted in 2012 (p. 61) Kvinna Till Kvinna finds that women are victims of "vote and obey" which produced by the patriarchal system prevents elected women to rightfully use their power to support gender-friendly laws.

The relationship between women themselves and the mediation team is often very distant, this because women often do not have any direct access to the negotiation teams and there is no mechanism through which women can have access to information. A strategic alliance would be an effective and important link among actors from track I, II and III of negotiations as is the example of Guatemala where thanks to the alliances built between all tracks, Luz Mendez a woman who was taking part in the formal peace negotiations tabled proposals put forward by local women's rights organisations (GIZ, 2014. p. 17). At the same time the strict division of labour in the public and private spheres prevent women from entering official peace talks. Even international, regional and local organisations are pointed out to ineffectively promote women's right to participate in mediation.

2.3 Recommendations on how to overcome challenges that hinder women from participating in peace processes

"Addressing post-conflict reconstruction in the context of a peace agreement without 'asking the woman question' means that those involved in the peace process failed to take seriously the call by the Security Council in its Resolution 1325." (Chinkin, 2003, p. 8)

Formation of civil society organizations compromised by women across all political and ethnic lines and with one single goal – peace, helps women sustain their interest in political participation (Amedzrator, 2014, p. 17; Potter, 2004, p. 27). Bankrolling is an effective tool through which solidarity groups formed in Sierra Leone, were able to financially support women who fought for

the cause of inclusion of women in political processes. The rise of such funds would help contributing for an inclusion of women in governance structures of any country. This in turn creates a platform and opportunity for women to be part of important political processes such as peace negotiations. This suggests a bottom-top work starting at the grassroot level with projects funded by civil society through which women ensure top positions which facilitates their engagement in peace processes (Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 115; Amedzrator, 2014, p. 17).

Gaining attention and help by external actors such as the international community, is considered to be easier when women's groups firstly try to strategically locate useful resources in order to get empowered. Women should themselves raise funds through which they can both finance their own projects and also prove for international mechanisms that they work independently. External sponsors and the international community gets attracted and become more likely to commit funds in order to support programmes and projects run by women. (Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 115; Amedzrator, 2014, p. 18). Simultaneously, trainings are one of the most definitive key tools towards the empowerment of women, specially those who go through pain, loss and hardship during conflicts. Some women, even though they have been highly and directly affected by a certain conflict, they choose to channel their frustration by demanding inclusion in peace processes. Trainings help these women learn on how to conduct advocacy, how to effectively communicate their concerns, on leadership and negotiation skills, something that is even suggested to be made compulsory for women in tertiary levels of education(Amedzrator, 2014, p. 18). Additionally, even men should undergo different trainings and educations to understand the different need of both men and women and women's capacity in peace processes. This will break down all patriarchal attitudes directed towards women and at the same time facilitate women's path towards inclusion in peace processes. Furthermore, even senior staff on the national level and policy-makers should get trainings and follow-up coachings regarding the advantages of implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (UN Women, 2012, p. 25; GIZ, 2014, p. 28).

National government and parliament quota is mentioned as an empowering measure to ensure women performances at the international scene as peace mediators. However these quotas are not always filled which requires special measures to reserve parliament seats for women in order to effectively promote the representation of women in higher governmental positions (Amedzrator, 2014, p. 19). Even the international community has been pointed out for its lack of political will and is required to make accurate efforts. By monitoring and reporting about national action plans, peace agreements and assessing the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on women's

participation in peace processes, the international community can ensure women inclusion in peace processes (EEAS, 2014, p. 2; Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 114).

Linking actors among track I, II and III is strategic and effective. It brings support, convenes exchanges between different experiences, enhances dialogue and consultations on peace building issues and it engages groups from different levels such as governmental, non-state armed groups, female peace activists and non-governmental organisations (GIZ, 2014, p. 26). Another issue is women's direct access on information regarding ongoing peace processes in their respective countries. Communities and courses of approach should be created in order to ease women's access on signed peace agreements and women's right to criticize and demand more inclusion in peace processes. Also women who are active in political parties need more support and information than demands by women's organizations. (Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 115).

2.4 EU as a mediator and its policies to enhance women's participation in negotiations
Conflict prevention, peace building and mediation are considered to be the heart of the European External Action Service (EEAS) in preserving peace, preventing conflicts and strengthening international security (EEAS, n.d.b). In 2009 the European Council and the Commission jointly presented a concept which would establish the policy basis for enhancing the engagement in mediation and dialogue. EU sought to expand its capacities to engage more actively in peace-building processes through mediation as a primary tool. EU expressed its will to strive for using mediation as a tool of first response and is promoted as an effective and cost-efficient instrument that relevantly can be used in all stages of inter- and intra-state conflicts with the aim of conflict prevention, transformation and resolution (Council of the European Union, 2009). Promotion of women's participation in peace processes is one among five guiding principles through which EU seeks to enhance its involvement in peace processes (Council of the European Union, 2009). EU reaffirms its commitment for developing a framework in accordance with the UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) in order to through promotion of women's equal and full participation in peace processes, achieve a stronger inclusiveness and representation. Yet is women's participation in peace processes recognized by the EU as an existing major gap and challenge (EEAS, 2012). Women's experiences of conflict and needs for justice and recovery are threatened to be limited by the fact that women are under-represented in mediation processes but also because of the gender expertise in mediation teams. The EU expresses the need to intensify the promotion of women's participation and enhance the gender expertise in the mediation teams from an early stage of the process, which in practice will be carried out through identifying female mediators and gender experts.

In a factsheet published in November 2012 by the EEAS on women's participation and gender in peace mediation processes, it was argued that women's participation in peace mediation is necessary throughout the whole process at all its levels – Track 1 (highest level), Track 2 (mid-level), and Tack 3 (grassroots level). Despite a number of commitments by the EU together with the UN, women remain systematically and significantly under-represented at the Track 1 level which constitutes women who are members of negotiating parties, signatories, mediators, high level advisers, and special envoys (EEAS, 2012). The EU sees the low number of women participating in peace mediations as very problematic for both itself and for third parties involved. Therefore the organisation wants to address this issue by increasing women's participation within the EU itself through giving women key roles in the mediation processes where EU is involved. Simultaneously, the EU is willing to act in line with the policies adopted in the 2009 (Council of the European Union, 2009, p. 8) as to promote women's participation even within other parties by inter alia diplomacy and financial support. About EUR 200 million are donated by the EU itself to more than 70 countries where EU is active on the issue of women, peace and security. The financial support funds both non-governmental organisations and trains governmental agencies for initiatives that enhance women's participation in mediation (EEAS, 2012). If the EU is not able to impact Track 1 negotiations by promoting women's participation, then it seeks to impact and support the other lower levels (Track 2 and 3) by forming "women's tables" and creating a debate in order to ensure women's voices being heard. Yet does the EU Mediation Support Team assess that the EU itself does not always practice what it preaches, which is very problematic for women's participation. (EEAS, 2012).

The European Union considers a set of different factors as obstacles towards women's participation in negotiations. These include the pervasiveness of violence against women which limits the participation or desire for participation among women, slandering against women as a weapon to silence them, and expectations on women and their roles within their families or communities that limit their ability to engage themselves in peace processes. Necessary measures to overcome these hindering factors, is by providing them with trainings in form of capacity building, supporting them to network and exposure to peer experience (EEAS, 2012, p. 3).

3. KOSOVO – SERBIA NEGOTIATIONS AS A STUDY CASE

3.1 Brief Historical Background

Kosovo and Serbia are two neighbouring countries in Western Balkans that aspire EU membership (European Commission, 2015, p. 6). Kosovo, that today is populated by a majority of Albanian population with 92 percent (CIA Factbook, 2016) has through the past century been under Serbian rule after being denied accession to Albania. As part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the territory of Kosovo enjoyed some kind of autonomy self-governance from the Republic of Serbia. The Albanian guerilla army (KLA) which was considered as a terrorist group by Yugoslavia intensified their attacks on the Yugoslav institutions in end of 1990's. Yugoslavian security forces responded with a brutal crackdown on the civilian population and expelled around 863 000 Kosovo-Albanians from Kosovo during a period of three months (PBS, n.d.). After rejecting international intervention for resolving the Kosovo crisis, Serbia faced NATO-launched air strikes which after about two and a half months lead to the signing of the NATO-proposed Ramboillet Peace Agreement that saw all Serbian forces withdraw and therefore lose control on Kosovo. The adoption of the UNSC resolution 1244 (1999) established UNMIK (United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) that ruled in Kosovo together with the Kosovan democratic-elected provisional institutions of self-government. After the failure of Vienna peace talks in 2005, Kosovo held general elections and in February 2008 declared itself independent from Serbia. Serbia sent the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to ask for an advisory opinion which ruled that Kosovo's declaration of independence from Serbia in 2008 was not illegal under international law (BBC, 2015). Following the ICJ decision, Serbia agrees to an EU-proposed United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/298 (UNGA Resolution, 2010) hoping to give birth to a new series of talk between Kosovo and Serbia, this time EU-facilitated.

3.2 EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia

The European Union facilitates the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia with the aims of normalising the relationship between the two countries, promoting bilateral cooperation, achieving progress in the path towards the EU and improving people's lives. The dialogue was launched following the adoption of UNGA in which EU expressed "...*readiness of the European Union to facilitate a process of dialogue between the parties...*" (UNGA Resolution 64/298, 2010). With Robert Cooper initially appointed to facilitate the first rounds of talks between Kosovo and Serbia (March 2010 – March 2012), succeeded by the former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs

Catherine Ashton (October 2012 – October 2014) and in turn by the current EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Frederica Mogherini (November 2014 – Present), the EU-mediated dialogue produced 7 agreements, among them the well-known "Brussels Agreement" which is considered to be the very first formal agreement between governmental representatives from Kosovo and Serbia (EEAS, n.d.a). The negotiations have been described as technical, meaning that issues discussed address technical issues for instance on free movement for trade and civilians. Yet is the EU criticized for improperly using the terms "technical" and "facilitation" to describe the activity of the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia (Lehne, 2012, p. 8).

Despite producing some agreements which have been described as historical and have been welcomed by political leaders around the world, the EU facilitated negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia have been criticized by many women's organisations from both Kosovo and Serbia. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (KtK), alongside with Kosova Women's Network and Women in Black Belgrade, have in a joint open letter to the former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton, expressed concerns regarding the continuous disregard of women from the ongoing negotiations. The letter invited Ashton to reconsider taking adequate measures in order to ensure women participation, a step that according to the organisations would only benefit the outcome of these negotiations. Partnering with women could provide the EU and the negotiating parts with very useful information about the condition of women affected by the outcome of the agreements. Important issues like education, health and economic and social rights at large, would be enriched by women's participation since it is issues that also greatly affect women on an everyday basis. The legitimacy would rise as the inclusiveness too (Ag, 2014).

4. CASE FORMULATION, METHOD AND MATERIAL

Despite an increasing international activity and involvement in non-military conflict prevention and crisis management missions by the EU, and despite its commitment in actively promoting women's inclusion in negotiations, the academic field has not paid much attention into highlighting factors which hinder women from being able to participate in negotiations Kosovo-Serbia mediated by the EU. There is a common understanding that the inclusion of women in negotiations tables and issues that address women and affect women's lives are important, but there is a gap in explaining what are the factors that hinder women's participation in the above-mentioned negotiations. The EU, and the government of Kosovo respectively Serbia are criticized for not being all-inclusive in the sense of gender balance, for not showing transparency by neither updating the public about the ongoing negotiations nor informing the public about the process of the appointment of those involved in the negotiation team. Therefore, based on the findings of the previous research combined with the expressed criticism towards the involved parties, the formulation of my research case is formulated as bellow:

What are the perceived factors that hinder women from participation in EU mediated negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia explained by the interviewees?

There are several different possible results this study could land on, given the fact that key informant interviews will be carried out with different actors involved (Kosovo, Serbia, EU, and women's organisations). I believe that this study will deffinitely be able to contribute to the existing research by highlighting factors that hinder women from participating from peace negotiations.

I treat the debate on "women's participation" and the "inclusion of gender issues" as two different topics that relate to each other but that require two separate studies. Therefore, the question that I seek to grip an answer on is the factors that hinder women from participating in the negotiating table as a direct part of the negotiating teams or other forms of participating (i.a. grassroot level).

This study is of both an inter-scientific and extra-scientific relevance. The inter-scientific relevance of this study has its basis on EU's itself and other NGO's acknowledgement and recognition of the existing gap between the aspirations for commitment towards achieving women's inclusion in negotiations and the reality where the absence of women in peace processes is striking (EEAS, 2012). There is also a scientific neglect on the topic. Since the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations are pretty recent (started in 2011) and ongoing, it makes the attempts for researching and investigating

the process even more difficult. For instance, the exact number of women appointed to participate in the negotiations through the Kosovan or the Serbian teams is unknown (ibid., 2012, p. 3). On the basis of the inter-scientific relevance, this study presents a case of women's participation in negotiations mediated by facilitation by a third party. Despite the fact that a third party (in this case EU) has committed itself towards enhancing women's participation in mediated peace processes (in this case Kosovo-Serbia), there are yet unknown factors that hinder women from doing so.

The extra-scientific relevance of this study lies in the question of EU's effectiveness in its commitment for enhancing women's participation in negotiations it mediates. The EU considers itself to be a skilful mediator and a huge financial donor to projects that enhance the empowerment of women in negotiations but at the same time it recognizes that there it has not a successful track record on inclusion of women in the negotiation it mediates. Another interesting issue related to the extra-scientific relevance of this study is the extent to which hindering factors to women's participation in negotiations is addressed by the government/institutions of the different parties. Given the fact that women are strikingly under-represented in these negotiations, it is a matter of the governments of both Kosovo and Serbia to give women seats so that the inclusiveness of the negotiations increases. The interesting aspect of this matter is to understand how the two governments respond to the call of women's civil society organisations to address the factors that hinder women from participating and to facilitate the process of inclusiveness.

4.1 Aim and Method

The design of this study is categorized as a qualitative research with theory testing and theory building as relevant methods to be used. The reason for this depends on the main aim of this Bachelor thesis which is is to contribute to theory building studies on the under-representation of women in peace processes by trying to identify factors that can explain the absence of women from the negotiation table in the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. The identification and the contribution in filling up the gap of the previous research is done by conducting key informant interviews which in the end will be related to the findings back to the present theory. The most suitable method for this study is to be carried out through theory building by trying to identify factors that hinder women from participating in the peace negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia (Esaiasson, 2012, p. 113).

This study was enriched by a field research carried out in the form of key informant interviews (see appendix I, II and III) which was performed in Kosovo and Serbia. By defining a purpose for the study (as defined above) I built the base for being able to carry out the interviews (Kvale, 2009). I have tried to reach an ideal scenario by interviewing persons who are directly involved (centrality) within the peace talks themselves from the Kosovan, Serbian and EU teams. Through interviews I have tried to reveal these persons self-image on the issue and investigate what factors hinder women from participating in the negotiations according to them. The results of these interviews have been reviewed, summed up, are analysed in combination with the previous studies on the issue in the order to get an answer on the question. A list of the interviewed persons can be found in appendix IV. I have interviewed not only representatives of the three major actors involved (EU, Kosovo and Serbia) but also representatives from women's civil society organisations from both Kosovo and Serbia in order to include a multi-perspective. Something very important to be underlined is that despite the fact that the interviewees are very central and that their answers are the closest to the truth one could come given the high degree of involvement in the issue, conclusions based on the interviews will not be treated as the solely truth on what factors hinder women to participate in the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia. Nevertheless, the answers will be a subject to source criticism and will be related to the findings on the current research in form of a final analysis and discussion.

My depended variable is women's participation in the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations. My independent variable is hindering factors. Potential independent variables (factors which hinder women from participation) are found in the present literature (party characteristics, electoral systems, subordination, war scars, economic dependency, education, stereotypes, fellow women competition, and relationship between track I, II, and III) which were related to potential hindering factors identified during my field research in Kosovo and Serbia. My causal mechanism variable does not measure the question of inclusiveness of gender issues and either the question of what women's participation in negotiations might mean for the outcome. Additionally, discussions will occur on weather the three parties involved are transparent to the public, and despite the fact that percieved transparency is measured through interviews, it is important to keep in mind that transparency here is not the main focus of the study and therefore is treated as a hindering factor to women's participation. Finally, conclusions made by this Bachelor thesis are relevant for the period between the start and the time of the conduct of this study (2011 – 2016).

4.2 Material

The foundation for my analysis consists of in total 16 interviews carried out in Kosovo and Serbia throughout the period of April 2016 – August 2016 with political representatives and activists at the grassroot level from Kosovo, Serbia and the European Union. Given the fact that the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia poses a security risk for many of the politicians involved in the process due to its sensitivity, one of the interviewees required to remain anonymous and three others rejected to be recorded. Interviews have been carried in person, through Skype, and phone calls in either my first language Albanian or English which is a second language I am fluent in. Some of the contacted key persons either explicitly refrained to contribute with an interview (as it is the case of former HR for the EU Catherine Ashton), did never answer at all (as it is the case of Head of Serbian negotiation team Marko Đurić; Head Delegation of the EU in Serbia, Michael Davenport; and Head Delegation of the EU in Kosovo, Samuel Žbogar), or authorized a third person to speak on the behalf of them (HR/VP for the EU Federica Mogherini authorized senior advisor Thomas Busch to speak on her behalf).

Since interviewing is the main tool used in this study, source criticism is essential. Thurén (2003, p. 21) suggests that four key principles to consider during a critical review are: Authenticity (is the information falsified?), Time (how long time ago did the event occur?), Dependency of the source (is it a primary, secondary or tertiary source?), and Tendency (is the source of information biased?). These four principles are applied in the analysis of the information provided by the interviewees, in order to assess the veracity of claims about the reality.

4.3 Why the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia?

The exact number of conflict cases in which the EU is involved as a mediator remains unknown. The Peace Processes of Israel and Palestine, Myanmar, Djibouti, and the transition in Mali are some of the examples where EU is involved in different capacities and track levels (ELPO, 2013, p. 4). Noting the fact that the European Union is internationally one of the biggest development aid donor, and one of the most powerful and influencing actors in the world in a political and economical sphere, but also because of its increased commitment in giving attention to gender equality, it has made the European Union as an organisational capacity in general and its mediation tools in particular an interesting case to study. Simultaneously, Kosovo and Serbia are two EU aspirants, between which a well established relationship is of interest for the EU. For the same reasons, the EU has historically never had higher chances for influence in other mediation cases (Lehne, 2012,

p. 8). The ongoing Kosovo-Serbia dialogue is considered to be an exemplary model, yet despite declaring to promote women's inclusion in peace processes the EU has failed to show results in that direction in Kosovo and Serbia.

5. ANALYSIS: WOMEN IN THE KOSOVO-SERBIA DIALOGUE

The discussion in this section, is based in the information that has been received during the interviews conducted with key persons. It links back to the earlier discussions on women's political challenges found in the literature research, although the following discussion treats only relevant factors mentioned by the interviewees. Accordingly, discussions on what factors hinder women from participating in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue can not be generalized, but can be seen as a starting point for further research on the matter.

Edita Tahiri is the Minister of Dialogue of Kosovo, who also leads the Kosovan negotiating team since its very start. She is one of the very few women, if not the only, who participated in the negotiations of Rambouillet (1999) and Vienna (2005). She talks about a mixture of factors that are rooted since the post-war era and which have gradually marginalized women. According to her, a problem among many was the UNMIK administration in the post-war Kosovo because they neither brought any good model or had any woman in the top leadership. Simultaneously, the traditional patriarchal mentality of the Kosovan leadership which was reflected through the undemocratic system in the political parties, maintained women under-represented.

Igballe Rugova is the executive director of Kosova Women's Network (KWN), a network which coordinates funds given by the international community and shares it among its 106 NGO members from Kosovo. According to her, the question of why there is a lack of interest by the governmental authorities to include more women in the ongoing negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia, is rooted in the patriarchal attitude towards women in the two previous official negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia. She means that the possibility for women to participate in the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia, raises the probability for discussion of questions that she calls "issues of justice", by which she means are questions that concern women. Rugova means that the current negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia only repetitively reflect the patriarchy within the leadership of Kosovo producing women's exclusion from peace processes. Rugova expresses concern about Minister of Dialogue Edita Tahiri and what she calls Editas "tied hands" at work.

"She [Edita Tahiri] is a leader but she is not independent and represents no women at all because she is an instrument used by men, whom she is afraid to turn against." (Igballe Rugova, KWN)

Related to the previous findings (GIZ, 2014, p. 18) demonstrates how women holding top positions in peace processes lose support as a result of criticism received by other fellow women or women's civil society organisations.

The Minister of Dialogue for Kosovo Edita Tahiri and the former chief negotiator for the Serbian team Borko Stefanović acknowledged during their interviews full transparency on the process of selection of experts in their respective negotiation teams. The chief negotiator has the main responsibility in the selection of mediators whom are sought from adequate ministries depending on the topic of the negotiations. After getting back a list from a Ministry with the names of the best experts who deal with a specific technical question, the chief negotiator together with the office of the Prime Minister makes a choice depending on the candidates' competency and professionalism regardless gender. The chief negotiator of a specific team is in fact the only negotiator and other persons in the team are authorized only as experts who advice the chief negotiator.

"The groups [negotiation teams] are formed based on competency and professionalism, and I do not refer to gender balance when creating my team but competency because it is impossible to interfere in the process by asking for a specific gender to be recommended. More chances for women to be recommended so to be part of the delegation would be if there were more women in decision-making, in the public administration and higher positions in the government." (Edita Tahiri, Minister of Dialogue for Kosovo).

Analysing the transparency shown by Edita Tahiri and Borko Stefanović about the process of selection, relevant principles of criticism are authenticity, dependence and tendency of the information. In consideration to dependency, the interviewees are a primary source which makes it reliable. Considering the tendency of the source, information provided by Edita Tahiri and Borko Stefanovic can be biased and there might be an interest to hide the truth because they both hold responsibility since they have led the respective negotiation teams. The tendencies of the source can directly affect the authenticity of the information which in this case can be questioned particularly considering that the government of Kosovo respectively Serbia have been criticized by NGOs for not showing transparency.

Furthermore Tahiri added that the dependence of women in terms of economy and the patriarchal attitudes of the Kosovan society constitutes a very big problem for women to move forward. Economical empowerment of women is therefore a very important step which can be achieved

through women's more active participation in politics starting by running for elections which in the end raises women's chances to get more important positions in the government. According to Tahiri, it is likewise important to work Top-Bottom by lobbying for laws that improve the gender balance in all political spheres such as the public administration, political parties, governments etc.

Vetone Veliu who is the executive director of Mitrovica Women's Association for Human Rights (MWAHR) in Kosovo, unites women from different political and ethnic backgrounds to struggle for one single goal – peace. These projects are an example of creation of NGOs across ethnic lines (Amedzrator, 2014, p.18; Potter, 2004, p. 27). Then formation of such groups stimulates women's interests in improving their representation at the formal peace process by offering them trainings and educations in order to translate their local expertise into useful tools for the peace negotiations.

However, Veliu does not agree on the idea that the only way for women to take part in the ongoing negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia is by encouraging women to run for elections. Veliu means that it is very important for women who choose to stand apolitical and part of NGO's to have the possibility to take part and contribute with their competency. Therefore, including women who are active in the politics in the negotiation table and including women's NGO's are two different things. According to Veliu, the patriarchal attitude in the Kosovan society and in the political leadership is the biggest hinder to women's participation in peace processes so consequently raising awareness among men, particularly men from the political sphere, is very significant. Yet she expresses that very little is done in that direction and she hopes that more funds for creating trainings and follow-up coaching for men to be granted by external donors. Simultaneously, the former head of the Serbian negotiation team Borko Stefanović admits that there never was any gender-related training offered by any actor which according to him might be a reason why the government of Serbia never took gender as important. Trainings and follow-up coachings contribute to the removal of patriarchal attitudes directed towards women and at the same time facilitates women's path towards inclusion in peace processes which in long term raises the awareness regarding the advantages of implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (UN Women, 2012, p. 25; GIZ, 2014, p. 28).

Veliu adds that women are often criticized for not being competent enough or for not possessing adequate knowledge but that in reality the difference is not high between girls than boys attendance in higher levels of formal education both in Kosovo and in Serbia. In contrast to the current research (UNICEF, 2003, p. 8; Kvinna Till Kvinna, 2012, p. 8) Vetone Veliu and Edita Tahiri agree that

education is not the main hindering factor to women's participation in peace processes but disagree on finding the way it should be achieved.

Interviewed in Belgrade, Serbia, an anonymous source pointed out EU's influence and the fast EU transition in both Kosovo and Serbia to be one of the biggest obstacles to women's achievement for seats at the negotiation table between Kosovo and Serbia:

"Both countries [Kosovo and Serbia] are since the end of the Kosovo war in 1999 experiencing new political reforms. Therefore the focus is shifted away from women although laws that promote gender equality are ratified in respective parliaments, it is just for the sake of the committed EU integration. The system needs a refresh, the Kosovan and Serbian leadership have to realize the advantages of the political participation of women" (Anonymous interviewee, Belgrade, Serbia).

Maja Stajčić, a senior program officer at the Kvinna Till Kvinna office in Belgrade, means that the big influence EU has in the governments of Kosovo and Serbia is considered to be a positive channel through which NGO's in Serbia feel that they can make a difference. Therefore Kvinna Till Kvinna focuses more in working closer with the European Union because the organisation believes it is where they could influence the most. According to Stajčić, there is a lack of interest within the government of Serbia to deal with gender equality related questions and the biggest contribution or if not all of it is done by women's organisations which in the end do neither enjoy recognition, inclusion or funding. Any partnership with the national government of Serbia is a big issue, therefore the hopes of women's organisations by being closer partners to the EU is reaching and influencing through the Union back on the Serbian national government. Igballe Rugova from the KWN in Prishtinë, Kosovo, recognizes as well the issue of having difficulties in creating a sustainable partnership with the government of Kosovo. This indicates that there is no strong thread of relationship that exists between the first track (the official dialogue) and the two latter ones (NGO's and individual level). Current research (EEAS, 2012; GIZ, 2014, p. 17) views links among actors from track I, II and III as an important strategic alliance in peace processes which would raise the chances for issues considered important to women to be proposed for discussion at the negotiation tables.

This made the women's network turn to EU instead. In the other side, officials from the EU underline that the Union has no mandate to intervene and on that account to influence the

negotiations in large by throwing the responsibility of the shaping the dynamics of the negotiations back at the Kosovan respectively Serbian government.

"The European Union is only a facilitator, which is important to bear in mind. We facilitate the dialogue by providing the disputed parties [Kosovo and Serbia] mediation but also technical help as for instance room. We do not have the right to forcefully intervene because it is up to the governments of each side to decide on such matters [women's inclusion in the negotiations]. We can not impose a certain model but we can provide them with conditions on what kind of model they [Kosovo and Serbia] themselves can build on." (Thomas Busch, Senior Advisor for the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue).

Yet is EU seen as a key actor with probably the biggest influence on the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, a dialogue that by many is considered to be political rather than what EU and the conflict parties themselves define as technical. EU's self-described "facilitation" has showed in practice elements of heavy-duty mediation, including setting of agendas, elaboration of solutions and the use of massive carrots and sticks (Lehne, 2012, p. 8). Massive carrots and sticks have been identified since the early stage of the dialogue in documents issued by the Council of the European Union. The European Union has used the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) as a carrot for Kosovo:

"The Council takes good note of the signing in October of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with Kosovo… The Council recalls that progress in the process of normalisation of relations with Serbia is an essential principle of the SAA and underpins the development of relations and cooperation between the EU and Kosovo." (Council of the European Union, 2015, p. 20).

EU pursued the same way of leading Serbia towards reaching an agreement of normalization with Kosovo, by using the grant of an EU candidate status as a carrot:

"The Council welcomes the several important steps Serbia has taken towards reconciliation and cooperation in the region… also welcomes the cooperation with the EU that led to the adoption and co-sponsorship of the UN General Assembly Resolution 64/298… The Council reiterates that Serbia can accelerate its progress towards the EU… as soon as all the necessary conditions are met." (Council of the European Union, 2010, p. 8).

In theory, one could argue that one among many factors that hinder women from participating in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue is EU's limited role as a facilitator. This means that the European Union within its mandate has a very limited possibility to shape or influence the negotiations in terms of experts and team members. This leaves us with an understanding that the 2009 "Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities" which urges EU to work more actively in enhancing women's participation in peace processes in line with UNSCR 1325 (2000), has not really gone through the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue. Nevertheless studying EU's activities in practice one could argue the opposite, namely that EU has been a key actor with a considerable capacity to influence since the beginning of the dialogue given the fact the organisation uses major carrot and sticks to lead the negotiations towards a certain outcome.

In terms of source criticism, authenticity, dependency, and tendency of the information are important tools of analysis here. Considering Thomas Busch as a primary source might come into question since Busch, despite the fact that he is directly involved in the negotiation as a senior advisor, is speaking in behalf of the HR/VP Federica Mogherini (a primary source). The authenticity of the information on EU's role as a facilitator provided by Busch is strong but can be affected by its tendencies since Busch avoided commenting on EU's influence in the negotiations, rejecting any other involvement more than a facilitator.

Arjeta Rexhaj who currently works as the political advisor of Minister of Dialogue for Kosovo, reveals personal opinions on today's feminism and how it together with the undemocratic system of political parties undermine women's chances to seize seats at peace processes:

"I am not a feminist, it is a very radical network. I belong to a natural network which naturally works for empowering women without undermining the men. I see the political empowerment of women as crucial for her empowerment in any other sphere of life, including women's inclusion in peace process. The key issue is the undemocratic system of political parties which needs to be changed." (Arjeta Rexhaj, Political Advisor to the Minister for Dialogue of Kosovo)

Here we can identify a lack of support for fellow women's struggle for the same goal – gender equality. Rexhaj's comments reflect the contradictions that exist between women because of possessing different understandings on what the best course of action is for women to achieve empowerment (Amedzrator, 2014, p. 16). This results with a marginalization of women by fellow

women. Meanwhile, both Kosovo and Serbia use a PR-system with open lists and 30 respectively 33 percent of gender quotas which in accordance with a range of researchers (Matland and Studlar, 1996; Rule, 1987; Duverger, 1955), Rexhaj does not see the full effect of these tools. Rexhaj means that leaders of political parties in Kosovo respectively Serbia, even though centralized (as suggested to be positive by Matland and Studlar, 1996, p. 709) have shown lack of interest to include women. Therefore, the democratization of political parties is regarded as a necessary step in order to ensure women's participation in peace processes.

Despite the fact that the found research considers allocated quotas as a positive contribution to the political participation of women which in turn facilitates women's struggle in path towards achieving inclusiveness in the peace process (Amedzrator 2014, p. 19), there are opinions that question how and if quotas could help women to reach a higher level of participation in peace processes. KWN does support the idea of parliamentarian quotas and is affirmed that a more advanced law than the present parliamentarian quota of 30 per cent in Kosovo will definitely be positive for women's struggle for inclusion at peace processes. However, there are opponents as Abelard Tahiri who is the political advisor to the President of Kosovo, that considers any type of institutional quota and women's forums in political parties as a way of just isolating women from reaching their political empowerment:

"Imposing such limitations to women through quotas or creation of women's forums within political parties only causes a backfire. Women should not be positively discriminated in that way because it only isolates them within those frames. Why not being part of the main council of the party and make their voice even more heard? Why not being more active and taking more political initiatives as a woman but instead requiring special statuses to be equal?" (Abelard Tahiri, Political Advisor to the President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi)

Abelard Tahiri's statements, in spite of being the closest secondary source to the President of Kosovo, are yet another example where tendencies need to come into account considering his position.

Igballe Rugova from the KWN in Kosovo, criticizes the international community in particular the European Union for not including the issue of gender balance in the peace process in their Annual Report of Progress for Kosovo and Serbia. Amedzrator (2014, p. 19.) suggests that essential for ensuring the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000) is to make pressure to the international

community to monitor and report on different countries progress about both women's empowerment generally and their inclusion in peace processes. Maja Stajčić adds that to make it possible for women to seize seats in the negotiation tables there should be a focus on supporting women not only in one but all stages of their empowerment starting from equal access to health, equal access to education, and economical empowerment, through making sure women get a fair media presentation, to opening more doors for her in the political sphere by dealing with the corruption in the partial system and national level. Finally, Staša Zajović the co-founder and coordinator of Women in Black mentions the physical and psychological scars that war violence has left on women in not only Kosovo and Serbia but the whole Balkan region which in the long term dissipated women's efforts to restore peace to the community (Ormhaug, Meier & Hernes, 2009, p. 3). Zajović expresses concern over the fact that violence and threats towards women have not terminated but are still present and directed particularly against her own organisation.

6. CONCLUSIONS

It is evident that there have been some new findings done in the field study which represent a new set of explanations to what potential factors that hinder women from participating in the EU-facilitated dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia could be. This means that this Bachelor thesis has been able to contribute to the current research through theory building. Findings during the field study conducted in Kosovo and Serbia can be divided into two groups:

The first group consists of factors that have previously been remarked by the current research as possible factors which could by a high probability be applied in other cases of women's exclusion from peace processes. Patriarchal and traditional attitudes causing a marginalization of women have frequently been mentioned along with accusations towards the women that currently possess top positions for being used by men, followed by the need to democratize the political parties' systems in order to ensure a fair competition between all genders. Violence against women during war times and violence against women's activists after the war, ensuring women's with neutrality in the peace negotiations are additional factors which make the pathway towards inclusion even more difficult. A so-called "crab mentality" has been identified in a case where women belonged to different levels of employment positions and where the tendencies to undermine or not support a fellow woman were expressed.

The second group consists of factors that are considered to be unique to the case of Kosovo-Serbia peace process. The UNMIK administration on Kosovo has been highly criticized by politicians and women's civil society for bringing and implementing a "ready model" on Kosovo and for not appointing any woman in their top positions. Another factor discussed was EU's self-defined role as a facilitator and its contradictory actions by using massive carrot and sticks to influence a particular outcome. EU's capacity to influence in this matter has been considered as both positive and negative depending on who was asked. Some Kosovan and Serbian NGO's were quite positive to this given the fact that they had poor contact or no contact at all with their governments which made EU an optional channel through which these NGO's could influence back on their own governments regarding issues that are related to the peace process between Kosovo and Serbia. Negative positions towards EU's capacity to influence have mostly been based on the fact that once feeling accused the EU dodges the responsibility and shifts it on the governments of Kosovo and Serbia.

Among the suggestions in how to overcome these hinders and achieve inclusion at the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, political empowerment of women; participation in election; seizure of top positions

in the public administration, government and parliaments; creating trainings not only for women but also for men, have been the most prominently presented.

Additionally, different actors give different explanations and understandings on what they believe to be one or many factors that hinder women from participating in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue. The answers have been exposed to source criticism by concluding that authenticity, dependency, and tendency were the most useful tools. As expected, actors depending on their positions have given answers the tendencies of which can be put into question.

Surprisingly, very few interviewees talked about women's experience of violence during the Kosovo war in 1999 and the ongoing circle of violence against women's activists in Kosovo and Serbia, an issue which according to the current studies (Ormhaug, Meier & Hernes, 2009, p. 3; Chinkin, 2003, p. 10) is very important to tackle with in order to ease women's full participation in politics and peace processes. Simultaneously, most of interviewees did not consider the education among women as a serious hinder to participation in peace processes despite the fact that current research shows that a majority of those attending higher education are male (UNICEF, 2003, p. 8; EU, 2012, p. 8).

Finally, this study can be seen as a first foundation and findings done during the field study and presented here can not be considered as a final truth but critically understood as explanations of different actors involved/excluded in different ways in the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue.

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APPENDIX I: DEFINITIONS

Gender balance – Refers to a balanced composition of active participating women and men in all stages of the peace process.

Gender Mainstreaming – Is a process characterized by assessment and planning of a strategy that makes both women's and men's concerns an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of any programme which benefits gender equality. (Chinkin, 2003, p. 8)

Kosovo-Serbia dialogue – Refers to the ongoing EU facilitated dialogue between the government of Kosovo and Serbia, also known as "The peace process between Kosovo and Serbia" and "Prishtina-Belgrade Dialogue".

Kosovan – refers to a person who comes from Kosovo whose ethnicity can be Albanian, Serbian, Turkish, Roma, Bosnian etc.

Mediation – is about assisting negotiations as a third party by supporting, organising or facilitating the dialogue between parties that are in a conflict with each other. The aim of mediation is to enable the parties to find a common ground and reach agreements in order to terminate the conflict and ensure a sustaining long-term peace and stability. Within mediation there are three tools which can be used separately or combined together. *Mediation* occurs when a third party gets an approved formal mandate for leading negotiations. *Facilitation* occurs when a third party gets an approved formal mandate but with a limited ability for involvement or shaping the substance of the negotiations. If a third party gets immediately involved in order to prevent a conflict from escalating, then it is considered as *dialogue*. (Council of the European Union, 2009, p. 2).

Women's participation in peace processes – refers to the activity during in which women are engaged in peace processes in different roles as members from negotiation parties, signatories, mediators, high level advisers, and special envoys (EEAS, 2012, p. 2) in three different diplomatic Track levels as defined (GIZ, 2014, p. 9) below:

Track 1 level – are formal discussions typically involving third party, high-level officials such as political and military leaders and focusing on cease-fires, peace talks, and treaties and other agreements.

Track 2 level – unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform the formal process; typically involving influential academic, religious, and NGO leaders.

Track 3 level – People-to-people diplomacy undertaken by individuals to encourage interaction and understanding between hostile communities and involving awareness-raising and empowerment within these communities.

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE KOSOVAN RESPECTIVELY SERBIAN OFFICIALS

Note that this is a draft and that the following questions are not necessarily to be asked as stated or ranked below. I see some of the questions as more as a triggering tool for keeping my conversation with the interviewed going on.

My name is Mergim Tahiri and I study Political Science at University of Gothenburg in Sweden. Thank you for accepting my request for an interview. This interview will be used for study purposes for my BA thesis which I am currently working on. I am writing about hindering factors to women's participation in the EU-facilitated negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia.

This interview consists of three main parts. Firstly I will ask you to introduce yourself, to tell me more about the work you do and the type/degree of involvement in the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations. Secondly, relating to the subject and the aim of this interview, we will talk more about women's participation in these negotiations. In the last part of the interview I am going to give you the chance to speak about topics that we might have missed out from our conversation and that you believe are of importance to be discussed.

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself?
   – Working position and tasks?

2. Could you tell me more about the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations?

3. To what extent and in what forms have you been involved in the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia?

4. Could you tell me more about the process of appointment of the negotiation team by your government? What are the criteria?

5. Do you think these negotiations are inclusive?
   – How do you assess the achievements done towards increasing the inclusiveness?

6. What importance does Kosovan/Serbian women's participation have in the negotiations?
   – How many women are there in the peace negotiations?

7. What are the hindering factors to women's participation in those negotiations?

8. What responsibility do you think the Kosovan/Serbian government has in promoting the women's participation in these negotiations?
   – How do you think you as a government can handle this issue?

9. Has your country been offered or accepted any kind of trainings or funds from the EU to enhance women's participation?

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE EU OFFICIALS

My name is Mergim Tahiri and I study Political Science at University of Gothenburg in Sweden. Thank you for accepting my request for an interview. This interview will be used for study purposes for my BA thesis which I am currently working on. I am writing about hindering factors to women's participation in the EU-facilitated negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia.

This interview consists of three main parts. Firstly I will ask you to introduce yourself, to tell me more about the work you do and the type/degree of involvement in the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations. Secondly, relating to the subject and the aim of this interview, we will talk more about women's participation in these negotiations. In the last part of the interview I am going to give you the chance to speak about topics that we might have missed out from our conversation and that you believe are of importance to be discussed.

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself?
   – Working position and tasks?

2. To what extent and in what forms have you been involved in the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia?

3. Do you think these negotiations are inclusive?
   – How do you assess the achievements done towards increasing the inclusiveness?

4. What importance does Kosovan/Serbian women's participation have in the negotiations?
   – How many women are there in the peace negotiations?

5. What are the hindering factors to women's participation in those negotiations?

6. What responsibility do you think the EU has in promoting the women's participation in these negotiations?
   – How do you think you as an organisation can handle this issue?

7. Has your the EU offered any kind of trainings or funds to the government of Kosovo and Serbia to enhance women's participation?

8. Is there any factor within the EU as a mediator that hinders women from participating?
   – Is there any lack within the system that EU could improve?
   – What can EU do more to ensure women's participation?

9. Why has not the "2009 Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities" on which EU stresses women's participation, not worked in the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations?

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF WOMEN'S CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS WORKING IN KOSOVO RESPECTIVELY SERBIA

My name is Mergim Tahiri and I study Political Science at University of Gothenburg in Sweden. Thank you for accepting my request for an interview. This interview will be used for study purposes for my BA thesis which I am currently working on. I am writing about hindering factors to women's participation in the EU-facilitated negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia.

This interview consists of three main parts. Firstly I will ask you to introduce yourself, to tell me more about the work you do and the type/degree of engagement in the Kosovo-Serbia negotiations. Secondly, relating to the subject and the aim of this interview, we will talk more about women's participation in these negotiations. In the last part of the interview I am going to give you the chance to speak about topics that we might have missed out from our conversation and that you believe are of importance to be discussed.

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself?
   – Working position and tasks?

2. Could you tell me more about the work your organisation does?

3. To what extent and in what forms have you been engaged/involved with/in the negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia?

4. Do you know anything about the process of appointment of the negotiation team by your government? What are the criteria?

5. Do you think these negotiations are inclusive?
   – How do you assess the achievements done towards increasing the inclusiveness?

6. What importance does Kosovan/Serbian women's participation have in the negotiations?
   – How many women are there in the peace negotiations?

7. What are the hindering factors to women's participation in those negotiations?

8. What responsibility do you think the Kosovan/Serbian government and the EU has in promoting the women's participation in these negotiations?
   – How do you think you as an organisation can impact on this issue?

9. Has your organisation been offered or accepted any kind of trainings or funds from the EU to enhance women's participation?

APPENDIX V: LIST OF INTERVEIWEES

Kosovo
- Edita Tahiri – Minister for Dialogue of Kosovo, Head of the Kosovan negotiation team

- Arjeta Rexhaj – Political Advisor to the Minister for Dialogue of Kosovo, Edita Tahiri

- Abelard Tahiri – Political Advisor to the President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi

Serbia
- Borko Stefanović – Former head of the Serbian negotiation team (2011 – 2012)

European Union
- Anžej Frangeš – EEAS Diplomat and contact person for the dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia

- Boyd Mckechnie – EEAS employee in Prishtinë, Kosovo

- Thomas Busch – Senior Advisor for the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue. Speaking in behalf of the HR Federica Mogherini.

Non-Governmental Organisations

- Igballe Rugova – Executive Director of Kosova Women's Network (KWN)7

- Maja Stajčić – Senior Program Officer at the Kvinna Till Kvinna office in Belgrade, Serbia

- Naim Leo Beširi – Executive Director at The Institute for European Affairs in Serbia

- Zorana Antonijevic – Scholar from Serbia

- Staša Zajović – Co-founder and coordinator of Women in Black, Belgrade.

- Yllka Soba – Program Officier at the Kvinna till Kvinna office in Prishtinë, Kosovo

- Nataša Šakota – Senior Governance Officier at OSCE office in Belgrade, Serbia

- Vetone Veliu – Executive Director of Mitrovica Women's Association for Human Rights in Mitrovicë, Kosovo

Anonymous: 1