

## Kateřina Špáčov, experience from work in HR organizations

4.5.2023

### 1. Short-term election observation mission

- o Ukraine 2004
  - The election results were challenged by Yushchenko and his supporters, with many international observers claiming that the election was rigged- Orange Revolution- a re-run second round election
- o Belarus 2010
  - crackdown on opposition- The [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](#) (OSCE) called the election "flawed", saying it fell well short of democratic standards. The [Commonwealth of Independent States](#) (CIS) recognized the election as legitimate.

Election observation missions are organized for example by:

- o ODIHR OSCE:
    - <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/325441>
    - Example: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/119271>
  - o the EU – knowledge of Russian/French/Spanish a plus, but sometimes English is enough
    - <https://www.eods.eu/how-to-become-an-observer>
2. Volunteering – Belarus and Ingushetia (Chechen refugees) – thanks to my knowledge of Russian- week and two weeks during the summer – thanks to that:
3. <https://www.peopleinneed.net/what-we-do/human-rights-support>

People in Need

- o thanks to the volunteering and knowledge of Russian and English (Russian necessary for communication with partners, English necessary for projects – foreign funding). They would have preferred me to know more about Czech politics and journalism and project management. Willingness to travel frequently required.
  - o Coordination of events:
    - Decentralization – study trips for Moldovan and Ukrainian mayors to the Czech Republic– inspiration.
    - Study trips for activists and lawyers from Belarus – ombudsperson’s office, constitutional and supreme court, Bar Association, environmental organizations, organizations working with the disabled...
    - Meetings of Belarusian pro-democratic activists and politicians with Czech journalists, Czech MFA, members of parliament as well as the Prime Minister –in order to promote continuous support to Belarus, for example: grants for human rights organizations, scholarships for students expelled for their civic engagement, asylum for political refugees, health care for those who suffered beatings or torture during protests or imprisonment
    - Exhibition – political repressions – also support to the families of politically persecuted
  - o One World film festival of documentary movies with HR topics – we invite and accompany the movie authors, protagonists or activists able to comment – discussions after the movie screenings, moderating the discussion
  - o Very often I would also interpret the meetings
4. Civic Belarus, <https://www.civicbelarus.eu/en/>
- o support to the following projects:
    - <https://euroradio.fm/en> support to independent media – Euraradio – did have impact at times – ecological or social issues

- <https://humanrightshouse.org/human-rights-houses/belarus/> support to Belarusian Human Rights House – coalition of human rights organizations, membership in this coalition increases mutual trust, support, capacity, impact, fundraising options, safety of data and people (shelter for Azeri, Belarusian and Ukrainian HRDs)
  - support to Belarusian civic initiatives (environment, cycling in the city...) – training, funding and networking
  - Visegrad books translated into Belarusian – both political essays and novels reflecting on life under Communism, book selection and translation done by Belarusians
  - I was the executive director (two colleagues + external accountant and tax advisor) – responsible also for financial management – work with budgets and receipts/contracts
  - Very special board – former dissidents: Václav Havel (later president), Jan Ruml and Petruška Šustrová (ministers of interior after the Revolution), Anna Šabatová (recent ombudswoman), Karel Schwanzenberg (former minister of FA), head of HR and Democracy Department of People in Need (Igor Blažević, founder of One World film festival)
  - Václav Havel’s initiative – letters to political prisoners drafted and signed by the ex-President himself – he knew how important this was
5. <https://humanrightshouse.org/human-rights-houses/>
- HRHN – 80 orgs in Western Balkans, Caucasus and Eastern Europe. Secretariat in Oslo, Brussels and Geneva
- freedoms of assembly, association, and expression and the right to be a human rights defender.
  - Coalitions – democratic decision-making. Trust, common goals and office/building
  - House to House projects – women’s rights in the Balkans – experience shared with Armenia, Belarusian experience with work under extremely difficult conditions shared with Azerbaijanis
  - Advocacy – Council of Europe, UPR UN, UN Special rapporteur on freedom of association, the EU, individual ministries of foreign affairs, embassies, but also campaigns connected with Eurovision (took place in Azerbaijan, the winner met with Azerbaijani HRDs)
  - Assistance with fundraising – US State Dpt, Czech MFA, Dutch embassy, EIDHR – help with administration, financial management and reporting
  - Capacity building – training on international mechanisms for lawyers, training in financial management, English, advocacy
  - South Caucasus Network of Human Rights Defenders – shelter for Azeris in Tbilisi, Georgian experience with support to torture victims and prison monitoring shared with Armenian colleagues
  - Advocacy campaigns – imprisoned colleagues – HRDs – Belarus Ales Bialiatki, Azerbaijan Rasul Jafarov, Intigam Aliyev, Khadija Ismail

Methodology of NGOs:

<https://grantsplus.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/nonprofit-grant-lifecycle-steps.png>

- Strategic plan
- Mission, vision
- Different sources of funding – also companies or individuals, frequently international institutions (EU) or governments (MFAs, embassies)
- Goals – outcomes – outputs
- Project management – drafting, implementation (organization of training sessions, study trips, conferences, press conferences, movie screenings, exhibitions, doing the training, writing HR reports, articles, business trips to meet the partners and plan cooperation), financial management, reporting, evaluation, development of follow-up