

## **Women's Day, 21.02. 2010**

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I have been now here for 3 years, and during that time i feel that I have been changing within myself as a result of the environment that I'm living in. I feel that I am now part of two worlds that are in many ways contradicting each other and that conflict has been within me ever since i came here. I would like to share some of those thoughts with you.

In Comparing the status of women in Kosovo and Iceland one can see obvious differences. I see it as a box, and the box is smaller in Kosovo. The chances to explore myself as a women there is more limited. The space between the walls of the box is smaller.

The opportunities for women are few since the patriarchal culture is still very strong, especially in many of rural parts of the country.

Young women are getting only primer education, some of them want to get more education in capital town but for financial reason the cant continue. Most of them they have only one ambition to get married to have social status. Still some of them they have to get married with whom the family chooses and from then on they belong to another family and their rules.

She is put in a single role and she can't decide for anything more. She is just a mother. I'm not disrespecting motherhood. I am just saying that if that is the only option you have, than your possibilities exploring yourself as a woman are limited, especially since they are entering that role at a very early age.

But now in the capital, Prishtina, the status of women is growing and getting more powerful in the main intuitional positions, fighting for their rights. They opened the gender equality offices and branches all over the country and especially they have now many seats in Parliament. The human Rights organization is defending, supporting and protection women's right more than ever.

The most important is the knowledge that comes with education. This strange relationship between power and knowledge can best be seen in the empowerment of women in Prishtina that are educating themselves. They are stepping up as role models for other women in their country, being part of the government, participating in decision making for the future of Kosovo. But even though they are getting so far there is still a glass ceiling, meaning that the country is still run by patriarchal elite and it's very difficult to enter their door.

Comparing myself and what i have been experiencing I see that the box in Iceland is bigger. Possibilities for women are more. When I came to Iceland I had a cultural shock like everybody who is experiencing a new environment.

Iceland is the first country to have a woman as a president. I haven't seen more single mothers as there are here, and they get state education and state support. Here I see that women have endless opportunities. Women are encouraged to developed themselves and be whatever they want to be. The only problem here for women is that they take too much of this for granted, and don't realize that all the doors are more or less open. But they have to make an effort to go through them. Too often I see them shy away from lack of confidence. I think that when women over here have realized that ,there will not even be any box any more, no walls, no ceiling. Only a wide open field.