



# Balkans

## Breaking the silence

The association XY Spektrum uses comic books to address a taboo subject in the Balkans: intersexuality.

### COUNTRY

Serbia

### LOCALISATION

Belgrade, Nis, Novi Sad

### DATES OF THE PROJECT

June 2023 – February 2024

### ARTISTS INVOLVED

Kristijan Randjelovic, Pavle Zelic, Nikola Vrzic, Stripo-Tetke Collective

### PARTICIPANTS

Intersex people, members of the XY Spektrum association

### FUNDING

Fonds Metis, AFD, Institut français de Serbie  
Budget 23,000 €

### PARTNERS

XY Spektrum, French Institute of Serbia, Faculty of Communication of Belgrade, KommunikArt

### SECTOR AND SDG'S



## INVISIBLE INTERSEX PEOPLE

According to a UN report from 2017, 1.7% of people are intersex. Millions of people around the world have sexual characteristics that do not fit binary definitions of male or female bodies. Yet, this issue is only now emerging in discussions on human rights. Too often, the fundamental rights of intersex people are not respected, and the topic remains taboo. In Serbia, intersex people feel they cannot talk about their condition or their feelings with a loved one or even a doctor. Invisible, their condition remains largely unknown, and intersex people continue to face discrimination.

## BREAKING THE SILENCE

Through Metis, discussions are held between members of the XY Spektrum association, which fights for intersex rights, students from the Faculty of Communication in Belgrade, and artists. Kristijan Randjelovic is an intersex activist and writer. Alongside Pavle Zelic, he writes the script for a comic book based on these discussions, depicting the journey, challenges, and aspirations of an intersex person. Based on this script, illustrators from the Stripo-Tetke collective collectively create a 48-page comic book, printed in 1,000 copies and available in digital format.

The writers and illustrators, accompanied by mediators, promote the initiative in three cities in Serbia: Belgrade, Nis, and Novi Sad. They give lectures on intersexuality and organize fun workshops aimed at children, addressing respect for differences.

The comic book is widely distributed during one of Europe's major literary events, the Belgrade Book Fair.

## THEY SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE

*"This project is one of the first attempts to address a societal issue not through a traditional institutional brochure, but through a creative work. Art can make a difference!"*

BRANISLAV GLUMAC, ARTS AND CULTURE PROJECT MANAGER,  
FRENCH INSTITUTE OF SERBIA

*"Intersex people represent nearly 2% of the global population. It is very important for them and for society itself that intersex people are recognized, along with their specific needs."*

DOMINIQUE HAUTBERGUE, DIRECTOR OF AFD SERBIA

# 1.7%

OF PEOPLE WORLDWIDE  
ARE INTERSEX

# 1,000

COPIES OF THIS COMIC BOOK  
PUBLISHED

# 3

CITIES IN SERBIA TOURED  
THROUGH