



CURRENT REFLECTIONS OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE AT DAMU

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I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT

- ☐ Roots of the failure
- ☐ Political context
- ☐ Societal context
- ☐ Institutional context
- ☐ Institutional response
- ☐ What's next?

EXAMINING THE ROOTS OF THE FAILURE TO ADDRESS DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

Ideological disruption during the socialism

- ❑ Almost no contact with the feminist or civil rights movement
- ❑ Formal x substantive (material) equality

Neoliberalism of 90's

- ❑ Maximum accent on individual freedoms and choices without any boundaries
- ❑ Lack of trust in legal regulations and state institutions

Euroscepticism

- ❑ Unfounded (sometimes hysterical) reaction with regard to EU body of antidiscrimination legislation

POLITICAL CONTEXT IN CZECHIA 2017-2021

Minority government of Andrej Babis (populist leader of political movement ANO)

❑ Supported by communist party, radical rightwing party, social democrats

President Milos Zeman (10 years)

❑ Very amicable to authoritarian regimes (e. g. Russian Federation, China)

❑ Hostile towards minorities and political opponents in general

1. Main focus on economic issues
2. No visible changes in the field of equality and non-discrimination

SOCIETAL CONTEXT

More visibility of various forms of inequalities (especially during the COVID-19 pandemic)

Under-reporting (a doctrine of “few bad apples”)

Vast majority of population in Czechia is agnostic or atheist (78 %).

Fight against so called “gender ideology”

- ❑ existing laws are objective and neutral
- ❑ new gender-progressive regulation of social relations is an unacceptable interference with the 'natural social order'
- ❑ Examples: ratification of Istanbul Convention, Equal Marriage Act

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Academy of Performing Arts

3 faculties: Theatre, Film and TV, Music and Dance

Theatre Faculty – approx. 450 students

June 2021 – Performance of student initiative
“You don’t have to endure it”

Break of silence

denigration of women, misuse of confidential information, psychological pressure, excessive workload of students, abuse of power

power relations as the main theme



CULTURAL IMPACT

Original TV series (Czech Public Television)

- Behind the curtain (EN)/Pozadí události (CZ)
- Five years (EN)/Pět let (CZ)

Performance lecture

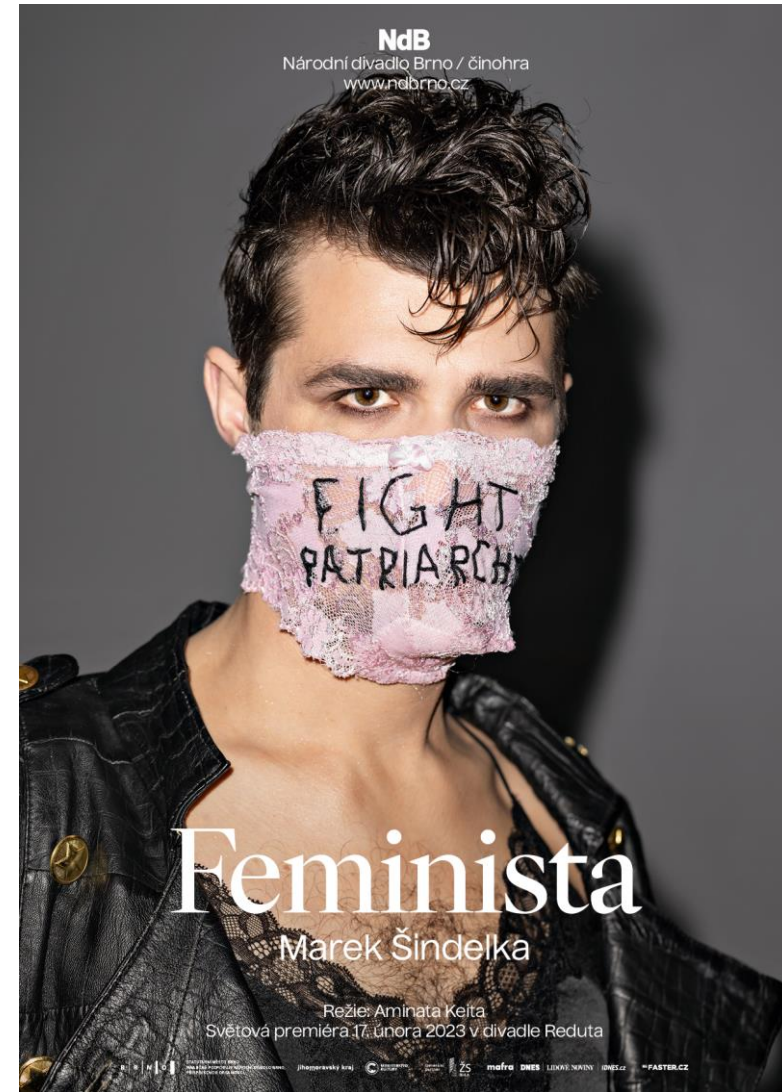
- Fears (EN)/Strachy (CZ)

Contemporary Drama

- Feminist (EN)/Feminista (CZ)

Documentary Movie

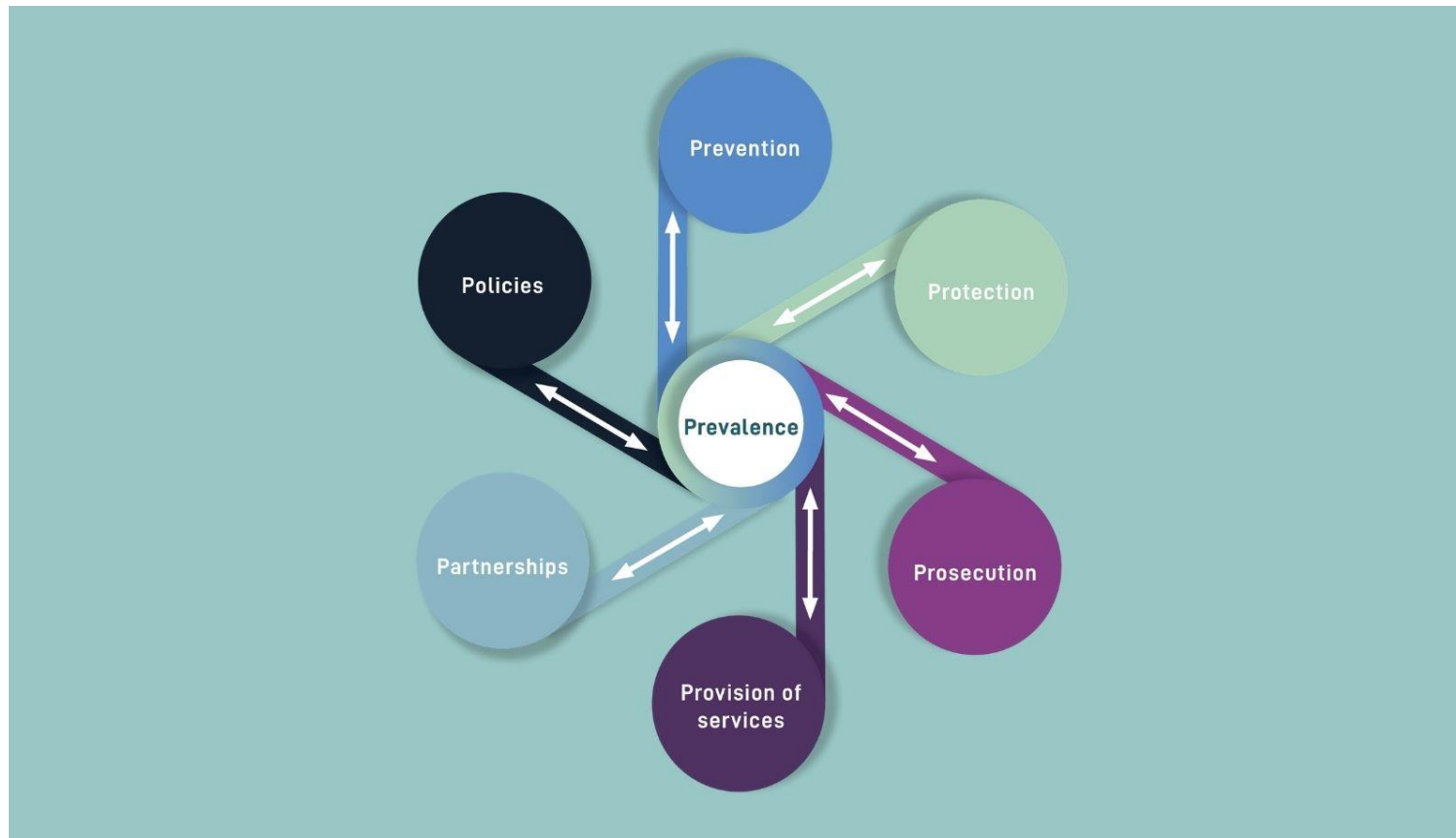
- Art Talent Show (EN)/ Zkouška umění (CZ)
- After the Silence Was Broken (EN)/ Po prolomení ticha (CZ)



IMMEDIATE INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

- ❑ Service of psychological support to students (3 interventions paid by faculty)
- ❑ Open platform “*Let’s share DAMU!*”
- ❑ Change of main internal regulation – Limitation of the term of office of heads of departments
- ❑ Establishment of Ombudsperson (for students and employees)
- ❑ Handbook for first year students and Guidance Days

WHAT'S NEXT?



PLAN OF ACTIVITIES OF OMBUDSPERSON FOR 2023 (BEYOND THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE)



- ❑ 10 thematic areas
- ❑ Target groups (students, pedagogues, other employees, people in decision-making positions)
- ❑ Forms: workshops, surveys, group discussions, peer support
- ❑ Themes: well-being, respectful feedback, sexual violence, mental health, hazing, etc.

<https://www.damu.cz/en/official-desk/other-announcements/4017/>