

Ukraine: the anti-capitalist “space of things” in Lviv

Wednesday 18 January 2023, by [LE TRÉHONDAT Patrick](#) (Date first published: 16 January 2023).

The feminist group Bilkis opened in Lviv an anti-capitalist “space of things” on 2nd August 2022. The space, which is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 4pm to 7pm, is intended to be a place where people can leave things or take them. Clothes, medicines, books, crockery and household items have been stocked on the shelves of the space, which aims to be “a real alternative to existing market relations and is based on mutual aid and cooperation”. The Lviv feminists declared at the time of its opening: “The capitalist machine of society tries to convince us that buying and selling is the only possible option. Brand culture, fashion trends, new things are what is destroying our planet and they are not for people who cannot afford to buy them. Millions of workers, mostly in the Global South, are exploited in the factories of the big companies and brands that produce these goods, intensifying the cult of consumption.” In the announcement of the opening of the new space, the Lviv feminists specified their ambitions “What are the possible anti-capitalist practices that relate to things?” and added “Visitors are always welcome whether you bring something, or take something with you, or just drop in to say hello.



Before the full-scale war, the Bilkis group, originally from Kharkiv, which has since fled to Lviv, was developing feminist popular education, organising demonstrations and rallies against gender-based violence and public meetings. But since 24 February, the feminist group has had to face new tasks, for which it had no experience. It has put all its strength into humanitarian activities with impressive results. For example, on 21 July 2022 alone, the group announced that it had sent 21 packages to Dnipro. In total, 62,000 Hryvnia (12,500 euros) of individual parcels, including nappies, baby food, medicines and hygiene products, had been spent in that month alone. A few weeks later, the group announced that it had supported another 35 families with children. By the beginning of September 2022, Bilkis claimed to have helped 700 families.

However, Bilkis has not abandoned her feminist activities. This was demonstrated by their active participation in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in November and December. During the 16 Days, the group launched a campaign to denounce the brand Drunken Cherry, a brand of liquor that displays a naked woman on its bottles, and organised three rallies in Lviv in front of

one of the shops of the sexist brand. The last rally resulted in being harassed by fascists from the Katharsis group and denounced by a city councillor who went so far as to contact the SBU (Ukrainian security services) to have Bilkis' activities stopped. Not intimidated by these maneuvers, the day after this last rally, Bilkis put up posters in the streets of Lviv on sexual consent and the day after distributed leaflets on violence against women in front of the Lviv Opera House.



To support an antipatriarchal, anticapitalist feminism, let's support Bilkis: (even small donations are useful)

Paypal - fem.bilkis gmail.com

By bank transfer

IBAN

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Beneficiaries KUTSENKO YANA

Bank

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