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Report of the Gender Equality Rapporteur from October 2016 to March 2017

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The opinions expressed in this document are the responsibility of the Gender Equality Rapporteur and does not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe

Background information

Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) are appointed among the members of the steering committees and other intergovernmental structures of the Council of Europe to promote gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.

The role of GERs is to provide impetus to the effective integration of a gender equality perspective in the work of their respective committee, making sure that a gender mainstreaming strategy progressively becomes an integral part of their work. Essentially, the gender equality rapporteurs are expected to watch over the programming process of their respective committees (i.e. the process of identifying priorities, preparing activity proposals, setting-up and implementing the activities, and evaluating the results) in order to ensure that a gender perspective is properly integrated. 40 GERs have been nominated in Council of Europe intergovernmental committees and monitoring bodies since 2012.

Introduction

At its 34th meeting (March 2016), the Joint Council on Youth appointed Şebnem Keniş from the Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG) in Turkey, as the CMJ Gender Equality Rapporteur for the period of 2016-2017. Following Şebnem Keniş resignation on 9 December 2016 the Joint Bureau appointed Alice Barbieri from the World Association of Girls Guide and Girls Scout, as GER *ad interim* until the next CMJ meeting in March 2017, where the new GER will formally be appointed.

This report covers the period October 2016 to March 2017. During this six-month period, the GER participated in and contributed to mainly two meetings:

1. Training course on Gender Mainstreaming for Council of Europe Gender Equality Rapporteurs (Strasbourg, 21 November 2016)

The training on gender mainstreaming focused on the importance of collecting and analysing data and information to have a clearer picture of the situation which can help to develop new policies, strategies and ideas. Considering the lack of data, it is suggested that this should be improved in order to further develop gender mainstreaming and gender equality within the youth sector.

2. 1st meeting of the drafting committee for the preparation of a Draft Recommendation on Combating Sexism, (Paris, 2-3 March)

Sexism is one of the causes for the pervasive gap between de jure and de facto gender equality in our member states. The first objective of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, focuses on “Combating Gender Stereotypes and Sexism” and it specifically refers to the need to “combat sexism as a form of hate speech”. As only two member states (Belgium and France) have actually legislation against the sexism it was deemed necessary to start a process which would lead to a draft Recommendation in combatting sexism.

This report explains the interventions made by the GER and her observations and evaluations regarding the integration of gender perspectives into the work of CMJ, CCJ and the Youth Department.

Guidelines on Integrating gender equality in intercultural youth activities

One of the most important developments for the integration of a gender perspective into the youth work and activities of the Council of Europe was the production of *Guidelines on Integrating Gender Equality in intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners* (hereafter the Guidelines) that was drafted in the Gender Equality Matters Seminar, organised by the Youth Department in June 2016.

At the request of the CMJ, the secretariat then elaborated a proposal for practical measures to be implemented by the Youth Department in its activities for the pilot period 2017-2019. This proposal, to be adopted by the CMJ during its March 2017 meeting, is based on the seminar in June 2016, consultation with the members the Trainers Pool and the outcomes of some study sessions and meetings held in the EYC's. The GER was also involved in this process and gave her opinions and contribution.

European Youth Foundation

The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is actively promoting the integration of a gender perspective in the youth projects it supports. The EYF has reviewed its web page on "Gender perspectives" to encompass a more diverse and inclusive approach. The webpage contains resources created by the Council of Europe and youth NGOs, as well as links to relevant tools and actors.

All youth NGOs which apply for an EYF grant must explain how they will include a gender perspective in their project. Often it is understood as involving "an equal number of women and men participants". The EYF is therefore in the process of updating the forms to better explain what it means to include a gender perspective in a youth project. For example, are there important gender differences in the area tackled and how does the project take those differences into account? Are the needs of every individual taken into account and how?

At its last meeting in December 2016, the Programming Committee on Youth (CPJ) examined 41 grant applications for one-off international activities taking place in the second half of 2017. Twenty-four of these explained more or less how they would include a gender perspective. Twenty-seven applications were approved, 18 of which had explained the gender perspective. Particular attention was also given to pointing out the lack of gender perspective and in the last round four of the successful applicants received specific reference to this aspect. Also, the CPJ found one of the activities dealing with gender and conflict particularly interesting.

During the latest EYF seminar on 1-4 March 2017, part of the programme was devoted to discussing gender mainstreaming concepts with 30 representatives of local and youth NGOs. The programme included, inter alia, a simulation exercise on writing grant applications where participants had to explain how their project will include a gender perspective; an assessment session where participants were asked to evaluate the applications according to the given criteria, including gender; and a session on gender perspectives and gender equality which included an exercise on terminology and concepts. During the seminar the participants were also presented with the EYF Gender Toolbox.

Recent examples of EYF-supported pilot activities at local level:

- Serbia: Promoting gender sensitive local action plans

- Turkey: Combating hate speech with a focus on gender-based stereotypes and discrimination
- Republic of Moldova: Empowerment of young Roma women
- Spain: Tackling specific problems and needs of young migrant women
- Armenia: Empowerment of women and LGBTQ communities

Examples of international youth activities:

- Discussing gender roles in relation to right-wing extremism/populism
- Tackling multi-discrimination of disabled young people from a gender perspective
- Creating a gender mainstreaming tool including both a gender and a diversity perspective

No Hate Speech Campaign

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, the No Hate Speech Campaign organised an Action Day countering Sexist Hate Speech titled "Challenge Sexism! Speak up for Gender Equality! The Action Day encouraged activists and national campaign partners to take action on 8 March proposing, inter alia, to label sexist content on the Internet; to flag sexist hate speech online on Hate Speech Watch; to use the Educational Tools of the campaign and organize educational activities which would increase the understanding of sexist hate speech and to support the Thunderclap of the Action Day.

Reference documents

[2016 Annual report](#): Implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, gender Equality Commission

Council of Europe [Gender Equality Strategy](#) 2014-2017