

Women Power!

Report of the study session held by
the Federation of Young European Greens
in cooperation with the
European Youth Centre
of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
2nd to 9th of April 2006



This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

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Executive Summary

From 2nd to 9th of April, the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG) organised, together with the Council of Europe, a study session called “Women Power” with the aim of empowering women to take high positions in their employments and especially in politics. Furthermore, the FYEG aimed at gathering and analysing methods that parties and NGOs employ in order to ensure gender equality within their own organisation. The FYEG organised this event after it became obvious that although it has a feminist standpoint and implements methods such as establishing a quota to ensure women’s representation, it is still far from reaching equality in more subtle questions such as speaking time, visibility, leading positions etc. Therefore the organisation found it necessary to review these tools and methods and carry out a number of seminars related to gender questions. This study session was a part of that process.

The study session had 29 participants, 5 preparatory team members and one educational advisor, all of them women. This was the first activity of FYEG with only women participants and it worked out very well. The participants were between 18 and 29 years old and came from 20 different European countries.

The week’s programme consisted of three main parts. Firstly we received basic knowledge and an introduction to the topic. This part included a lecture from Dolors Camats, a Catalan MP who reported on the difficulties for women in politics and how to overcome them and a lecture from Beata Maciejewska a Polish feminist about the influence media has on stereotypes and on the difference between gender and sex. Furthermore the first part was used to introduce the participants, their expectations and backgrounds and the historic roots of the feminist movement.

The second part of the programme was dedicated to training and skills development. The peak moment of this was a day long training on communication and assertiveness that was greatly appreciated by the participants. Also, the preparatory team encouraged the participants to exchange the skills that they themselves had and hence to profit from each others experience and expertise.

During the third part the achieved knowledge and skills were put into practise and the participants set the path for the follow-up of the study session. They wrote a statement summarising the problems that were analysed and the demands that were taken out of that and developed new projects that are being worked on in FYEG and ensure that also in the future the FYEG will carry out projects related to gender questions.

The participants also visited a local NGO that is working on gender issues in order to see a local practical example of feminist work. A free afternoon ensured that the participants could take a break, reflect on what they have experienced and also see some parts of Budapest.

The main questions and points of discussions that were raised again and again during the week were the possibility or impossibility to combine private life and a career, be it political or professional. We agreed that it should be possible to combine these things but in the contemporary reality we considered it a very big challenge. Another point was whether women in politics could change the system or whether they are not rather swallowed by the system and eventually act like their male counterparts in order to keep their position; or whether, on the other hand, it is rather anyway those women who are already completely absorbed by the male system who reach high positions and who therefore don't even have an interest in changing the system. We also addressed the issue of appearance and the effect it has on the audience, whether men can be feminists or not and whether we just have to change the quota of representation of women or whether the error lays within the system. These questions were not all raised within the official program but big parts of them were the subject of break and evening discussions.

After the study session ended, the project proposals kept being worked on and now, for example, we have a gender working group within the FYEG and a seminar on gender equality in Europe in August 2006 in Warsaw. The final statement of the study session has been distributed to the members of European Parliament and is available at the FYEG website. The participants are still in contact with each other and with the FYEG. The FYEG gained new active members, project proposals and expertise out of this study session and we would like to thank the European Youth Centre Budapest, the Council of Europe and their educational advisor Helene Barkovic a lot for their financial, administrative and educational help and support.

Introduction

Aims and Objectives

During the preparatory meeting the preparatory team defined the long and short term aims for this study session.

As long-term aims we defined:

Long-term aims

Change the world: with this study session we want to contribute to the worldwide and ongoing struggle for gender equality

Change (green) politics: We see gender inequality in politics, even in green politics, and with the study session we want to raise awareness as well as questions and want to empower women who are potential political activists to claim their rights and equality

Change FYEG: FYEG, even though it is per definition a feminist organisation, still faces difficulties in carrying out gender equality and often the tools for change are missing. We want to gather and find ways of making our own organisation more equal

Create a gender network: networking is crucial for the empowerment of individuals and we see this form of connecting people as an important tool. We aim to create a network of women working on gender issues that can also serve as an informal network of future leaders

Get new activists for FYEG and the green movement: reaching gender equality needs active women taking their right to participate. We want to encourage the participants to get active in society and politics

More women power: more women in high positions and in politics in general as well as questioning the system constructed for men, not for women

More women in politics; more men in the kitchen: We want to develop ways and tools of changing gender roles. The family should no longer be the task of only women. In this regard we want to empower the participants and break up traditional gender roles that create obstacles for both women and men

Women being more confident with themselves: With the help of communication training and self-experience, our participants should start considering or strengthening their self-esteem

Change public perception of/attitude towards women in politics as not being able to do “serious” politics or being “just a quota woman”. We will try to analyze this perception and find ways of how to overcome it, partly through changing our own perception and behaviour.

Our short-term aims are:

Short term aims

Successful session: in the end we want to feel that we contributed to our long-term aims; we want to have good outcomes and an overall good study session.

Happy prep team: In the past we realized that very often the preparatory team is exhausted in the end and in urgent need for holiday. We would like to try to have a less stressful study session that can be enjoyed by the prep team members as well as the participants.

Have a nice group atmosphere: We deem the group atmosphere very important. It can facilitate discussions, channel outcomes and follow-up activities.

Have active and responsible participants: Our participants should feel involved and actively contribute to the study session. Therefore we need to take care that possibilities for participation are clear and advertised and that the people feel encouraged and welcomed.

Provide knowledge and information: We want to provide knowledge about the history of feminism, about women in politics, about success stories and problems, for knowledge is power and often helps us to realize obstacles and glass-ceilings.

Be well-prepared: A good preparation is the main source for a good study session. Although it seems obvious, it was important for us to explicitly mention this.

Aha-effect of participants: We aim to reach a moment in which we start thinking: "Yes, we can do this; we can overcome inequality and stereotypes!"

Concrete new project proposals: In the end of the Study Session we would like to have a number of project proposals that we can realise in the future in order to continue and improve our work on the subject.

Bring awareness of skills: With the help of some training we hope we can make the participants, at least some, to realize their skills and to develop them. We wanted them to become more assertive in their everyday life as well as in their political environment.

Profile of the participants

The participants had an age range of 18 to 29, most being in their early twenties. They came from 20 countries all over Europe. About half of them were members of FYEG or had been in contact with FYEG on other occasions. The majority had been involved in gender issues before, either through studies, personal involvement in women organisations or green organisations or experience of discrimination in the every day life or working life. However, their approaches to how to reach equality often differed. Hence, all participants already had a certain level of awareness and knowledge of the situation of women, although the conclusions they drew out of this knowledge and experience differed notably.

The special thing about the participants was that all 34 of them were women. This was the first activity of FYEG with only women participants and it was considered by the organisation and by most participants as an important experience that should be repeated from time to time. We also intend to have once a seminar on gender issues with men only. We think that such separated projects can be helpful at some time, especially when talking about gender issues. However, the strategy remains of solving the problems together.

Flow of the content/ Main issues addressed

In the beginning of the week we provided the background of this project. We presented the organisations involved; why we did this project and explored what kind of experience everyone had brought with her.

Afterwards we turned to examples of women in politics and the history of the women's movement in order to analyze obstacles that women face, such as lower pay than men, marginal representation in high political and professional positions, a traditional gender role that gives women alone the responsibility for children and housework etc. The next step was to discuss the perception of these women in the media and the public perception and how to overcome these images and roles that place the woman as the weak, non-political and not public person in opposition to the political and public man. During this step we also tried to define what we personally want to achieve in our life. The first lecture, Dolors Camats, a Catalan MP, included this in her lecture and asked the participants to write down what they want to achieve, what obstacles they see for the way there and what they would need to do in order to overcome these obstacles. This was a point of reflection for the participants and made them also think about what they could use through the elements of the study session and what their personal outcome should be. As conclusion from this we tried to find ways of how to reach our personal aims and what communication tools we can use for this purpose. This part mainly consisted of a day-long communication training which was followed by further means of empowering ourselves: we discussed different means of how to reach gender balance and we had a skills market in which the participants could learn from and provide knowledge for each other. Out of this part we developed a statement with our demands on gender aspects such as a same pay for women, support for parental leave, training possibilities for women and a struggle against stereotypes. The statement can be found in the part "Outcomes".

The last part was dedicated to evaluation and follow-up, meaning mainly the development of new project ideas and summarizing and evaluating the week.

Programme – Inputs and discussions

The week long programme can be divided into 3 main parts: first gaining knowledge, secondly receiving training and thirdly developing our own projects and policies based on the two previous parts. In the following, we will explain the flow of every part and how we developed the sub-categories.

Part One: Background information

Background of the study session and its participants

We started the week with the basic background information: the participants found out who was there, where the others came from, why they were there and from which background they came. For this section, we allocated a welcoming evening with the main purpose to allow everyone to get to know each other and to break the ice. On the first morning we introduced the organisers of the study session – FYEG and the Council of Europe, presented the week's programme in order to give an overview about the proceedings to the participants and introduced the language signs and democratic rules of FYEG. We also discussed the motivations and expectations of everybody to show that they are very diverse and hard to fulfil all of them to 100%. From this background information session, everybody received an idea about what was going to happen, what kind of background the other people have and with which expectations everyone's own interests competed.

Feminism in history and present

After this we started dealing with the topic of the study session by exploring the historical roots of the feminist debates in the different parts of Europe. Here we could already profit a lot from the knowledge of our participants. We had working groups on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd wave of feminism, about the American suffragists and as two examples of successful women the last two working groups dealt with the German chancellor Angela Merkel and the Latvian president Vaira Vike-Freiberga.

The first wave of feminism started around 1850 and ended with the First World War. The concerns of the feminists were mainly those of education, marriage laws, employment and the right of women to vote. The methods they used were rather radical, like for example public suicide. The first wave achieved some aims in education and employment but did not lead to a general voting right for women. The second wave of feminism started in the late 60s of the last century and came out of the civil rights' and anti-war movement. It addressed the political aspect of the private, the sovereignty of women over their own body and the social construction of gender. This wave ended in the 70s and was followed in the early 90s by the third wave which addressed topics like sexual

harassment, rape and economic discrimination. The American suffragists were active in the US in the late 19th century and early 20th century and their main aim was to achieve the voting right for women. Their movement had a great influence on European feminists. The 5th group discussed Angela Merkel, the current female chancellor of Germany who has been in the conservative party for 16 years. She is not active at all in the feminist movements and is not seen as a defender of women's rights. Still, she is the first woman as head of government in Germany and her gender was discussed before and after the elections. The other famous example to be discussed was the Latvian president Vaira Vike-Freiberga, who was elected president in 1999. She also is not an active feminist. It seems like the prominent examples of women who reach high position in politics do not win elections because they are women and promote equality; rather, because they don't emphasize equality and try not to look like a representative of a discriminated majority.

Charlotte (UK) writes about the Vaira Vike-Freiberga working group: "After reading the text on Vaira Vike-Freiberga in a group we attempted to summarize the facts but instead managed to expand upon them. We were particularly impressed by Vaira's ability to maintain a balance between professional commitment and family life – a task many women find challenging due to the pressures of imposed social views and restrictions in the work-place. It was also noted that she was elected due to public acknowledgement, presumably being personable and individually creative rather than a clinical representative of a single political stance. Together we discussed presentation methods with emphasis on the ways in which to surmise/emphasize her achievements, taking heed of the manner in which they were obtained. Under the headings of "background", "personal life" and "political career" we condensed the information into three or four bulleted points with the opportunity to elaborate during the presentation."

Afterwards we had an example of contemporary feminism as speaker: Dolors Camats, MP in the Catalan Parliament spoke about women's participation in politics and obstacles and also about her own experience being a woman in politics.

Dolors is 35 years old and was an independent candidate when she stood for the elections to the Catalan parliament. Now she is also the spokesperson of the Catalan Green Party. In the beginning of her lecture she spoke about herself and her background and posed questions towards the participants that would encourage them to reflect and take a standpoint. The questions were: Are women dealing with politics differently than men? What do women do and what can they do when they are elected? Do we want them to act differently from men, or should being a woman not have any relevance to politics? Do women have different capacities (empathy, capacity to listen, conflict resolution)? Even if women participate in politics, they do not have the same responsibilities or tasks. They deal mostly with education, health, social topics. In distribution of the topics there is gender difference. In Dolors' opinion the obstacles are caused mostly by legal solutions that do not ensure equal representation of women and men in the politics. She uses the notion of 'unfinished democracy' and claims that unequal participation of women is a crucial

problem of democracy. Our rights as women are not completed if we cannot actively use all the rights we have. It is failure of democracy.

However, legal regulations are not the only barriers to women' access into politics. In most of the countries women have legal possibilities to participate in politics, but there are several obstacles for their participations.

- social and cultural conditions
- the organisation of political system and party organisation.

She gives several examples that illustrate those obstacles. Meetings of the Parliaments and party debates often last till late in the night. In such cases children and family can be perceived as an obstacle to a female politician. This is mostly to do with cultural and mental stereotypes that define female politicians in the perspective on her family and children. Female politicians are often asked about their motherhood and responsibilities of taking care of children.

Usually women have to choose between political career and private life. Men do not. When a woman chooses a political career, she often deprives herself of family and private life. Men do not. Dolors claims that there is a need for transformation of social and cultural conditions, so women would not be forced to choose between family and career.

According to Dolors women's participation in politics is a crucial problem. She enumerates several reasons why women should be present in politics:

- equal rights
- justice
- democracy (democracy is not finished as some people are excluded from it)
- 'because I decide' (social, cultural and political conditions cannot limits the free choice of the individual)

Dolors stressed that women should have a right to make mistakes. It is assumed that if they are in politics, they are the best- they cannot fail and make mistakes. The same does not relate to men. You don't have to be super to be in politics, you just have to be there! Now the participants were asked to go into groups and to discuss the situation of women politicians in their countries. The results have some similarities, for example that women are judged by their looks more than by their deeds and achievements, that they are looked at more closely and their failures and mistakes are judged more critically. Women are often put in spheres of family and social welfare policies. It is said that women cannot be beautiful and clever at the same time and if they are not married they are "suspected to be lesbians". The working groups presented their results and Dolors concluded with asking the participants with writing down what they wanted to achieve in their lives and what each of us thinks still hinders us from reaching our aim and how we can overcome these obstacles.

Discrimination of Women

In the next part we firstly analysed what kinds of discrimination exist. We had a brainstorming on obstacles and discrimination that women face in their daily life or when they reach out for positions.

The list we brought together was quite impressive. With this impression, the participants were asked to go into working groups and prepare role plays for different kind of discriminations. Most role plays presented the discrimination of women at work, especially in the job interview, when the most decisive question asked to her is whether she has kids whereas this question is not asked to the male applicant. Also the restrictions of parents and of traditional gender roles were shown and are documented on the study session movie.

Afterwards, Beata Maciejewska, a feminist from Poland working with media, showed in a succession of creative workshops how media stereotypes work, especially for or against women. She started by claiming that most discrimination nowadays is not explicitly in the law text, but is more indirect. She said that the laws in most countries proclaim equality but are not sufficiently implemented. She asked us to imagine that we would represent different magazines or newspapers, church magazine, a women magazine, a daily newspaper and so on and to prepare questions that our magazine or newspaper would ask in an interview to a woman politician. These questions were presented and we talked about the different forms of discriminations and standpoints that are shown in these questions.

She encouraged us to work against these stereotypes and emphasized the difference between characteristics of gender and of sex. At this point we had a misunderstanding with Ms Maciejewska, since her expectation of the motivation of the participants didn't hold true for all the participants. However, the participants addressed the problem and stated once more their very different motivations in a way that actually was very good for the programme flow at this stage by reminding the participants of their diversity and also reminded each individual of the things she wanted to gain out of the study session. Francesca, a participant from UK reports:

“Beata Maciejewska introduced herself stating that she is currently a member of the Polish Green Party, which was set up three years ago. She had previously worked with the largest daily newspaper in Poland and after that with Newsweek, before moving to work full time with the Polish Green party. She also founded the ‘Spaces for dialogue Foundation’, which is a foundation concerned with human rights, women rights and children’s rights and the development of democracy and civil society.

Beata presented three topics to be discussed by the plenary:

- 1) Which are the stereotype systems which place women in a bad position.
- 2) How does the media create stereotypes and how can this be prevented.
- 3) Women in politics.

Presentations:

The **first exercise** consisted of the following:

Beata placed charts on the floor; each chart had a picture of a person. The participants were then invited to write down their first impressions on each of the photos presented. The chart had to be

folded in a way to ensure that no participant could see her predecessor's comment. The aim of this exercise was twofold:

- To show that should a person decide to portray a certain impression or 'stereotype', it is possible if the person chooses the correct attributes and characteristics. And also
- That our impressions of people are affected by the stereotypical images which society conjures and by which we are biased in our thoughts.

As discussed by Beata, stereotypes consist of statements made by people to categorize people. Stereotyping people may be necessary when faced with the need to analyse various situations and people. However stereotypical words, phrases and thoughts can be turned into prejudices such as when one judges a person before actually meeting the person. And many times when one is faced with the real person it is still hard to change your mind or opinion about the person. Discrimination occurs when one acts on her/his prejudices.

The **second exercise** consisted of a discussion on sex and gender issues and the difference between them.

Beata gave each participant a written statement and each person had to decide whether the statement was connected to a sex issue or a gender issue .

Statements:

Women give birth to children, men don't.

If birth is referring to the physical act of giving birth then it is considered to be a sex issue. However if giving birth is seen within the wider context that is including the responsibilities of bringing up a child then it would be seen as a gender issue, since both parents (the woman and the man) are responsible for brining up their child.

The majority of men are physically stronger than women.

Since physical strength is genetically determined then the statement was deemed to be connected with sex rather than with gender.

Women feed their babies with their breasts, men need a bottle.

This statement need was generally considered to be related to sex, however one participant did claim that it has been scientifically proven that men can actually breast feed.

Men have beard on their faces, women don't

This statement was considered to be connected to sex.

The statement which created the most controversy was the following:

Boys have mutations girls don't.

The term 'mutations' is being used incorrectly in the above statement. All genes whether found within the genetic material (DNA) of a male or a female can and do undergo mutations. The term 'mutations' in the above statement was used to describe the deepening of the voice in males. This in itself is not a mutation (mutations occur within genes only); it is actually the development of what in biology are known as 'secondary sexual characteristics' which occur in both males and females.

In males 'secondary sexual characteristics' include amongst others the following: muscular and skeletal growth that result in wide shoulders and narrow hips, pubic, axillary, facial and chest hair, and enlargement of the larynx and consequent deepening of the voice.

In females secondary sex characteristics include fat distributions to the breasts, abdomen, mons pubis and hip; voice pitch, broad pelvis and hair pattern.

Therefore as can be seen above secondary sexual characteristics develop both in men and women, albeit differently because the sex hormones giving rise to these characteristics are different in men and women. Therefore to state that, the statement 'Boys have mutations (more correctly secondary sexual characteristics) girls don't', is a **sex** statement is totally **incorrect**, since both women and men develop secondary sexual characteristics. If it is perceived as a **correct statement** by society then the statement itself consists of a **gender issue**, reflecting that society is ignorant of a woman's biology.

Other gender statements included:

- The majority of police officers in the majority of countries are men
- In many countries women earn 70% of what men earn
- It is usually men who buy sex stuff
- Women make peace in the world
- Women must not work men do it at their own risk
- Women care much about their children's education
- Little girls are delicate and shy, little boys are strong and bold

In Poland 20% of people are unemployed. Therefore in order to overcome the unemployment problem, the Polish government is providing benefits for women to stay at home rather than go to work. Benefits are provided for the firstborn only. Poland is turning towards the old traditional roles for women in society. The television network in Poland is turning this issue into a sex

issue when in actual fact it is a gender issue. However the media can be very convincing that it's an obvious sex issue and that traditional roles cannot be changed.

Conclusion:

There are some biological factors which are true which however can be manipulated by society to give rise to sweeping statements and generalizations. Gender issues affect both women and men and can lead to the creations of gender roles for both sexes.

NGO visit

As a last part of this section, we visited a local NGO in order to see one very practical example on how local people put feminist issues into practise. One participant reports about the visit:

Feminist NGO visit: Ariadne -Gaia

Presentations made by Abato Rusgia.

This feminist organisation was founded in December 1989. One of the founders had lived in the UK for 8 months in 1988 and had been inspired by the feminist movement in the there. When she returned to Hungary her dream had been to create a bridge between the UK and Hungary as well as opportunities in Hungary for all her English friends.

Ariadne-Gaia was not intended to be a women's organisation. However due to the title of their organisation 'Ariadne-Gaia' everyone associated this organisation with women issues.

The title of the organisation was chosen for the following reasons:

Ariadne in Greek mythology had provided Theseus (who had come to Crete to kill the Minotaur and save the Athenian youth) with a sword to kill the Minotaur, and thread to enable him to come out of the labyrinth in which the Minotaur lived. The Minotaur represents the monster which resides inside each and every one and within society and Ariande thus provides us with the tools of both overcoming this monster and of living peacefully again. The name Gaia is the ancient Greek name for Mother Earth.

When the Ariadne-Gaia Foundation was founded its emphasis was on training, such as assertiveness training. However this was considered as a male channel of communication to bring about change because it entails telling people what to do and how to do it as well as instructing people on how to behave.

The foundation sees the feminine way of bringing about change as entailing creating connections and networks as well as exploring new avenues on how to connect people. It is similar to weaving

where one weaves different colours into a tapestry thus enabling new patterns to emerge and out of these new behaviour patterns are created.

Society has become very one-sided in that situations or subjects are considered as either masculine or feminine. What is actually required and should be more actively sought is a balance between both female and male principles. This means that training such as assertive training should not be discarded, but should not be regarded as the only tool which will help bring about change. The 21st century is more concentrated on the collective. This does not mean that the individual's needs are discarded; far from it.

A person who has been lovingly given the opportunity to reach self actualization will be more ready to cooperate with others to reach and create a common good. Empowered individuals will make a better collective.

The aim is to create an environment where everyone feels safe, loved and encouraged to express her/his full potential and is also recognized. And creating such an environment may entail not using solely traditional male channels, but rather to weave a strong holding energy based on female principles and using female channels of communication.

Today's society should be a partnership-society where everyone should feel empowered.

Recommended reading:

www.thepartnershipway.org : Rainer Eisler

The chalice and the Blade : Rainer Eisler

Maria Gimubtas

Ariadne-Gaia is currently involved in four major projects:

- 1) One project is aimed towards people who are undergoing a big crises or a transition period in their lives. This project also has its own foundation for cancer patients.
- 2) One project is on organisational learning (the one which Nora is heading known as the Society for Organisational learning (SOL))
- 3) [www. Solonline.org](http://www.Solonline.org)
- 4) A new project for the entitled 'Women for Sustainability'

The main gender issues faced by Hungarian women to day include: representation at work, representation in the media and a crises in the education system in Hungary which is also affecting women. Hungary has only 9 % women MP's.

Eda, one of the founders of the organisation

In 2001 Eda wanted to create her own woman's organisation, however no one could give her correct data regarding any of the women organisations present in Hungary, for the simple reason that the different women organisations did not network between themselves. She therefore decided to use the internet to create connections between these various organisations. Today Eda heads an organisation of 130 women. She has created partnerships for certain projects with the aim of sharing knowledge and experience. Eda is also currently involved in a one year project aimed to help young women entrepreneurs to create their own networks.

Women's organisations in Hungary are gathering strength and power, and are also creating their own regional networks. The internet has been a very useful tool in the creation of such networks. When asked who is involved in the networks, whether it is open to just representatives of organisations or to all members of organisations, Eda answered that the networks are open to representatives of organisations.

The Birth of the World Café

Nora, self-employed and mother of two children moved to live in a small village of 6000 people in central Hungary where the majority of the people living were young families with small children. Nora felt isolated as a self-employed person working from her home. Her life was very difficult, taking care of 2 kids, attending to their education needs and their wellbeing and at the same time being self-employed.

However, she realised that she was not the only person with such a problem. She met with her friends and they realized that a communication problem existed which they first had to overcome in order to start having appropriate solutions. In 2005 Nora and her friends attended a 2 day conference in Vienna where they were very impressed and inspired by the lectures given at the conference. Nora took this learning opportunity to heart and decided to organise her first World Café back in her small village in Hungary, thereby strengthening communication ties between the women within her community. The other alternative would have been to use the existing male network of communication; however the latter was not considered as the ideal means of communication amongst her female community. In this way she created her first women network.

What is the World Café?

World Cafe consists of creating a coffee ambience with chairs and coffee tables, where one can invite friends and choose good topics for discussion. Each table has a host which will lead the discussion with the rest of the people seated at the table. The discussion takes place for half an

hour, after which the people change places with other tables except for the table host. Each table host will have a different topic to discuss, thus the people present will be exposed to different topics for discussion.

This activity encourages a cross-pollination of ideas and provides a possibility to collect ideas and inspirations from other people.

www.theworldcafe.org

Part Two: Training and Skills

Communication/ Assertiveness training

The whole next day was dedicated to training in communication skills and assertiveness training, carried out by Sabine Finzi. Because it was a very important part of the study session, we will report about it more in detail. The power point presentation of Sabine Finzi can be found in the appendixes.

Sabine's presentation focused on the following points:

- 1) Who am I?
- 2) What is the impression that I make with others?
- 3) How assertive am I?
- 4) Who is/are my role model/s?
- 5) Practical examples

Other points discussed included the following:

- 1) The iceberg of Diversity
- 2) The road of identity
- 3) Theory on women situation
- 4) Non-violent communication

The **Johari window**: enables one to explore areas which are usually not usually exploited when communicating with others.

Public self	Blind Spot(what we don't know about yourself)
Private self	Unknown

	(unconscious)
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The Public self is the area know both by oneself and by others. The Johari window enables one to identify any weaknesses in our character which we may harbour unconsciously, bring these up to a conscious level, work through these weaknesses and correcting them, until the correct behaviour becomes so habitual for us that we apply it unconsciously.

Unconscious competence	Unconscious incompetence
Conscious competence	Conscious incompetence

We therefore work from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence, to conscious competence to unconscious competence.

In order for us to become familiar with our blind spot and therefore become familiar with the impression we leave of ourselves on other people, it is necessary to ask for feedback from people we trust the most such as family or close friends.

The participants were then asked by Sabine to comment on the first impression they had when they first met her, since she had purposely not introduced herself at the beginning of the session. The participants commented on her appearance, her ethnic background, her age and her general physical appearance. Other areas commented on and which fall within the area known as the 'private self' in the Johari window included: her marital status, her religion or spirituality, as well as her level of education.

The participants were then asked to split into pairs and to share something of our hidden identity with their partner the aim of the exercise being to show the participants that each person harbours a hidden identity and thus using stereotypes to label people can be very misleading.

At the end of the exercise, Sabine introduced herself as a lecturer of French and Italian origin. She had studied communication in journalism and had worked for 10 years in anti discriminatory organisations. She is currently working on gender issues and programmes designed to help women reach their objectives. She is also the mother of two boys.

Helene, the educational advisor then gave the participants an A3 paper each and asked each participant to write down their names and any circumstances/ experiences which had influenced them in their lives and the skills they learned/gained from such experiences.

The participants were also asked to compare the above results with the answers they had written to the questions listed under the 'Global question and personal answer' (handed to us during Dolores Camats's session) and were also asked to identify areas and goals which they had not realized yet their lives as well as areas which needed improvement.

The lecture also discussed the following points:

- The organisational approach
- The Individual approach
- The Communicational approach

The Theory of tokenism (Rosabeth Moss Kanter)

This theory is concerned with:

- The identity of a person (is very visible)
- Contrast (any differences)
- Symbol (e.g. represents all women)

For instance when a woman working in an all male environment she will be very visible and very identifiable, will present a high contrast with her male colleagues and will also be taken as a symbol to represent all of womankind, this especially the latter will place enormous pressure on her as a worker and her performance, and she will have to give more than her best to be recognized and appreciated. She may be viewed as not fitting within the room and if she succeeds, her success is attributed to the Authority or Organisation, whilst if she fails, her failure will be solely attributed solely to her lack of ability.

In our lives when we express ourselves we have to take into account how others will interpret what we say in order to ensure that we are getting across the correct message.

Which are the factors which influence other people's perception of us? These can include:

- 1) Our family, our educational background, our community which determines the acceptable norms within a society.

2) When communicating verbally with someone, the following weightings are given to three factors:

Words: 20%

Body Language: 60%

Tone of voice : 20%

3) Body Language includes:

- facial expression,
- posture
- space gesture (stand smart on both legs)
- Territory
- Appearance.
- Eye contact

4) Other factors include:

- Extent of knowledge on the particular situation
- Clear sentences and enunciation
- Using key words
- Repeat oneself when necessary especially when the audience shows signs that it is not understanding
- Asking you audience whether you are being understood

Therefore in order for one to portray a confident image of oneself one should take in to account:

- 1) What do I want to say/be
- 2) What do I want to deice to say/be
- 3) What do I actually say/show
- 4) What does the audience actually hear/perceive
- 5) What does the audience actually pay attention to
- 6) What does the audience actually remember after my communication?

The participants were then asked to split into groups of five and each individual in each group was asked to list her role models and why she had chosen such person to be role models.

Self Image

Public image

Ideal Image

Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
Reactionary	Being Proactive	Sarcastic
Justify oneself	Aggressive	Hostile
Pretend nothing happened	adapt the right behavior to the situation	forceful
		noisy

Many people have a tendency to react instantly without thinking to a situation. Recent Neuroscience research has attributed this behaviour to a group of several neurons known as the Amygdala, residing within the part of the brain referred to as the Limbic system.

This behavioural pattern is called the **Amygdala hijack**. The trigger could be an event in itself or is symbolically perceived as a threat, which elicits a strong emotion and an automatic reaction in an individual, which she/he might regret later.

Which are the steps one should take to avoid an amygdala hijack? This may include some self training:

Step 1 This individual must identify the drivers and motives, values, past memories unpleasant events which trigger such a response.

Step 2 The next step would be to identify the 'reaction of events' on one's response

Step 3 One should identify the words used to communicate with others during an amygdala hijack

Step 4 The final step would be to evaluate the impact such words may have on a receiver.

Women in society face systematic discrimination. They have their individual life choices and attitudes. They have different ways of expressing themselves. The theory of Tokenism says that women will stand out in a male environment. There is a pressure for them to perform and they are facing stereotypes and are seen as mutating males.

The importance of non-verbal communication.

The participants discussed how one can judge the reaction of other people towards oneself. The proposal is to use subtle questions and to watch the posture of the audience, although here again we have to take into account the differences in behaviour of people from different backgrounds. For example, crossed arms can express a whole set of meanings.

The participants were asked to voice their associations with effective communication. The points mentioned were:

- eye contact with the audience
- be informed about your topic
- make short and simple sentences
- ask if you are understood
- use the right tools
- know what your message is
- use key words and make them visible if possible
- repeat the key issues
- structure your speech
- put empathy on your key words and issues

This was followed by a group debate on the role models that we have. Role models can for example be politicians, activists, relatives, colleagues, trainers, boyfriends, friends, writers, philosophers, fictional super-heroines etc. The reason, why they were our role models were among others that they have good communication skills, they fight for their rights even in difficult situations, they worked hard, fought for education, are good in public speeches, have a lot of knowledge, are very co-operative and not oppressive or dominant, they are calm and rational, are creative and have a vision, have passion, are committed, have courage and so on.

Afterwards Sabine discussed the basic steps for a successful communication:

- 1) demonstrate that you're listening → make the other people calm
- 2) reflect/paraphrase back your understanding (how do we make sure that we are understood and understand?)
- 3) respond: what you think and feel, state clearly what you would like to happen
- 4) try to reach a workable compromise

To become assertive in your speech you should avoid rambling statements such as “yes, but” or “I can't/ I won't/ Impossible”; you should not use non-words such as ok or eh, you should not use aggressive words and no passive justifications or denials.

To draw a summary, we should practise using right words, have a script ready, use the right body language, focus on what is possible, agree on workable compromise, be clear in defining the need, keep good open relations, ask for feedback and breathe since it is very visible how you breathe.

Now Sabine presented us some video examples of women holding speeches. There was first a French minister of research and science. She was nervous and was making nervous gestures; she

used the same regular tones, was a bit smiling, and breathing fast, she had lots of non-words in her speech, she was surrounded by 7 men, and she was the only woman. She looks more self-confident at the end.

The second example was another French woman who was not breathing at all and was rearranging her belongings on the table in front of her and tries to control the space in front of her. She didn't look straight into the camera and she doesn't look convinced of what she is saying. It is also important to know that she is not speaking her native tongue.

The third example is Angela Merkel, the German chancellor. She was reading out her speech and not talking freely. She had good word-stress and filled the room. Even while speaking about feelings she was reading from a paper.

She was followed by Lady Diana, who spoke freely and very emotionally. Her body language and words were in harmony and she seems to be honest. The difference in situation is that she doesn't have an audience but into a camera which only showed the face.

The last example is Hillary Clinton who was giving an announcing speech. She knew what she is saying, controls the situation and looks into everybody's eyes. Her speech is very populist; she says very simple things in simple sentences. Clinton is not talking about herself; she is heating up the atmosphere for somebody else's speech. She also doesn't need to convince her audience since it is a party event.

After this exercise the participants split into groups of 3 and were asked to present themselves and their NGOs to the others in one minute. One of the watchers will analyze the words and the second one the body language and will give their feedback to the presenting person. Afterwards the participants expressed the problems they faced while speaking, for example the question of where to put your arms, how to start and end a speech, speaking too fast. Recommendations to that were to observe how you put your arms in a very relaxed situation and employ this way of holding them and also to use some gestures to stress your message. You should be aware of how to put breaks in your word flow and not forget to breathe. You should make sure that there are no things that might disturb you, such as tight clothes, open doors etc.

As a last exercise the participants were split into two groups. One was supposed to defend positive discrimination and the other group was to speak against. Two people of each group were discussing from their forced perspective and the other members of the group could replace the "combatants" when they wanted to interfere in the discussion. The participants found this part very useful and enriching for it gave them the possibility to be in a role that they usually not have and to train argumentation.

Exchange of knowledge and skills

Since the participants united a wide range of expertise, it was one of the main objectives to make this expertise accessible to the other participants. For that purpose we offered a “Skills Market” to the participants, a time frame in which everybody could offer skill workshops to the others. The participants and also prep team members offered workshops on project management, fundraising, working methods etc. The feedback and evaluation showed that this session was appreciated.

The participating women were not only encouraged to present their skills during the skills market, but also to exchange skills and knowledge throughout the whole week, for example in the session on their motivation, on discrimination and on women in media. Sharing experience and knowledge also ensures that the people feel their contribution is appreciated and valuable.

One example of the skills workshop:

Suvituuli from Finland presents a fast method to reach a decision:

“At first you need to decide the issues you want to discuss. You go into groups that have different colours. In the groups, everybody has two minutes to speak about the topic and the others cannot interrupt. One person makes notes. Then the group discussed the issue and writes down the points that they discussed. After 30 min this round is finished. Then the people are divided into new groups, this time with different fruit symbols. The groups move from table to table whereas their notes always remain on the table. At every table, the fruit group member who has been in the original colour group dealing with this topic is the host of the fruit group and gives an introduction to the topic. Then the group discusses the issue for 15 min and make amendments to the paper. Then the group moves to the next issue. At the end the participants have a plenary session in which they discuss the amendments and vote on the papers.”

On the second last day of the study session, we asked the participants to present in working groups the methods and structures that their organisations employ in order to reach gender equality, such as quota, gender working groups, a person focusing on gender equality in the board etc. Then the working group was to debate the usefulness of the methods and judge them with a plus or minus. This judgement was then presented to the plenary.

Methods that were collected include:

- quotas (temporary or permanent)
- discussion groups on gender issues
- seminars on gender issues
- campaigns on gender issues
- mentoring programs: women parliamentarians mentor young women and show them how they work, how they arrange their daily life and how politics function
- women subgroups within the organisation
- public statements addressing gender issues
- gender budgeting

- individual sponsoring
- women foundations
- support and integrate gender studies
- gender action plan
- networking
- motivate parental leave (for men)
- better child care facilities
- pension/salary for housework
- gender aware language
- publish gender statistics
- education programs to raise gender awareness
- mentoring and coaching
- gender mainstreaming
- women solidarity groups
- men's reflection groups
- putting gender issues on the agenda and in the spotlight
- clear description of functions
- informal women networks
- adopt schedules to specific needs of women and mothers, as long as it is still the women who take care of the children), for example, adjust meeting hours
- campaign for female membership
- projects/ seminars for women who are not involved yet
- trainings for women
- co-leadership of the organisation
- gender political spokesperson
- women assembly
- women working groups and organisations
- women veto
- space for gender issues in electoral program

Part Three: putting theory into practise

Statement

Towards the end of the week, the statement team initiated a gathering of points, issues and demands that the participants wanted to mention in the final statement. The team defined the sub-headings of the statement following the different areas that the study session covered and the participants were invited to write down the problems that they see in that area and what demands they would make in order to improve the situation. The points were taken up and structured. At the

last programme day, the statement team presented their draft; amendments were gathered and then the participants voted on each paragraph and on the statement as a whole. Such statements are important for FYEG because they transform the knowledge gained in projects into policies and become useful for the political everyday life of FYEG. The statement has been distributed to all members and the Members of European Parliament and it was published in our magazine and at the FYEG website. The text can be found in the “Outcome” section.

How to implement methods in our organisations?

After working groups had presented a collection of gender equality methods as described earlier in Part II, the working groups were then asked to discuss and define how their organisations could implement such tools and which methods they would find less useful and why. The idea of this was to encourage the participants to actually propose methods ensuring gender equality to their organisations and thus improve the chances and representation of women in their organisations back home. Also for FYEG this was a point of reflection for we are as well looking for more and different means to ensure gender equality, since the one we are employing right now proved not to be 100% successful.

Project development

At the last day we held a session of open space technology in order to facilitate project development. The participants were invited to come up with proposals for projects and topics that they want to work on and develop. The outcomes were numerous and are described in the “Main outcomes”.

Social dimension

During the week we had numerous social events that aimed at bringing the group closer together, to encourage informal talks and also an intercultural experience. For example, the second evening in Budapest was reserved for the Intercultural Evening, during which the participants presented traditional food, drinks, costumes and dances of their country of origin. But also on the other evenings, a social event was offered: A story telling evening, in which everybody presents a fictional story or legend of their home country, a movie evening with movies about women who went their own way; we had a talent night and a massage course and of course a very nice farewell party with the motto “Gender Trouble” and the request to appear in costumes.

Main outcomes of the Study Session

General Outcomes

Statement

During the week, the participants developed a statement that is concluding the points of learning and experience as well as the demands that came out of the discussion. The statement has been published at the website of FYEG and in its magazine and has been distributed to the green Members of European Parliament. It will be from now on part of the FYEG policy and will find reflection in press releases and statements that we do as FYEG.

Two prep team members have been responsible for the development of the statement. In the last third of the week, they gathered the points that the participants wanted to see mentioned in the statement and wrote down the demands. In the end of the week, the statement was voted upon paragraph by paragraph and in the end by a final vote. It reads as follows:

“WOMEN POWER” STUDY SESSION

2-9 April 2006, Budapest

We, the participants at the study session “Women Power!” – representing over twenty youth, green and women’s organisations from over twenty European Countries - have met at the European Youth Centre in Budapest to:

- Share THE needs and dreams we brought with us;
- Share experiences, methods and other good practices for empowering women;
- Identify educational and social strategies for empowering women;
- Explore the role of women’s rights mechanisms;
- Explore the perspectives of the feminist movement both collectively and individually;
- Discuss the role of youth policy in women empowering;
- Create a network of socially and politically active women to give ourselves the courage to be engaged and to work on solutions of problems that we recognise;

In the area of Culture

- A. We have recognised the expectations that society puts on women are disproportionately high in comparison to those placed upon men, creating pressure to be perfect;
- B. We believe that women still meet many prejudices, such as bearing the whole responsibility for children’s welfare and domestic chores;

- C. We are especially concerned with the fact that women are treated as objects in many situations;
- D. We acknowledge that women are very often confronted with the problem of glass-ceiling;
- E. We are also alarmed that women often suffer from oppression connected to religious and ideological conservatism;
- F. We are aware that today`s societies demand too much of people which makes it hard to combine the professional and the personal life, especially for women;
- G. We are sad to notice that, despite many programs in the whole of Europe many state governments still do not cooperate with non-governmental- organisations on gender equality; or take into account the issues of gender equality;

In Politics

- A. We recognise that women are underrepresented in almost all political bodies in the world;
- B. We believe that today`s political system is structured by men thus favouring men;
- C. We are alarmed by the fact that women in politics are still very often confronted with sexism and the use of stereotypes to discourage;
- D. Very often the political resolutions are not implemented and have no impact on the real lives of women in Europe;

In the field of our own organisations:

- A. We are alarmed that even women who are engaged in political or social work are often discouraged by an existing hierarchy, which does not allow them to get to reach the top positions;
- B. We are aware that women`s voices are very often underrepresented, and women seem to be invisible in many ways;
- C. We are sad to notice that, despite of many achievements we still suffer from a lack of communication and the sharing of information within our organisations;
- D. Too much demand is put on local NGOs to solve the problems which are not being considered by the governments and parties ;
- E. We are sad to mention that women as politicians are very often discriminated against in the media concentrating on their appearance and their gender roles;

At the labour market

- A. We are sad to notice that many women meet glass ceiling on their way to achieve the highest position at their work place;
- B. We are alarmed that there are more unemployed women than men, although women are as educated and skilled;
- C. We acknowledge that precarity affects women in special way;

- D. We frown upon discrimination of women because of reproductional differences, pregnant women should have equal opportunities;
- E. It is important to mention that fields, such as social work, where women are overrepresented, are very often not equally valued;
- F. We believe women should receive equal pay for equal work.

As individuals

- A. We recognise that the road to equality is a path of continuous learning;

At the same time we would like to stress the following concerns:

- The public sphere is structured by men thus favouring men, and creating a public sphere accepting different value systems should be our first aim to achieve;
- Youth programmes and youth policies often marginally consider the problems of gender balance;
- Girls and young women's participation and influence in women's rights organisations often remains worryingly low or insufficient; and many women are not aware at all of being discriminated;
- Often societies that have reached a high level of development still contain women facing problems in claiming their rights and achieving equal opportunities;
- Globalisation and the increasing gap between rich and poor in many European societies is likely to further expose women to economic dependency and social exclusion and, generally, to legitimise economic discrimination;

PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The mass media should be encouraged to let women express their opinions for a wide public, show their contribution to the societies, and give them a chance to take part in the deciding process, so that the media will fulfil their role in democracy;
2. We encourage medias to promote women in all occupations and reject gender stereotypes;
3. There is a need to continue setting a network of cooperation between women in all European countries;
4. We strongly call all women to support each other;
5. We encourage all people interested to organise as many as possible other gender related meetings to involve more women into the feminist movement;
6. We recommend to provide gender education in different fields of education, also gender studies departments should be created in all universities,
7. We recommend to work on positive actions, that have an empowering role especially for young women;

8. There is a huge need to work on breaking stereotypes concerning the women rights movement, therefore we call for intensive education in public schools, public medias;
9. There is a need to encourage women to be more politically conscious and consider individual parties commitment to gender equality when voting;
10. We call FYEG and other feminist organisations to plan and set any kind of “Politicians-School for Women”;
11. We call our organisations to analyse their own system of organisation and work for empowering women, and it is necessary to improve it, so that their voice will be heard;
12. We want to involve all men interested into our actions and work on gender issues;
13. Equality systems should be set into local practices, so that at least formal equality will be implemented in the every day life of women in Europe;
14. We want to work on having broader feminist representation and perspective in politics of all kind;
15. We think that it is important to achieve the same parental rights and responsibilities for men and women;
16. We strongly recommend to implement temporary quotas not only in political bodies but also in companies;
17. We decide to plan our careers by improving different skills, being more assertive, using our talents to become more self-confident and accumulating knowledge about what can occur on woman’s way to success;
18. We recognise a need to assert ourselves in working relations and to set limits in order to combine successfully personal activity with professional life;

Project proposals

On the last programme day we invited the participants with the help of the open space technology to develop new project ideas and proposals around the topic of gender equality to define the next steps of how to go on with our work. The outcome of this open space workshops have been numerous and very good. In the following we present the project ideas that were initiated by the participants:

* Training courses for women with less opportunities: The aim is to eradicate stereotypes and bring women of the so called “lower class” together. The project should help the women to gain self-confidence and assertiveness and it should address the topic of domestic violence. Different age groups will be of advantage. It is now necessary to look for funds and partners and for housing facilities. These should ideally be in the countryside.

* To create an informal women’s network. The members will support each other, provide information, skills and technical support for each other. We will set up a mailing list, gather who can

offer what and look out for more women. The aim is to empower ourselves and make use of a structure that men already use to their advantage.

* A training company that offers trainings on discrimination, sexism, intolerance, xenophobia and how to fight them. It should offer trainings for companies, schools and other institutions. The aim is to raise gender equality and by founding a company empower the women who manage it. We want to share experiences and accomplish common projects. As next steps we want to find similar projects and look for sponsors.

* Entrepreneurial service for women: to offer courses on international management, accounting, communication, legal frame etc in order to motivate women to start a business and be independent. The target group would be unemployed women, single mums and women who lost their job because of transition and privatization. As next steps we need to set up a network, develop partnerships and find money.

* F-FEST (F= feminist): a concert with young women performers and groups in Prague, connected with workshops, art performances etc. We want to raise awareness for gender issues and promote feminist ideas. For this project, we need to find contacts in Prague, contact women musicians, create a network and find money.

* Seminars to empower women with leadership skills. The seminars would address stereotypes, leadership skills, communication methods etc. The seminars should be done in co-operation with national NGOs. Next we would have to find trainers and participants as well as locations and of course money.

* Gender working group: This group should exist and work within FYEG and bring people together that are interested in gender topics and also bring forward the FYEG policy on gender and work politically. We don't only want to address gender topics as such but also want to research how policies such as social welfare cuttings affect women in specific. The working group will be open to all young greens and young people that are interested. We need to set up a web space and define our working areas.

* Career development: We want to set up workshops for young women who just graduated from university and don't know yet what to do in their professional life. We will offer them skills and possibilities for education. There should be such workshops at all universities at the end of each term.

* Campaign on women in politics: Within FYEG and also with other political youth organisations we want to encourage women to get active in politics for we are as well affected by politics and politics is everywhere. We will create nice and appealing leaflets for this, will write a campaign concept and set up a website.

Main learning points for the participants

*** Different approaches and methods**

For the participants this study session was also a point of giving and receiving experience, knowledge and cultural backgrounds. The participants came from very different backgrounds; partly from northern countries where gender equality has been on the political agenda for a long time and others from Eastern European countries where this topic is not even a topic yet. Therefore, the approaches and solutions have also been very different which was not always easy to deal with but which was a main point of intercultural learning. Reporting about the methods that their organisations apply in order to reach gender equality they discovered new ideas and approaches. For example, one group found methods like quota or separate women structures applied by Western organisations less helpful because they had the approach of reaching gender equality together with men, whereas other participants rather believed in positive discrimination and women-only structures. This was an interesting debate and both “parties” took the opportunity to explain their point of view.

*** Communication Skills/Assertiveness training**

This debate has been the conclusion out of a first part of the week, during which we focused on gaining knowledge about feminism and feminist movements in different countries followed by a part of gaining skills; mainly represented through the day that we dedicated with the help of the expert Sabine Finzi to communication skills and assertiveness training. This second part has also been one of the main learning points for the participants. Since it is possible to read about the history of women’s suffrage at home or in the internet, but it is rarer to have a teacher on communication and assertiveness that focuses on women. This day has been seen very positively in the evaluation and as one of – if not THE – main learning points of the study session.

***Exchanging skills**

We had prepared a skills market, that is a space where everybody who wants can offer their skills to the others and it was widely used. The participants and also the prep team members had very interesting skills, such as working methods, project management, fundraising, membership recruitment and many other things. From their co-participants, they could learn very practical and tried-out methods that might be useful for them or their organisations and they also had the experience that others were interested in their skills which previously might have seemed marginal to them.

*** Developing projects**

The participants learned how to develop projects first of all by attending the project workshops during the Skills Market and also by bringing their own project idea on paper and later into praxis during and after the Open Space Technology. And they also learned that it is actually possible to realize own project ideas, be it a youth exchange on a certain topic or setting up a group of people with a common interest in a topic. They learned where to find money and support and what to be cautious about and that nothing is impossible.

* Examples

The lecturers also functioned as a good example. They were successful women, active in politics and society. They showed that what we talked about is indeed possible and you don't need to be extraordinary in order to go your own way.

* Knowledge

Last but not least, knowledge also played an important role. For example, knowledge about the history of the women's movement, about situations in different countries, about the Council of Europe, about assertiveness and much more. The knowledge gained was an important learning point for the participants, as they also stated during the evaluation.

Main learning points for the organisation

* Women only

This was the first "women only" project of FYEG and it has proven to work very well and also to be appreciated by the participants. Although not everybody wanted to repeat such seminars for women only everybody liked the atmosphere and regarded this as a great experience. For us as an organisation it was also interesting to see what different approaches the participants had and what their feminist standpoint and philosophy was. FYEG will consider repeating this in the future and maybe arranging further seminars that focus on one sex in order to discuss gender equality.

* Different methods and approaches

For FYEG it was of great importance to see the methods applied by the represented organisations to reach gender equality. We could take up some good ideas but unfortunately there was no completely new method that we learnt about.

* Training as a tool for gender equality?

The communication and assertiveness training was also very interesting for us as an organisation to see although we are a bit sceptical in how much the training can be a solution for the gender inequality in society as a whole although it definitely gives good tools to individuals.

* New active people

With this study session, FYEG could gain some new active people that are now working within FYEG to realize their project proposals, to work on the gender issues or to take part in other projects.

Follow-up activities

Realisation of project ideas

FYEG has stayed in contact with the participants and supports them in realizing their project ideas. Regarding the idea for a gender working group within FYEG, there have been meetings with local persons in Finland and Germany, both to strengthen the ties of the former participants as well as to involve new people and new ideas. The website for this and the campaign for involving women into politics are in the making.

Communication between participants

The participants are still using the mailing list of the study session to announce news and greetings but also to forward calls for participants for projects around gender and to discuss issues raised in media etc.

Involving the results in other structures

The Gender Initiative, a working group that is reforming the structures and working methods of FYEG in order to reach more gender equality, has received the outcomes and will work on the proposals brought forward by the participants. The Gender Initiative has also organised a seminar on gender equality in Europe to which the participants of the study session were invited. The seminar took place in Warsaw at the end of August 2006 in co-operation with the Polish Young Greens.

The political dimension

The results of the study session have also been discussed at a board meeting of FYEG and will be tabled at the General Assembly in March 2007 together with the results of the Gender Initiative. The Women power Study Session has also been documented in the magazine of FYEG, the "Ecosprinter".

Final conclusions and Recommendations

Political

The study session made, once again, clear that the question of gender inequality is far from being solved. Discriminations against women exist in the East as much as in the West and it doesn't look like it is going to be eradicated soon. Politicians have often forgotten about the question, claiming equality to be reached. It is true that there is hardly any law in Europe that openly discriminates women instead the discriminations have become more subtle and indirect. Also, the consequences of policies and laws are different on women and men, an aspect that is often forgotten. There is no gender neutral method or directive. Although gender equality is or better, has to be clearly an issue for both men and women, it remains in the field of the ones affected by this discrimination, women, to again and again raise their voices, bring inequalities on the agenda and remind the world that we are far from equality. Therefore women only networks, seminars and meetings remain vital and necessary and should be encouraged by the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe should go on promoting gender equality and funding youth projects on gender issues. Since the Youth Program by the EU Commission often doesn't allow women only projects, the Council of Europe remains the only regular source for international youth organisations to carry out such projects.

For the green movement it is necessary to sustain and even intensify the efforts made on gender issues and also to review and restructure their methods for reaching gender equality on a regular basis. FYEG will continue working on this topic. The study session provided us with very useful input in knowledge, projects and active women that will strengthen the policy on gender issues within FYEG. In the gender policy field this event has definitely been crucial in showing the way forward.

Technical

The EYCB provided us with an excellent help and service, before, during and after the study session. The educational advisor, Helene Barkovic, has been a great help and supporter for the prep team and FYEG. It is very helpful that the EYCB offers to take over the financial arrangements and we would ask the Council of Europe to provide this service also in the future, since the financial and administrative arrangements are a heavy burden for a small organisation like FYEG that works almost 100% with volunteers.

Conclusion

FYEG thanks the EYCB and Helene Barkovic for their help and commitment. FYEG asks all political actors in Europe and beyond to stand up for true gender equality. We encourage every young women to be aware of discrimination and to act against it. FYEG encourages and promotes

the feminist struggle and this study session was a great opportunity to bring together young like-minded women and empower them and us to carry on the struggle.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Program of the study session

FYEG Study Session “Women Power!”

Program

Sunday 2nd, Arrival Day

Arrival until 19hrs

19hrs Dinner

20.30 Welcoming Evening

Monday 3rd

Breakfast 8.00 to 9.30

9.30 Introduction session

Motivation/ Expectation

History of women’s rights movement

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee Break (in between)

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch Break

14.30 Women in politics: a view from insight with Dolors Camats, MP

16.00 – 16.30 Break

19.00 Dinner

21.00 International Evening

Tuesday 4th

Breakfast 8.00 to 9.30

9.30 Intro to the day, Energizer

Personal experience of discrimination

11.00 Break

Gender roles: how do they work? How do we behave? With Beata Maciejewska, Polish green party

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Strategies for breaking gender roles

16.00 Break

18.30 Evaluation

19.00 Dinner

21.00 Story telling

Wednesday 5th

Breakfast 8.00 to 9.30

9.30 Intro to day/ Energizer

How to be more self-confident? Communication skills with Sabine Finzi, communication trainer, Brussels

Break

13:00 Lunch

14.30 Conflict prevention in public communication

16:00 Break

19:00 Dinner

21:00 Movie/games

Thursday 6th

Breakfast 8.00 to 9.30

9.30 Study visit to a local NGO tbc

13:00 Lunch/ Travel reimbursement

Free Afternoon; organised visit to SPA

20.00 Dinner in town

Bars in town/ Free evening

Friday 7th

Breakfast 8.00 to 9.30

9.30 Intro to the day/ Energizer

How can we reach gender balance?

11.00 Break

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Skills; techniques... for creating projects

16.00 Break

19.00 Dinner

21.00 Talent night/ massage course

Saturday 8th

Breakfast 8.00 to 9.30

9.30 Intro to the day/ Energizer

Project development

11.00 Break

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Evaluation

19.00 Dinner

21.00 Gender troubles Party

Sunday 9th

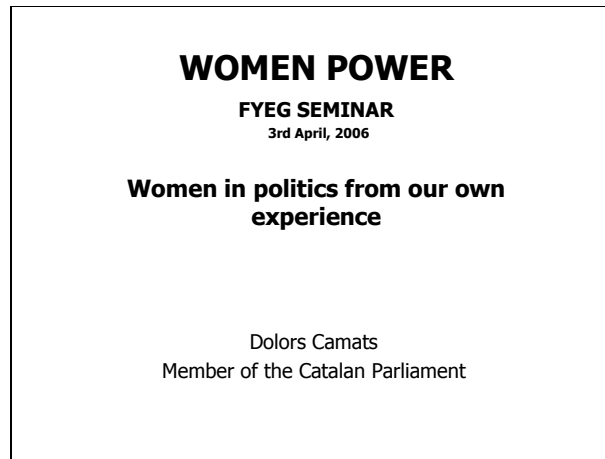
Departure

Appendix 2: Final list of participants

Country	Organisation	First Name	Last Name
Spain	EGGO (European Green Gender Observatory)	Marta	Martinez
Spain	Joves D'Esquerra Verda	Aida	Llauradó Álvarez
Former Republic Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Union of Women Organisations of the Republic of Macedonia	Aleksandra	Krzalovska
Germany	Grüne Jugend	Anna	Cavazzini
Bulgaria	Youth Club	Irina	Dakova
Bulgaria	Youth Club	Vanya	Bayreva
United Kingdom	Young Greens of England and Wales	Charlotte	Gasser
Spain	Joves D'Esquerra Verda	Clara	Bosch
Malta	ADZ (Alternattiva Demokratika Zghazgha)	Denise	Attard
Turkey	AEGEE Ankara	Didem	Ünal
Ukraine	Policewomen group	Elena	Meshcheryakova
United Kingdom	Young Greens of England and Wales	Francesca	Richards
Kosovo	ASFJUP – Law Students Association of University of Prishtina	Flutura	Kusari
Greece	European Network Of Women (ENOW)	Katerina	Pantazi
Lithuania	Vilnius Youth Center “In Corpore”	Laura	Varzgalyte
Poland	University of Maria Sklodowska-	Magdalena	Dabrowska
Poland	eFKa Women’s Foundation	Natalia	Sarata
Romania	PLEON Graffiti	Sabina	Stirb
Serbia	JEF (Young European Federalists)	Sandra	Dragojlovic
Finland	ViNO (Vihreiden Nourten ja Opiskelijoiden liitto)	Sanna	Kopra
Belgium	Jong Groen	Saraswati	Matthieu
Germany	Grüne Jugend	Selma	Beck
Finland	ViNO (Vihreiden Nourten ja Opiskelijoiden liitto)	Suvituuli	Sihvola
Finnland	ViNO (Vihreiden Nourten ja Opiskelijoiden liitto)	Tiia	Katajamäki
Cyprus	NEOI (Young Greens Cyprus)	Valentina	Theodosiou
Ukraine	International Roma women fund “Chiricli”	Kondur	Zemfira
Bosnia and Hercegovina	Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Hercegovina	Elma	DEMIR
Turkey	Amnesty International	Sule	Bayrak
Finland/Sweden	Gron Ungdom	Ritva	Ryynänen

Preperatory team			
Malta	ADZ (Alternattiva Demokratika Zghazgha)	Karen	Bonello
Poland	Ostra Zielen	Kasia	Dulko
Armenia	JEF (Young European Federalists)	Marish	Manucharyan
Spain	Joves d'Esquerra Verda	Laia	Ortiz
Germany	FYEG	Ska	Keller
Belgium	CoE, educational advisor	Helene	Barkovic

Appendix 3: Power Point Presentation of Dolors Camats



- I'm 35. Felix, my son, is 3 years old
- I'm member of the Catalan Parliament since October 2003
- I was independent, when I was elected.
- Now I'm the spokesperson of ICV (Green Party of Catalonia).



The question is not how many women access to power, but, we access to do what?

Can we expect women act differently?

% women	Countries	% women in every country
41-49'9%	2	(49) Rwanda - (45) Sweden
31-39'9%	18	Finland, Denmark, Cuba, Spain, Argentina, Belgium, Austria, New Zeland, Germany, Burundi, Tanzania ...
20-29'9%	36	Seychelles, Belarus, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Namibia, Irak, Switzerland, Mexico, Luxembourg, Tunis, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Croatia, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Portugal, Latvia, Canada, Poland, China, United Kingdom...
10-19'9%	73	Senegal, Macedonia, Estonia, Peru, Check Republic, Bosnia Herzegovina, Slovakia, Cyprus, Zimbabwe, USA, Angola, Chile, Israel, Sudan, Ireland, Greece, Liberia, Italy, Rumania, Uruguay, Morocco, Thailand, Mali, Russia...
Less than 9'9%	47	Georgia, Malta, Hungary, Malaysia, Japan, Brazil, Cameroun, India, Guatemala, Somalia, Serbia and Montenegro, Albania, Benin, Kenya, Mongolia, Argelia, Armenia, Ukraine, Libia, Turkey, Egipt, Yemen
0%	11	Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Emirates, Bahrain, Kirghizstan...

Unfinished democracy

- In the majority of the countries of the world there are no legal obstacles for women participation in politics.
- More than 70% of countries have less than 20% women in Parliaments.

Obstacles for women participation in politics:

- Social and cultural conditions
- The organisation of the political system

Reasons for women participation

- Equal rights
- Justice
- Democracy
- “Because I decide”

To talk on working groups

- The situation in my country
- The situation in my political party
- My own experience
- My expectations and wishes

Personal Questionnaire

1. I want to become..... Why?
2. Which difficulties will I face?
3. What do I bring to politics?

Conclusions

- Organisation of political system is based on men.
- Women struggle affects all society
- Equality is a way to change the world

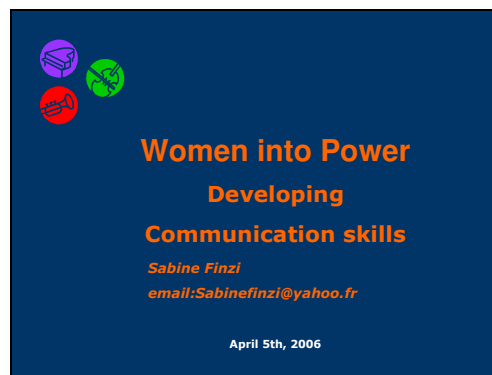
*Politics can change
a woman,
but a lot of women
can change politics*

To know more

EGGO
(European Green Gender Observatory)

www.eggogreens.org

Appendix 4: Power Point presentation of Sabine Finzi



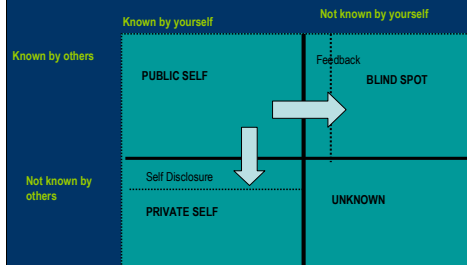
The slide features a dark blue background. In the top left corner, there are three circular icons: a purple one with a book, a green one with a leaf, and a red one with a speech bubble. The main text is centered and reads: 'Women into Power' in orange, 'Developing' in white, and 'Communication skills' in orange. Below this, the name 'Sabine Finzi' and email 'email:Sabinefinzi@yahoo.fr' are listed in white. At the bottom center, the date 'April 5th, 2006' is written in white.

AGENDA

- Who am I
- The impression I make
- My assertive me
- My role model
- Practice
- The Iceberg of Diversity
- The road identity
- Theory on women situation
- Non violent communication
- Non verbal communication and
- Hillary Clinton

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Johari Window



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The Diversity Iceberg



Exercise:

- In pairs please share an element of your invisible identity...

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The Identity road

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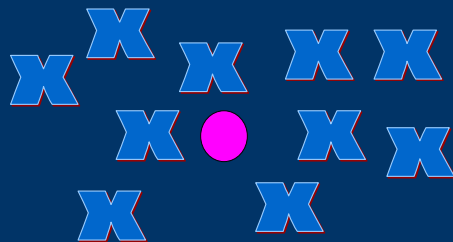
Women in the society

- Organisational approach
- Individual approach
- Communicational approach

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The theory of Tokenism

Rosabeth Moss Kanter



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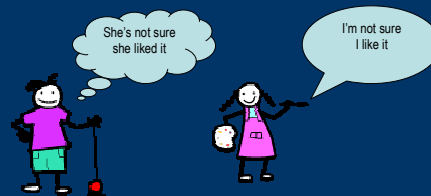
Consequences for “Tokens”

- Visible
- Contrast
- Symbol
- Pressure to perform
- Lack of fit
- Attribution
- Stereotyping

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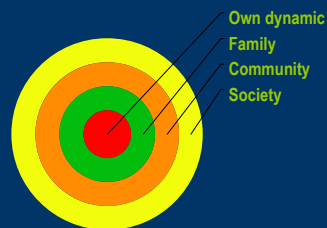
2

What she says,
what he understands....



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Influences on perceptions

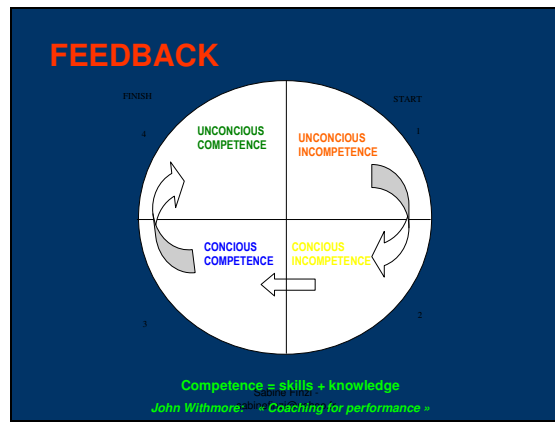


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The impression I make

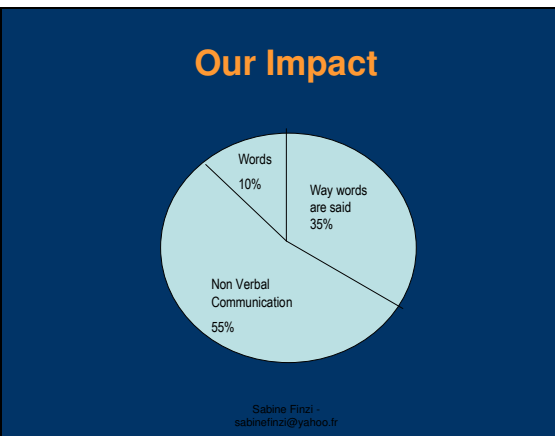
- Ask the person next to you the first impression you made on her?

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NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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- ## NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION
- Facial expression
 - Posture
 - Space gesture
 - Territory
 - Appearance
- Sabine Finzi
sabinefinzi@yahoo.fr



Communication

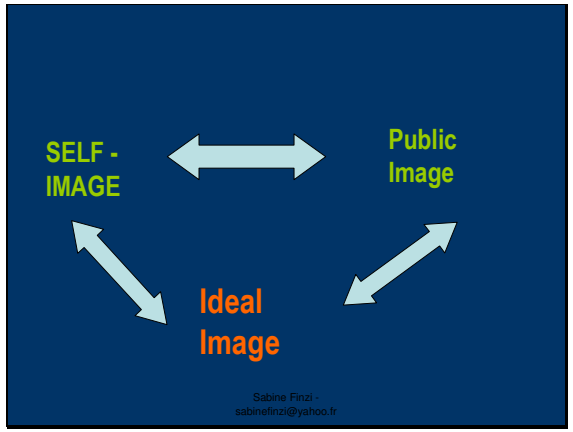
- What do I want to say / be
- What do I decide to say / be
- What do I really say / show
- What does the other hear /perceive
- What does the other listen
- What does the other perceive
- What does the other remembers

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WHO DO YOU ADMIRE ? and why?

- Groups of 5

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Assertiveness

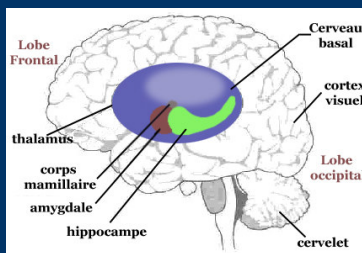
• Passive	• Assertive	• Aggressive
<i>Reactive</i>	<i>Proactive</i>	<i>Sarcasm</i>
<i>Justifying</i>	<i>Chosen</i>	<i>Hostile</i>
<i>Avoiding</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Forcing</i>
<i>Excusing</i>	<i>Initiate</i>	<i>Noisy</i>
	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Airs</i>
	<i>Open</i>	<i>Feeling</i>
	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Personalism</i>
	<i>Empathic</i>	
	<i>Constructive</i>	
	<i>Tone of voice</i>	
	<i>Define the limit</i>	

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RESPONSABILITY

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The brain



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Neuroscience research

- In certain situation people feel before they think and act
- In the brain this is accounted for via a newly identified neural link

Adapted from Daniel Goleman "Emotional Intelligence"

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The Four Stages of an Amygdala "Hijack"

- **1. A trigger:** An Event that correctly or symbolically, is perceived as a threat.
- **2. A strong emotion**
- **3. An automatic reaction:** One that you regret later, after the feeling pass. This reaction is usually inappropriate to the situation, and often has a negative effect on you, the other person or performance.
- **Feelings of regret** about reaction

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STEPS IN MANAGING YOUR RESPONSE

Step 1. Know your triggers

- personal drivers or motives
- values
- memories of past unpleasant events.

Step 2. Identify the "chain reaction" in you response

Step 3. Identify the "self talk" you use when responding.

Step 4. Challenge the "self talk" you use

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Managing your response

- Understand your common triggers by looking back at past hijacks. Look for patterns and themes in order to identify your underlying motives across situations.
- Common motives and example hijacks:

Motivation	Example
• Need for approval	saying "yes" for fear of rejection
• Need for recognition	Anger or threats to status
• Need to belong	Withdrawal from conflict
• Need to be in control	Anger when subordination is required

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- Remember an experience when you had an "amygdala hijack" and share it in group of 5.
- Analyze the trigger and an other possible answer.

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ASSERTIVE

- To be able to say the right thing at the right moment.
- Ability to manage difficult situations.
- Achieve more of the results you want without manipulating or aggressing others.

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Main Areas of Assertion

Expressing Feelings	Positive Negative
Setting Limits	Counteracting putdowns / criticisms Defining our needs
Initiating	Starting a conversation Putting forward ideas Asking for something you need Accepting valid criticism
Positive Self Concept	Identify needs Stand up for rights Awareness of behaviour / needs

3 Basic Steps to Assertiveness

- 1) Demonstrate you are listening
- 2) Reflect/paraphrase back your understanding
- 3) Respond:
 - what you think and feel
 - State clearly what you would like to happenThen:
 - 4) Try to reach a workable compromiseRemember to:
 - Adopt a confident body language

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Becoming Assertive

Avoid.....

- Rambling statements
- "I can't" "I won't" "impossible" "yes but"
- Non words
- Aggressive words
- Passive justifications, Self denial

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Why we can't say No

- ✓ Desire to help
- ✓ Need to feel important
- ✓ Fear of causing offence
- ✓ Not knowing how
- ✓ Desire to be busy
- ✓ Expectation of others

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SUMMARY

- ✓ Practice using right words
- ✓ A 'Script'
- ✓ Right Body Language
- ✓ Focus on what IS possible
- ✓ Agree on workable compromise
- ✓ Be clear in defining need
- ✓ Keep good open relationships
- ✓ Focus feedback on behaviour
- ✓ And B R E A T H E!

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• VIDEO

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- "Introduce yourself and your role in your organisation" in one minute.
- One person is observing the content of your speech the other one observing your NVC.
- Repeat your 1' speech after the feedback
- Groups of 3

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The samoan Circle

- The audience will be split in 2 groups (In order of birth)
- Each member of the group will choose it's statement.
- " Men and women are equal"/ "Men are not equal"/ "I'm in favour of positive discrimination" "I'm against positive discrimination"
- Each group has 25 minutes to become the voice-speaker of the opposite group.

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