

Press Release

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The Council of Europe recommends Member States to incorporate gender equality measures at all levels of education

Strasbourg, 12.10.2007 - The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers has just adopted a recommendation to promote and encourage measures specifically aimed at implementing gender mainstreaming at all levels of the education system of its 47 Member States with a view to achieving gender equality, firstly by enshrining gender education in law.

The Committee proposes the creation of mechanisms, throughout the education system, to favour the promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in all aspects of the school: structures, roles of staff, the formal curriculum, timetabling of subjects, textbooks and materials, extracurricular activities, classroom practices, use of budgets, examination results, career guidance and use of premises and facilities.

As a first step, the Committee recommends for every State to review its legislation and practices with a view to implementing the strategies and measures recommended. The Committee of Ministers also recommends the Member States to monitor and evaluate the progress achieved in ensuring that a gender quality perspective is incorporated at all levels and stages in the organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of all educational policies, and to submit reports to the Committee on the measures undertaken and the progress made in this field in every country.

The Committee understands that "despite increased awareness of gender inequalities, and government's efforts to achieve equality between men and women, changes has been slower than expected, and schools are still mainly transmitting the knowledge, scholarship, values and experience of males in their curricula".

The Ministers state that the principle of equality between women and men needs to be enshrined in laws of education, being a fundamental principle of democratic citizenship which needs to be specifically addressed in school policies and curricula. In their view, schools can become instruments of positive change and are in a unique position in the community to promote gender equality, raising awareness, correcting misinformation and offering new behaviour modes.

The [Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in education](#) is addressed at all relevant political institutions and public and private bodies and authorities responsible for framing and implementing education policies at central, regional and local level in the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe. It is also targeted at school management bodies, local and regional authorities, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

The recommendation also reminds Member States that preparing girls and women to participate, on an equal footing, in all aspects of the life of the community, including decision making, is vital to achieving a truly democratic society and for social cohesion.

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