



## **EXPLORING GENDER EQUALITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS**

Report of the study session held by  
Youth and Environment Europe

in co-operation with the  
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Strasbourg  
6-11 March 2017



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

Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) is a network that unites 41 environmental youth organisations from 25 European countries. The aim of YEE is to encourage youth to be involved in environmental protection and to provide a platform where these organisations can work together. The office of YEE is located in Prague, Czech Republic, but our activities are international. YEE organises training courses, youth exchanges and campaigns that involve our members and other environmental youth organisations. With various training courses we create space to support personal and professional development of youth workers and with campaigns we aim to raise awareness about various environmental issues.

The idea for the study session was suggested by YEE team as a way to explore how our projects can be organised with gender perspective and address issues related to gender. The main field of work for YEE are environmental projects and with this study session we wanted to find if and how gender issues are connected with this type of projects. We also wanted to provide practical knowledge for our members on how to gender mainstream their projects.

The study session “Exploring gender equality in environmental projects” took place on 6-11 March 2017 in the European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France in cooperation with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. Besides 4 preparatory team members 25 participants from 22 countries took part in the study session. The participants were youth workers or volunteers actively involved in environmental youth organisations.

The study session started with the introduction to the project and participants group and defining main terms and concepts (gender, environment, youth). Each day was then dedicated to one topic: gender equality in Europe and world (with sessions by the invited speaker and presentations of the Council of Europe’s work on gender equality, session on LGBTQ environmental movement in the USA); youth work (with sessions on youth participation, youth work, environmental youth work and a general introduction to gender mainstreaming); gender mainstreaming and environmental youth projects; gender mainstreaming and project planning; planning follow-up and closing the study session.

The study session resulted in many learning outcomes and conclusions useful both for YEE, the Council of Europe and participants. It was strongly linked to the priorities of the Youth Department as it contributed to increasing knowledge of and capacity to combat intersectional, multiple and other forms of discrimination and enabled participants to take actions to foster young people’s access to their rights and young people’s autonomy. Gender perspective is present in any environmental project even if it is not so obvious at the beginning. It is possible to gender mainstream environmental projects, but for this it is required to do research, use appropriate tools and choose what to gender mainstream: topic, project management or organisational structure.



## INTRODUCTION

### Aim and objectives of the study session

The aim of this study session was to explore the topic of gender equality and gender perspective in environmental youth projects and the ways of addressing this topic in work of environmental youth organisations.

The objectives were:

- To share the realities and experience of gender issues in various European countries;
- To learn more about gender mainstreaming, especially in youth work (what it is, why it is needed, how it can be done);
- To share experience in organising environmental projects and explore them from the gender perspective;
- To discover and think of the ways of introducing gender mainstreaming in environmental youth projects;
- To work on the ways how environmental projects can tackle gender issues.

### Profile of participants

25 participants from 22 countries took part in this study session. We invited participants from diverse countries in order to gain a greater understanding on how gender and environment related topics are perceived across the continent. Participants came from the following countries:

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Italy, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

The profile of participants was as followed:

- Most of the participants were between 18-30 years old. One participant was older than 30 years, aged 34. The average age of participants was 26.
- All participants had a good knowledge of English.
- Participants were persons actively involved in environmental and/or youth organisations, either as employees or volunteers.
- Participants had experience in working with local communities, with organising projects and took part in international projects before.
- Participants were interested in the topic of gender equality, wanted to learn more about the topic and gain skills on how to bring the gender perspective into environmental youth projects.
- Participants were interested in the topic of environmental protection.
- Participants clearly defined their plan on how they will share the knowledge and skills gained in the project with their organisation and local community.
- Participants confirmed that they will be able to get actively involved for the full duration of the session.

Due to unfortunate cancellations, we did not manage to have a gender balanced group; 15 participants were female and 10 participants male.

### Topic - gender equality and environmental projects

The main topic of the study session was gender equality in environmental projects, with an emphasis on environmental youth work. Throughout the project we continuously tried to build on the knowledge of previous days to gain better understanding of the topic.

The main themes addressed during the session were:

- Definitions related to
  - gender: what is gender, sex, gender equality, gender balance and gender equity and non-binary consideration regarding gender
  - youth: what defines youth, youth work, youth worker
  - environment: what is environmentalism, ecology, environmental degradation, sustainability
- Gender equality in Europe: what are the differences across countries, which international legislative frameworks are tackling gender issues.
- Gender equality at the Council of Europe, the role of human rights education in achieving gender equality, the work of the European Youth Foundation.
- Contribution of LGBTQ communities to environmentalism and equality.
- The No Hate Speech Movement (emphasis on online sexist speech).
- Youth work and youth participation.
- Environmental youth work (what it is, how it is different/the same as other types of youth work).
- Gender mainstreaming (what it is and why it is important).
- Gender mainstreaming in environmental projects (different tools of gender mainstreaming and different pillars where it can be incorporated: mainstreaming the topic, the organisation and the project process).
- Planning environmental projects with a gender perspective.

The last two days of the study session focused on project planning. The knowledge and tools gained in the previous days were so put into practice.

### **Background of the study session**

YEE believes that the topic of gender equality is of great importance to all young Europeans. Our network consists of environmental organisations which primarily work on environmental issues - the topics of inclusion and gender equality are often not focused on or considered in their work. With this study session we wanted to introduce a change in the attitude of environmental youth organisations towards gender issues by exploring the topic of gender in youth work and especially in environmental projects. We wanted to draw the attention of our member organisations to the fact that gender issues are always present in any kind of youth work. With its activities, such as training courses, youth exchanges and campaigns, YEE can provide the needed and unique space for youth workers to meet their peers, share experience and learn from each other. We also think that with the new knowledge and skills on gender issues we can better support our members in improving the quality of their work - by helping them to focus on new topics and/or to address issues which are part of any organisation active in youth work, but are not addressed by them yet.

## PROGRAMME – INPUT AND DISCUSSIONS

During 6 working days we managed to cover various aspects connected to the topic of the study session. The programme was based on the aim and objectives and had the following flow:

Day 1 - Introduction to the project, venue, team-building, establishing common terms and definitions

Day 2 - Overview of gender equality in Europe and related work of the Council of Europe

Day 3 - Youth work, environmental youth work and introduction to gender mainstreaming

Day 4 - Gender mainstreaming and environmental youth projects

Day 5 - Gender mainstreaming and project planning

Day 6 - Planning follow-up, closing the study session

The first days of the study session were dedicated to the introduction to the project. The first activities were name games, icebreakers and getting to know each other games. In the morning of 6 March we started the day with the welcome space - an interactive introduction to the study session with 5 separate spaces each presenting a different topic: aim and objectives, programme, YEE, Council of Europe and getting to know each other better. During the first day the participants also took part in team-building activities, shared their expectations as well as learning goals and had a small excursion around the European Youth Center. After introductory sessions we moved to talking about terms and concepts related to the themes of the study session: gender, environment and youth. The participants had another chance to establish new connections during the NGO market and intercultural night later in the evening.

We continued exploring gender equality by combining sessions delivered by invited experts and sessions of sharing between participants. First invited speaker was Anne Laure Humbert who presented an overview of gender equality movement in the world and Europe and gave an introduction into gender statistics. Later there was a session about the work of the Council of Europe on gender equality - there were several invited speakers from different departments of the Council of Europe. Thus, the work of the European Youth Foundation, Gender Equality Unit and the Youth Department was presented. During the second day the participants also had a chance to share their personal experience on gender perspective in their life, in their organisation and in their country. The day finished with the online meeting with Gerod Rody from the American organisation Out for Sustainability.

After working with a general understanding of gender and gender equality, we had sessions on two other pillars of this study session: youth work and environment. During these sessions the participants established the specifics of environmental youth work. This prepared the ground for introducing gender mainstreaming and welcoming another speaker, Vesna Jusup, to deliver her sessions on gender mainstreaming in environmental youth projects. After Vesna's input and practical exercises, the participants worked on developing their own future projects. The study session finished with planning the follow-up and evaluation.

The flow of the programme and various non-formal educational methods provided a lot of space for discussions and group learning. The participants were involved in the discussions actively as they were interested in the topic of gender mainstreaming and had environmental background.

The main topics of discussions were:

- Definitions of gender and sex, environment, youth work: the discussions showed that there are many differences in the understanding of gender and sex which are often formed by cultural differences.
- Sharing personal reality connected with gender - the participants shared the information on gender statistics in their countries, how gender is addressed in their organisations, LGBTQ legislation in their country and their own personal experience of gender.
- The history of feminism and the importance of the International Women's Day.
- Youth work and specifics of environmental youth work.
- Gender mainstreaming in environmental youth work.

## INPUTS OF TEAM MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL EXPERTS

The invited speakers together with team members also provided a lot of new information for the participants.

**Gender equality in Europe - session by invited speaker Anne Laure Humbert** (Senior Research Fellow, Cranfield School of Management). Anne has done extensive work in the area of women and/or gender within the economy and society, with particular attention to work and organisations, entrepreneurship, and the integration of work and life. She is particularly interested in the applications of advanced quantitative methods applied to comparative social and economic analysis.

She gave a summary of gender equality in international context:

- first World Conference on Women in Mexico City, 1975;
- the adoption of [The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#) by the UN in 1979;
- the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 and 12 critical areas;
- the UN's [Millennium Development Goals](#) (2000) and the focus on gender there;
- the [UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#) (2015) and goal 5 *Gender Equality*.

Anne also referred to the work of the Council of Europe and specifically Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017. After her input the participants worked in small groups and discussed the international frameworks on gender: if there is an overlap between them, if they are relevant in the context of their home countries and how different age groups are affected. Anne also made a brief presentation of gender statistics and highlighted the challenge of collecting and reading gender statistics. It relies on sex-disaggregated data which means that any data is broken down by sex and is usually binary. This means that gender statistics usually only focuses on binary sexes and genders and does not represent people who are intersex or do not identify with male or female gender.

**Out for Sustainability - session with Gerod Rody** (activist, Founder and Board President of Out for Sustainability)

Gerod presented the work of the organisation [Out for Sustainability](#) - a non-profit based in Seattle, the USA. According to Gerod, it is a leading non-profit organisation dedicated to mobilizing the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community for environmental and social action. It is also a movement which aims to accelerate sustainability engagement and action in the LGBTQ community, and prompt the sustainability movement to be a more actively inclusive space for people of all identities. The past work of Out for Sustainability was also presented:

- [Regional mobilisation](#) – there are regional groups of volunteers across the country who organise local environmental actions.
- [#EarthGay](#) - is a celebration of Earth Day by the LGBTQ community.
- [Q-Susty Salons](#) - are education/networking events among the LGBTQ community with focus on intersectional topics.
- [#FabPlanet Summit](#) - is the LGBTQ space to explore the intersection of identity, society, and environment. The biennial conference is part expert panels, part forum; a gathering space for leading LGBTQ thinkers on sustainability issues.
- [Activation Campaigns](#) - are campaigns by OUT4S partners with leading organisations to articulate what LGBTQ sustainability really means, in context with practical application. The content of campaign includes articles, stories, and resources on intersectional themes like [#EnergyEquality](#), [#NatureisSoGay](#), and [#MyGreenerPride](#).
- [#GreenerPride](#) - consulting with LGBTQ events like Pride, celebrating individual greener pride, and mobilizing for action.

Gerod also pointed out that more equal societies (in which individuals share rights and responsibilities to a greater extent) manage their resources better and have a lower impact on the environment. In addition, he stressed out how in unexpected events, such as extreme weather events, rights of minorities and marginalised groups of a society tend to be neglected or even revoked first.

## **Presentation about the work of the Council of Europe on gender equality by Cécile Gréboval, Programme Advisor of Gender Equality Unit**

Equality between women and men has been on the agenda of Council of Europe for a long time. The gender equality standards have been incorporated in various way in the work of the Council of Europe:

- [European Convention on Human Rights](#): Art. 1, 14 and Protocol 12 (no discrimination) and case-law of the Court
- [Istanbul Convention to combat violence against women and domestic violence](#)
- [Anti-human trafficking Convention](#)
- [European Social Charter](#)
- Committee of Ministers Recommendations (from 1979 - on many topics)

Institutional setting on gender equality in the Council of Europe:

Gender Equality Transversal Programme

- The [Gender Equality Commission](#) (GEC) and its secretariat (GE Unit)
- [Gender Equality Rapporteurs](#) appointed within intergovernmental bodies
- [Gender Mainstreaming Team](#) (CoE staff members from various sectors)
- [Istanbul Convention/GREVIO](#) (separate Division on violence against women)
- [Unit on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) (SOGI)

Cécile also presented the [Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017](#) and specific objectives:

The document has five objectives:

1. combating gender stereotypes and sexism;
2. preventing and combating violence against women;
3. guaranteeing equal access of women to justice;
4. achieving balanced participation in political and public decision-making;
5. achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.

There are different actions implemented by the Council of Europe to reach these objectives. For examples:

- [Committee of Ministers Recommendations on gender equality and media](#) (1984/2013)
- [Committee of Ministers Rec.\(2002\)5 on the protection of women against violence](#)
- [CM Rec.\(2003\)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making](#)
- [EURIMAGES](#): the European film industry:
  - 17% of project submitted to EURIMAGES directed by women in 2012
  - 62% men in the first 3 roles of castings
  - Development of Gender Equality Strategy: research, prize for best female director, gender criteria in the allocation of funds to films
  - Result: projects submitted by women = 27% in 2015

## **Presentation about the work of the Council of Europe's Youth Department on gender equality by László Milutinovits**

The Youth Department addresses gender related topics with several activities:

- by creating publications on gender equality: e.g. [Gender Matters](#), Compass
- by funding youth projects on the topic of gender
- with campaigns, such as the [No Hate Speech Movement](#), [The Enter! Recommendation](#), [Roma Youth Action Plan](#)
- by contributing to the development of Youth policy
- with training and educational activities, such as study sessions, trainings, conferences and seminars.

Most interesting for our Study Session was the presentation of the outcomes of the [Gender Equality Matters!](#) Seminar, which happened in 2016. During the seminar the participants created [guidelines](#) on integrating gender equality into intercultural youth activities.

## **European Youth Foundation - work on gender equality, presented by Karen Palisser and Georgiadou Paschalio**

The EYF promotes the integration of gender perspective in all youth activities which they support. There is a detailed page dedicated to gender on the website of the EYF:

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/gender-perspectives>

## **No Hate Speech Movement presentation by Menno Ettema**

The session took place on 8 March, on the International Women's Day. Therefore the presentation of the No Hate Speech Movement was dedicated to online sexist hate speech and ways to stop it. Menno showed some examples of sexist speech and how No Hate Speech Movement aims to draw attention to it and what the movement does to stop it:

- the movement encourages the formation of comprehensive legislation and an effective implementation of the latter;
- the movement fosters solidarity towards hate speech victims and increases the visibility of the issue;
- the movement raises awareness on gender equality as well as countering of sexism and hate speech;
- the movement promotes gender equality as a shared responsibility.

To celebrate the International Women's Day and to highlight the importance of combatting online sexism an evening activity was organised on the same day. The groups of two study sessions participated and prepared various actions dedicated to the topic.

## **Introduction to gender mainstreaming by team member Natalia Luchko**

The session was organised by the team member to introduce the concept to the group one day before the session by the invited speaker on gender mainstreaming in environmental projects.

The session started with group discussions on gender and youth work. The participants discussed in small groups the following questions: the role of gender in youth work, benefits of working with gender, if youth workers should have competences to work with gender topics, their experiences of gender-related projects.

The discussion was followed by defining gender mainstreaming.

It is:

- incorporating equal opportunities for all genders into all policies and activities of an youth organisation;
- strategy used to achieve gender equality between men and women; bringing the experience, knowledge and interest of women, men and other genders on the development agenda;
- putting on "gender glasses" - adopting gender perspective in youth activities, projects and trainings.

It is not:

- simply counting numbers of women and men to ensure equal numbers;
- obligation to have special activities for these groups;
- just adding "women's component" - it is more than that.

The term "gender mainstreaming" was first proposed at the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985.

Main principles of gender mainstreaming are: gender-sensitive language; gender-specific data collection and analysis; equal access to and utilisation of services; all genders are equally involved in decision-making; equal treatment is integrated into steering processes.

The detailed explanation with examples can be found in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udSiBbGwJEg>

## **Youth work and youth participation by team member Mariam Sahakyan**

Youth was defined as "the time of life when one is young, but often means the time between childhood and adulthood (maturity). It is an experience that may shape an individual's level of

dependency, which can be marked in various ways according to different cultural perspectives". Youth are people between 16 and 30 years of age. The definition of youth age is different in various countries (15-24, 16-29) and it is the starting point for youth work.

Youth work is a community support activity. It also means a planned programme of education designed to help the personal and social development of young people which is complimentary to formal or vocational education and training. Youth work is provided mainly by voluntary youth work organisations. Youth work takes holistic approach and gives young people the safe space to explore their identity, experience in decision-making, develop interpersonal skills, etc. There are several models of youth work: character building, personal development, critical social education, radical social change.

Participants agreed that youth work plays an important part in local communities and that it is important to support and give opportunities to all age groups of a society.

### **Environmental youth work by team member Aljaž Malek and participants**

In this session we set out to create a common understanding on what environmental youth work is. Participants first had the opportunity to share environmental projects among themselves. Later we moved on to discussing the parallels and differences environmental youth work might have with other types of youth work. We established that environmental youth work:

- Differs from other type of youth work by primarily focusing on environmental topics;
- Aims to improve the relationship of humans towards the environment by raising awareness on environmental topics among youth, empowering young people to take action in environmental issues and involving youth in environmentalism. Participants expressed that they perceive environmental youth work as an investment in the future;
- Involves young people that either have greater interest in environmental topics, young people with a higher level of awareness when it comes to environmental issues or young people that want to know more about environmentalism. Young people who get involved in this type of work also do so because of a wish to improve their knowledge and competences in order to increase their positive impact on the environment;
- Involves different activities, which do not, apart from the topic, differ much from activities used in other types of youth work. However, outdoor activities might be more present in environmental youth work as well as activities fostering environmental knowledge and skills needed for environmentalism;
- Not only involves youth workers with an environmental background but also people (which are not young people) who do not necessary have an environmental background but have experience in fostering development of competences among young people. In many cases of environmental youth projects there is also an input from external experts coming from the field of environmentalism.

Moreover, we agreed that Human Rights Education (HRE) is connected with environmental youth work and plays an important role in environmentalism. HRE addresses big and important topics, such as the right to life and freedom of speech. With HRE we sometimes indirectly address environmental topics, e.g. the right to life is connected with a safer and cleaner environment, with the equal availability and fair distribution of resources, with sustainable consumption. Participants agreed that in a way HRE could even be seen as a part of environmentalism. They also stressed out that introducing environmental topics into HRE should be done with great care and after a thorough research, in order to avoid a clash between social and environmental issues (neglecting one by supporting the other).

Lastly, some participants expressed that environmental issues might sometimes be resolved easier than social issues (e.g. decreasing the amount of plastic bags). In this way some participants perceived environmentalism and environmental youth work as more liberating, since the aim can be achieved faster and easier.

## **Gender mainstreaming in environmental projects, session by Vesna Jusup, invited speaker**

Vesna Jusup works in the European Green Party as Assistant for Member Party Relations. She previously held the position of Network Coordinator in CDNEE/network of Eastern European Young Green organisations.

Vesna highlighted that before starting the process of gender mainstreaming one needs to find answers to the following questions:

- *Who is doing what?*
- *Who has access to which resources?*
- *Who has control over which resources?*
- *Who needs what? Who is gaining what?*
- *Who is losing what through the project intervention?*

The reason why we should gender mainstream in the environmental sector is because we all depend on the same natural resources and we all contribute to their management, however, not all benefit from the natural resources that are available to us. In addition, humans are stronger, smarter and more efficient when they cooperate and work together.

There are also reasons why not to gender mainstream in the environmental sector. Firstly, it should not be done with the purpose of solving gender inequality, as doing so may result in overburdening women with more work or with increasing costs in the environmental spectrum. Secondly, it should not be done with the purpose of solving the environmental crisis as gender segregation may not be the cause of an environmental issue but a consequence of it. Vesna pointed out that including more women in the planning process or execution of a project would not help if these women are not attributed to the same knowledge provisions.

Vesna also pointed out that there are several things that are important to remember when considering gender mainstreaming:

- Not everything can be gender mainstreamed.
- But everything can be questioned.
- Gender mainstreaming is also not a 'holy grail', which will solve complex environmental and social problems.
- Gender mainstreaming is a mechanism which can ensure that we do not replicate and/or further strengthen existing power models that are discriminatory or detrimental towards different genders.

When talking about gender mainstreaming in environmental projects there are several things one should be aware of:

- Different genders may perceive and can have a different attitude and relationship towards the environment. There are also different views towards the environment (different systems of value), regardless of gender: an '*ecocentric*' (nature centred) and '*anthropocentric*' (human centred).
- Women and men use and manage natural resources, but they do not have equal access to ownership and control over these resources. They can use same resources in different ways and different resources in the same way. They can also have different knowledge on same resources and might thus need a different approach in capacity building. Lastly, the role of women has been undermined; the main discussion discourse when talking about women and resources revolves around ownership and control which is most visible in risk management and disasters.
- Gender and environment are secondary political issue, which means they require more effort (will, competences (use of disaggregated data), cooperation, an interdisciplinary approach) to be put on the agenda.

To show an example on how gender mainstreaming in the environmental sector looks like Vesna presented the [Green Climate Fund](#).

We later moved to a more practical side of gender mainstreaming. First, we clarified that there are different things one can mainstream in the environmental sector:

- Topic/Object/Result - one can mainstream the topic of an environmental project, choosing a topic that tackles both environment and gender issues;
- Process/Labour - one can mainstream how an environmental project will be carried out, always keeping the gender perspective in mind;
- Decision-making - one can mainstream the organisational structure of an environmental organisation, thus making it more gender equal.

We highlighted several measures of gender mainstreaming that can be implemented:

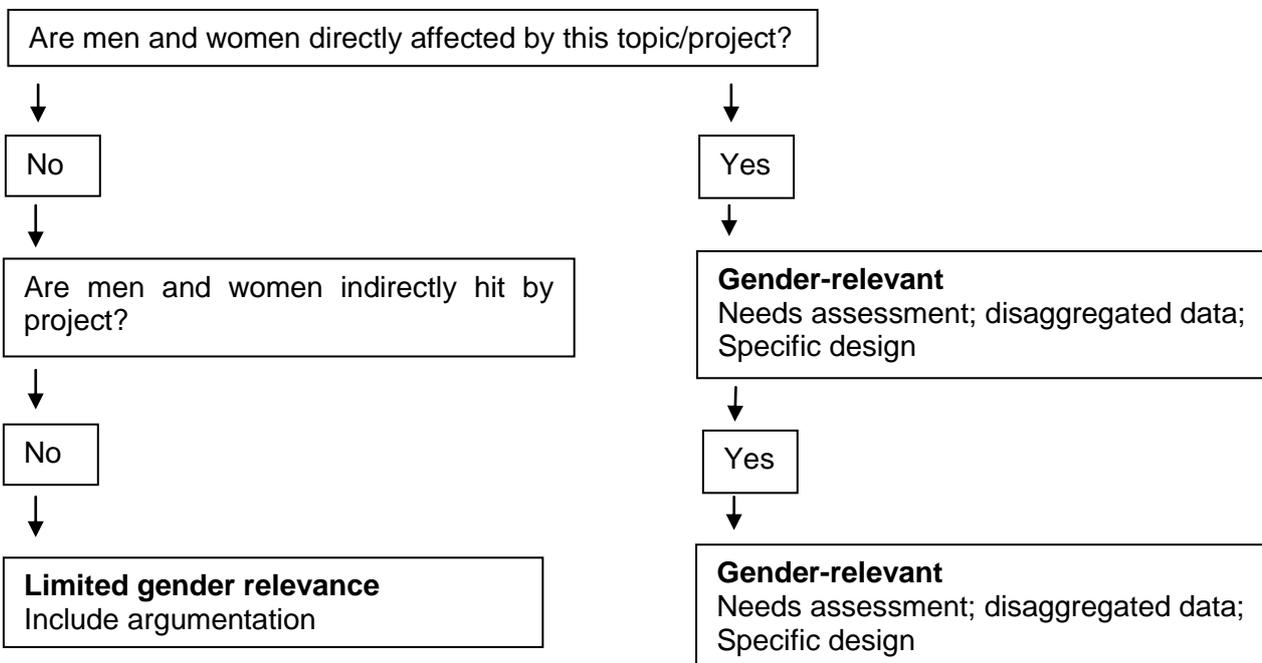
- we can influence policy frameworks
- we can change institutional structures
- we can do a sectoral analysis to gain better understanding of the gender situation in a certain economy
- we can ensure that the budget provides support to all genders
- we can address cultural norms
- we can network
- we can cooperate with and influence the media
- we can encourage and ensure equality on all participation levels

As seen below, there are several steps before you start gender mainstreaming.

When mainstreaming a topic one should:

- Find inequality within the topic
- Look into which stereotypes are included
- Assess which skills are already available and needed in order to work on the topic
- Adopt outreach materials
- Work on self-awareness

When preparing a project, one should answer these guiding questions:



Once these questions are answered one can focus on the project cycle.

## MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY SESSION

We believe that this study session had important outcomes for both environmental youth work and the future work of YEE, as well as for participants.

During the study session we have identified issues that require particular attention and which could be addressed in the context of European youth work:

- Gender equality moves beyond social issues, which is a fact people are not always aware of. Inequality between genders is one of the factors that impact how humans affect the environment. Moreover, gender is incorporated in all aspects of the work of environmental youth organisations. It is therefore important to foster awareness on gender issues and highlight the connection between gender and the environment among environmentally-minded youth and youth in general.
- Some youth organisations are more aware of gender issues and gender mainstreaming than others. Organisations that are less aware of gender mainstreaming are not doing it at all and also do not know how to do it. Youth work so represents an important link - a platform for environmental youth organisations to exchange knowledge on gender issues and gender mainstreaming, thus improving their work.
- It is important to understand gender mainstreaming before applying it. Gender mainstreaming has to be tailored according to the situation as it can be applied on different levels: we can mainstream a project, the work of an organisation or a topic.
- The understanding of gender and gender equality differs among cultures and organisations. All this should be kept in mind when planning international youth projects. We believe that youth work could spread and foster a unified and contemporary understanding of gender among environmental organisations.
- Due to cultural differences a binary understanding of gender might occur in youth projects at first. To yield greater outcomes from the projects, a careful introduction of the non-binary understanding might be needed.

The study session also had several outcomes for the project team and the future work of YEE:

- Working with the Council of Europe was an important learning experience for the project team. The team gained a greater understanding on how a study session looks like, how to organise such projects in the future and how they can contribute to a work of an organisation.
- The project team gained better understanding of the complexity of gender. It is a topic that should not be taken lightly. Cultural differences result in a diverse understanding of gender related topics. We will pay special attention to the latter in our future work, when forming new projects, publications and policies.
- Together with participants and with the help of experts, the team explored tools for gender mainstreaming. We will share these with our member organisations and other interested environmental and/or youth organisations in a form of a publication.
- The study session was a space for networking and a good opportunity to form partnerships with youth organisations, spread the idea of YEE and get organisations interested in becoming our members.
- The focus of the session was leaning towards the binary understanding of gender. We would like to explore the non-binary understanding and its relationship with the environment more, preferably with the support of the Council of Europe, and spread this understanding among environmental youth organisations within our future projects.

Lastly, according to the evaluation the study session had several important outcomes and learning points for participants:

- Participants gained better understanding on what the Council of Europe is, what it does and how it tackles gender related issues with its work. Participants got introduced to human rights education and its importance for youth work.
- Participants got familiarised with the work of the European Youth Foundation and with the foundation's funding opportunities for youth organisations.
- Participants were introduced to the structure and work of YEE, as well as the responsibilities and benefits of being a member of the network. Some participants expressed interest in joining the network and will discuss the matter with their organisation.
- Participants were introduced to youth work and youth participation and learned why they are important.
- Some participants gained a new perspective on gender. All participants gained an insight on how gender is understood across diverse cultures, both on a local and national level.
- Participants were introduced to terms related to gender. Participants did not only learn what gender equality is, but also how to achieve the latter with the help of gender mainstreaming.
- Participants were introduced to gender mainstreaming tools, how they can be applied and had the opportunity to use the latter in a project planning session. Several projects arose during this session.
- Participants had the opportunity to establish new connections and get to know people from diverse countries, get acquainted with the work of different environmental and/or youth organisations and shared examples of environmental and/or youth projects.

### **Possible suggestions or recommendations for the Council of Europe (including for the work of the Youth Department)**

The work of the Council of Europe on gender equality and gender mainstreaming is quite prominent and diverse. It provided great input and learning points for the participants of the study session. It is inspiring to see that the European Youth Foundation and the Youth Department support the incorporation of gender perspective in the activities of youth organisations.

This study session showed another interesting point, namely that the work of youth organisations nowadays cannot focus only on one topic. While the topics of environment and gender equality might seem not connected to each other at all, it is simply not true - gender issues exist in all human activities and environmental issues equally are important for all people. Therefore, it seems that it is important to create space for youth organisations to work more on interconnected topics, to go beyond their main focus and explore it from the different angles. The Youth Department can support youth organisations in collaborating with other organisations and finding new perspectives for their work.

We would also like to suggest some recommendations on how to make projects supported by the Council of Europe more environmentally-friendly:

- environmentally-friendly ways of transport could be encouraged or required: participants from closer distances can travel to the venue by bus or train and the participants who want to fly by plane need to prove that there are no better land connections. In case the participants travel by plane, they could be required to pay for carbon offsetting.
- the environmental impact can be reduced with dietary services as well: to introduce vegetarian days (Meatless Mondays) or even to provide vegetarian/vegan food only for the whole duration of the activity; to serve tap water and support local young entrepreneurs by selling their products (e.g. soft drinks); to invite participants to drink tap water rather than providing bottled water at events.

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Several follow-up activities have been developed prior to and as a result of this study session:

- To promote the project we have published several articles about the Study Session on YEE's website, both prior and after the study session ([call for participants](#), [preparatory meeting in Budapest](#), [article about completing the project](#), [EVS blog](#)). In addition, we have created a [separate section](#) with information about the study session on the YEE website.
- We have created a Facebook page for the project. The purpose of the page was to give participants space to get to know each other better before the event and to provide them with related information. Today, the page is used as a channel to give participants information on follow-up activities and gender related themes. Participants are also encouraged to use the page for discussions on gender and environment related topics.
- During the study session participants worked on several gender and/or environment related project ideas. We will support participants to further develop their project ideas. By doing so we will increase the chances of a successful implementation of their projects.
- The study session was a space to gain new knowledge and improve competences. The latter will impact the future work of participants and their organisations. The study session was also a good opportunity for participants to network and create connections with diverse organisations for future cooperation.
- We will create a publication with guidelines on how to use gender mainstreaming in environmental youth projects. The publication will be created together with participants and shared within the YEE network and with other environmental and/or youth organisations interested in the topic.
- The knowledge gained in this project will be taken in consideration when updating existing YEE policies (adding the gender perspective) and creating new ones. In the future we also want to create a gender policy for the network. By creating the best possible YEE policies we will improve the work of the office as well as the work of the network, make the network more inclusive as well as gender equal.
- We will use this experience to create new environmental projects focused on gender and gender equality. A need to continue working on the understanding of non-binary genders arose during the session and will hopefully be addressed more in similar future projects.

## **FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The topic of this study session turned out to be of big interest for many young people involved in environmental youth work. While at the first glance it might seem that environmental work and gender equality issues are not connected and have no common ground, it proved to be otherwise after further discussion and exploration. Gender equality moves beyond social issues and gender is incorporated in all aspects of the work of environmental youth organisations. Gender mainstreaming can be and should be used in the work of environmental youth organisations. However, it is important to understand it well and identify what needs to be gender mainstreamed: topic, project management or the work of the organisation itself.

The work on this study session was very fruitful and beneficial experience for the project team, participants and YEE. It allowed us to learn more about the work of the Council of Europe, and specifically the Youth Department, on gender equality across Europe. The participants were also introduced to the work of YEE and possibilities to join the network of similar environmental youth organisations.

The study session's results will be used by YEE in our future projects - gender mainstreaming and gender perspective will be introduced in projects and decision-making processes of the organisation.

The work on the topic of gender mainstreaming and environment highlighted that it needs more research and practice and environmental youth organisations can be the forerunners of new methods and tools which can be spread among other organisations later. After working on this study session, it seems clear to us that we also need to learn more about the work of LGBTQ communities on environmental issues and how youth organisations can provide more space for expression of different sexual orientations and gender identities.

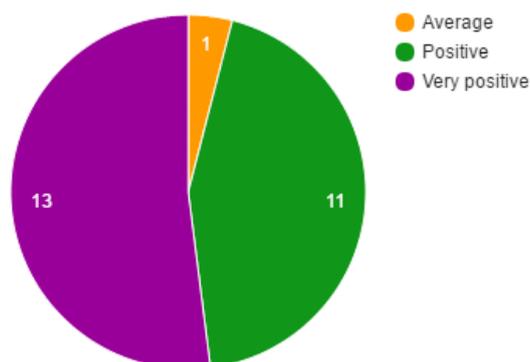
We believe that we reached the set aim and objectives of this study session and provided space for the preparatory team and participants to expand their knowledge on environmental youth work and gender mainstreaming, develop new skills and gain more confidence to explore the topic further.

## SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATIONS

In the last session of the project we asked the participants to fill in the evaluation form provided to us by the Council of Europe. This summary focuses on the numerical evaluation of participants.

Most of the participants experienced the study session as very positive. None of the participants graded their experience as very negative or negative (see pie chart below).

Overall experience of the study session



In addition, participants said that the study session was a good opportunity for them to:

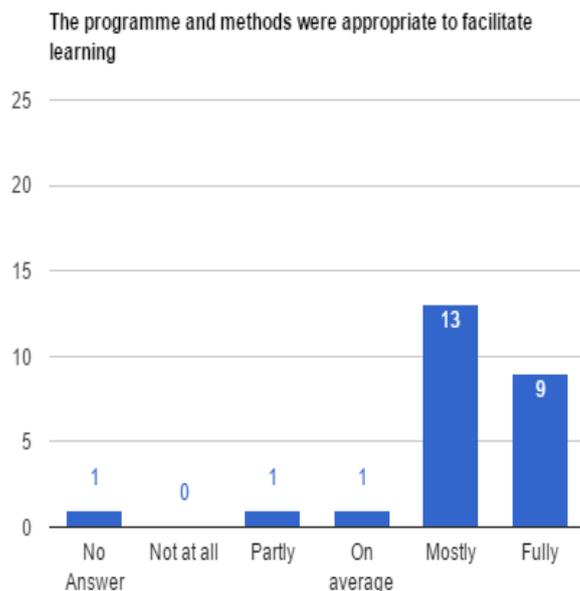
- gain information on different organisations, such as the Council of Europe, EYF and YEE;
- gain information on youth related funding opportunities;
- gain knowledge related to gender;
- gain practical gender-mainstreaming tools;
- establish new connections;
- create and get new project ideas;
- gain insight into different cultures.

Participants graded to which extent the aim and objectives of the project were achieved on a scale from 1 (not achieved at all) to 5 (fully achieved). Results are presented in the table below as average scores. The aim and most of the objectives scored above 4 points out of 5. The overall average score of the study session was 4.17 points out of 5.

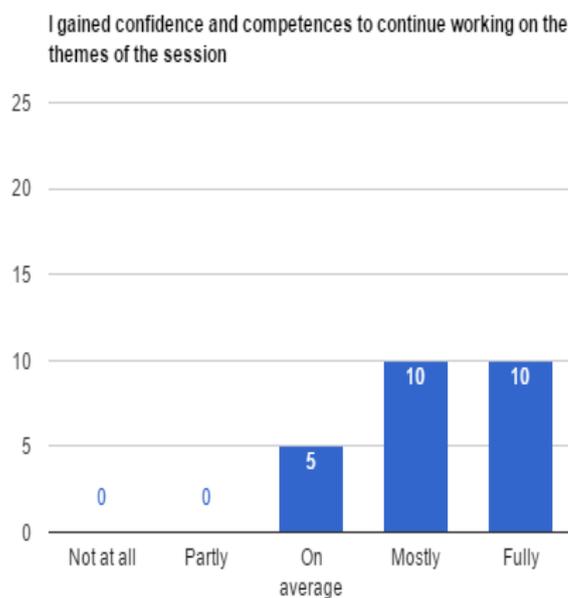
Achieving the aim and objectives	Score
Aim: To explore the topic of gender equality and gender perspective in environmental youth projects and the ways of addressing this topic in work of environmental youth organizations	4.08
Objective 1: To share the realities and experience of gender issues in various European countries	4.4
Objective 2: Learn more about gender mainstreaming, especially in youth work (what it is, why it is needed, how it can be done)	4.28
Objective 3: Share experience in organizing environmental projects and explore them from the gender perspective	3.92
Objective 4: To discover and think of the ways of introducing gender mainstreaming in environmental youth projects	4.32

Objective 5: To work on the ways how environmental projects can tackle gender issues	4
<b>Overall average score</b>	<b>4.17</b>

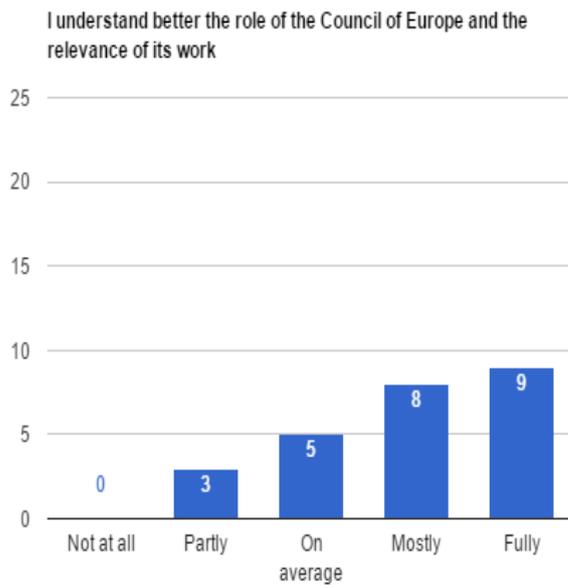
Most of the participants assessed that the programme and methods were mostly or fully appropriate to facilitate their learning (see chart below).



The study session was also a good opportunity for participants to gain confidence and new competences. Most participants agreed that the latter will help them to continue working on the themes of the session (see chart below).



Participants agreed that the study session was an opportunity for them to gain better understanding on the role of the Council of Europe and the relevance of its work (see chart below).



Most of the participants assessed that the study session was mostly or fully a positive experience in participation, intercultural learning, human rights education, gaining new skills and establishing new connections. In addition, most participants assessed that the learning environment was a space:

- where everybody had the opportunity to actively engage in the process;
- where everybody's opinions were respected;
- with a positive atmosphere;
- where they did not feel discriminated;
- where conflicts or disagreements were addressed constructively;
- where they felt supported by the project team.

Overall, the participants assessed that the facilities of the European Youth Centre were fully appropriate for the project. However, they suggested some improvements related to food (the vegetarian food was good, but it could have been more balanced), travel reimbursement (inform participants about the maximum amount of money they can spend on travel reimbursement) and the facilities (the temperature in the building was too high).

## APPENDICES

### Programme

The final version of the agenda can be found below.

6 March	7 March	8 March	9 March	10 March	11 March
Welcome Space	Gender equality in Europe - session with Anne Laure Humbert	No Hate Speech movement presentation and history of the International Women's Day	Gender mainstreaming and environmental projects - session with Vesna Jusup	Gender mainstreaming and environmental projects - session with Vesna Jusup	Developing project ideas
<i>Coffee break</i>					
Team-building and excursion around the European Youth Center	Work of the Council of Europe on gender equality - presentations by the EYF, Gender Equality Unit and the Youth Department	Youth work and youth participation	Gender mainstreaming and environmental projects - session with Vesna Jusup	Gender mainstreaming and environmental projects - session with Vesna Jusup	Presentation of projects ideas
<b>Lunch</b>					
Expectations and group rules	Links to personal and local reality	Environmental projects in youth work	Free afternoon	Project planning	Follow-up planning
<i>Coffee break</i>					
Terms and concepts	Meeting with Out for Sustainability	Introduction to gender mainstreaming	Free afternoon	Project planning	Evaluation and closure
<b>Dinner</b>					
NGO market and intercultural evening	Free evening	Common evening with StS "Children on the Move"	Free evening	Movie night	Goodbye party

## List of participants

COUNTRY		NAME	ORGANISATION
1.	Albania	Ardit Elezi	EDEN
2.	Armenia	Knyaz Saroyan	FYCA
3.	Azerbaijan	Maryam Majidova	AIESEC
4.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Džanin Jamaković	Scout Group Visoko
5.	Bulgaria	Aleksandar Yordanov	"Zavod za Idei" Sofia
6.	Bulgaria	Iveta Malinova	Prozrachni Planini
7.	Czech Republic	Diana Podgurskaia	YEE
8.	Czech Republic	Carolina Vosatkova	Be Fair at CULS
9.	Georgia	Mikheil Rogava	Association Atinati
10.	Georgia	Ketevan Kochladze	SAEM
11.	Germany	Stefan Rudel	FÖJ-AKTIV e.V.
12.	Germany	Mariia Kurkova	AYA
13.	"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	Dejan Dimitriev	Youth Council of the municipality of Shtip
14.	Montenegro	Lazar Baćović	Aktivna Zona
15.	Republic of Moldova	Daniela Para	Gutta-Club
16.	Netherlands	Femke Lootens	Studenten voor Morgen
17.	Poland	Marcin Czerkowski	Stowarzyszenie Rowerowy Poznań
18.	Portugal	Ana Rita Martins Pereira	100portas/Associazione Eufemia
19.	Romania	Danut Staciu	YOUTH BUZAU 2007
20.	Serbia	Jovana Mirjanić	Young Researchers of Serbia
21.	Slovenia	Neža Posnjak	Leeway Collective
22.	Sweden	Kristin Malmcrona Friberg	Circular Economy Wageningen
23.	Sweden	Federica Pastore	Italian Climate Network
24.	United Kingdom	Jenny Brown	University of Edinburgh
25.	Ukraine	Iuliia Fabiiian	Youth Council at Charity Fund Open Ukraine

## PREPARATORY TEAM

COUNTRY		NAME	ORGANISATION
1.	Russia/Czech Republic	Natalia Luchko	YEE – Course director
2.	Slovenia/Czech Republic	Aljaž Malek	YEE
3.	Armenia	Mariam Sahakyan	FYCA
4.	Albania	Herda Paco	EDEN Center
5.	Hungary	László Milutinovits	Educational advisor, Youth Department

## List of references

### Materials about the study session:

- [Section about the project on YEE website](#)
- [Photo gallery of the study session](#)
- [News article about the study session](#)
- [Article about the preparatory meeting](#)

### Publications related to gender and environment:

- [COMPASS. Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, Gender Section](#)
- [GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING. Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit, European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016](#)
- [Good practices in gender mainstreaming, European Institute for Gender Equality \(EIGE\), 2013](#)
- [Visions for Gender Equality, European Commission, 2015](#)
- [Non-Binary Gender Identities, Gendered Intelligence](#)
- [Gender matters. A manual on addressing gender-based violence affecting young people, Council of Europe, 2007](#)
- [Research on Gender, the Environment and Sustainable Development, Institut für sozial-ökologische Forschung \(ISOE\), 2001](#)
- [Environment and Gender Equality, Irish Aid](#)
- [Gender equality and state environmentalism, Norgaard, York, 2005](#)
- [Gender and Climate Finance, Liane Schalatek, Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America with Smita Nakhooda, Overseas Development Institute, 2016](#)
- [Gender and Environment. A guide to the integration of gender aspects in the OSCE's environmental projects. OSCE, 2009](#)
- [Guide on gender mainstreaming energy and climate change projects. United Nations Industrial Development Organization](#)
- [Gender and Natural Resource Management. Livelihoods, Mobility and Interventions. Edited by Bernadette P. Resurreccion and Rebecca Elmhirst, 2008](#)
- [Gender equity and the environment, TUNZA, Vol 4, No 4](#)
- [Towards gender mainstreaming in environmental policies, UNEP](#)
- [Guide on gender mainstreaming environmental management projects, UNIDO, 2015](#)
- [World survey on the role of women in development. Gender equality and sustainable development. UN Women, 2014](#)
- [Global Gender Gap Report](#)

### Institutions and organisations:

- [Council of Europe - Youth Department](#)
- [Council of Europe - Gender Equality Unit](#)
- [European Youth Foundation](#)
- [European Institute for Gender Equality](#)
- [Out for Sustainability](#)
- [Youth and Environment Europe](#)

## Glossary

Gender refers to the socially-constructed set of expectations, behaviours and activities of women and men which are attributed to them on the basis of their sex. Gender roles are learned and vary widely within and between different human societies, and change over time.

Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that differentiate men and women. We are defined as male or female at birth, which becomes a social and legal fact from that point on.

Gender identity refers to the gender to which persons feel they belong, which may or may not be the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. It refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender and includes the personal sense of body and other expressions, such as dress, speech and mannerisms.

Intersex: An umbrella term that describes a person with a genetic, genital, reproductive, or hormonal configuration that does not fit typical binary notions of a male or female body. Intersex is frequently confused with transgender, but the two are completely distinct.

Transgender: an umbrella term which is often used to describe a wide range of identities and experiences; it usually refers to persons who have a gender identity which is different from the gender assigned to them at birth and those people who wish to portray their gender identity in a different way from the gender assigned at birth. Transgender people are individuals whose gender expression and/or gender identity differs from conventional expectations based on the physical sex they were born into and which was legally registered for them at birth.

Sexual orientation: describes a pattern of emotional and sexual attraction to males, females, both or neither. Sexual orientation is not linked to gender identity.

Pronouns: Affirming pronouns are the most respectful and accurate pronouns for a person as defined by that person. It's best to ask which pronouns a person uses. In addition to the familiar "he," "she," and "they," newly created nongendered pronouns include "zie" and "per."

Nonbinary: A spectrum of gender identities and expressions, often based on the rejection of the gender binary's assumption that gender is strictly an either-or option of male/man/masculine or female/woman/feminine based on sex assigned at birth. Terms include "agender," "bi-gender," "genderqueer," "genderfluid," and "pangender."

Gender balance: is commonly used in reference to human resources and equal participation of women and men in all areas of work, projects or programmes.

Gender equality: Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, thereby recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Gender perspective: Taking a gender perspective means taking into account gender-based differences when looking at any social phenomenon, policy or process. The gender perspective focuses particularly on gender-based differences in status and power, and considers how such discrimination shapes the immediate needs, as well as the long-term interests, of women and men. In a policy context, taking a gender perspective is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and

evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

Intersectionality: In relation to gender equality, intersectionality is an analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination. It starts from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and the operation of structures of power. Intersectional analysis aims to reveal multiple identities, exposing the different types of intersectional and multiple discrimination and disadvantage that occur as a consequence of the combination of identities and the intersection of sex and gender with other grounds.

Sex-disaggregated data: Any data on individuals broken down by sex. Gender statistics rely on these sex-disaggregated data and reflect the realities of the lives of women and men and policy issues relating to gender. They allow for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic dimensions and are one of the requirements in obtaining gender statistics. However, gender statistics are more than data disaggregated by sex. Having data by sex does not guarantee, for example, that concepts, definitions and methods used in data production are conceived to reflect gender roles, relations and inequalities in society.

Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment. Therefore "youth" is often indicated as a person between the age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment.

Youth work: encompasses a broad range of activities (eg social, cultural, educational, sports-related and political) carried out with, by and for young people through non-formal and informal learning. Youth work helps young people to reach their full potential. It encourages personal development, autonomy, initiative and participation in society.

Youth worker: is a person who works with young people to engage them in informal education. Youth workers can work in many contexts. In the UK and elsewhere, the main distinction is usually made between statutory, those who work as part of a government run initiative, and non-statutory, those that work in any other context.

Environment: the natural environment, commonly referred to simply as the environment, is a term that encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally on Earth or some region thereof.

The concept of the natural environment can be distinguished by components:

- Complete ecological units that function as natural systems without massive human intervention, including all vegetation, animals, microorganisms, soil, rocks, atmosphere and natural phenomena that occur within their boundaries.
- Universal natural resources and physical phenomena that lack clear-cut boundaries, such as air, water, and climate, as well as energy, radiation, electric charge, and magnetism, not originating from human activity.

Environmentalism or environmental rights: is a broad philosophy, ideology, and social movement regarding concerns for environmental protection and improvement of the health of the environment, particularly as the measure for this health seeks to incorporate the concerns of non-human elements. Environmentalism advocates the lawful preservation, restoration and/or improvement of the natural environment, and may be referred to as a movement to control pollution or protect plant and animal diversity. For this reason, concepts such as a land ethic, environmental ethics, biodiversity, ecology, and the biophilia hypothesis figure predominantly.

Environmental degradation: is the deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources such as air, water and soil; the destruction of ecosystems; habitat destruction; the extinction of wildlife; and pollution. It is defined as any change or disturbance to the environment perceived to be deleterious or undesirable.

Sustainability: can be defined as “the ability to continue a defined behavior indefinitely”.  
Sustainable development is the process which aims to reach sustainability. The most famous definition of sustainable development is taken from the report “Our Common Future” by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Sustainability is based on three pillars:

- Environmental sustainability is the ability to maintain rates of renewable resource harvest, pollution creation, and non-renewable resource depletion that can be continued indefinitely.
- Economic sustainability is the ability to support a defined level of economic production indefinitely.
- Social sustainability is the ability of a social system, such as a country, to function at a defined level of social well-being indefinitely.

Sources:

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- [UN Women, Concepts and definitions](#)
- [European Institute for Gender Equality. Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus](#)
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- [Wikipedia, Youth worker](#)
- [Wikipedia, Natural environment](#)
- [Wikipedia, Environmentalism](#)
- [Thwink.org, Sustainability](#)