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CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Training course

GENDER EQUALITY IN YOUTH WORK

European Youth Centre Budapest

28 September - 2 October 2020

BACKGROUND

Gender equality entails equal rights for women and men, girls and boys, as well as the same visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation, in all spheres of public and private life. It also implies equal access to and distribution of resources between women and men. It means accepting and valuing equally the differences of women and men and the diverse roles they play in society. Even if progress is visible and the legal status of women in Europe has undoubtedly improved during recent decades, effective equality between women and men is far from being a reality.

Gender gaps and structural barriers persist in many areas, which limit women and men to their traditional roles, and constrain women's opportunities to benefit from their fundamental rights. Regular monitoring and research show that progress is very slow as regards women's political participation, access to justice and the elimination of harmful gender stereotypes and sexism. Violence against women remains one of the most pronounced expressions of the unequal power relations between women and men. It is both a violation of the human rights of women and a major obstacle to gender equality.

Gender equality is one of the priorities of the Council of Europe and the organisation has a dual approach:

- specific policies and actions, including positive action when appropriate, in critical areas for the advancement of women and for the realisation of de facto gender equality;
- the promotion, monitoring, co-ordination and evaluation of the process of gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes.

The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy, adopted on 7 March 2018, builds upon the vast legal and policy *acquis* of the Council of Europe as regards gender equality, as well as the achievements of the first Strategy 2014-2017. It links them to both the current economic context and the political leverage within the Council of Europe, including the overarching priorities of the Organisation.

Young people are more vulnerable to all forms of gender-based discrimination. The Youth for Democracy programme has kept gender equality an important dimension and purpose in the programme, including an intersectional dimension. A Gender Impact Study of the programme conducted in 2019 confirmed the sensitivity of the Youth for Democracy Programme to the promotion of the of diversity and inclusion of minorities and vulnerable individuals. The study concludes that

The aims of the Programme are well implemented from the decision-making process to the physical accessibility, while the Guidelines on Gender Equality in the intercultural youth activities serve as support, and further strengthen the aims of the Programme. The Programme has gender equality among its priorities, and its work is in contrast with current gender inequality patterns in member states of the Council of Europe.

Youth work and non-formal learning as practised and promoted by the Council of Europe are based on human rights values and principles. The human dignity of every person involved in activities is to be respected at all times. Human rights offer a framework where opinions, beliefs and cultural practices can be discussed while respecting differences. A human rights-based approach in youth work and non-formal learning recognises that achieving equal opportunities remains a common goal and that youth work should recognise inequalities and provide support to bridge the gaps.

The Guidelines on Gender Equality in intercultural youth activities, adopted by the Joint Council on Youth in 2017 call for a more consistent and a systematic approach to promoting gender equality in youth activities, based on human rights education:

Universal human rights provide also the ethical and normative frameworks to prevent, combat and overcome any form of discrimination grounded on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity. Achieving gender equality is not about “special rights” but about promoting everyone’s right to freedom and equality in dignity.

Gender balance in intercultural youth activities should be considered at all stages and processes of youth activities.

Despite unequivocal positive developments regarding the understanding of gender equality as a fundamental principle in a democratic society, gender inequality patterns persist across all European countries. Concerns about a new backlash on gender equality are also present; the Covid-19 pandemic revealed that gender inequality and gender-based violence remain a sad reality for many people.

Youth work and youth organisations reflect the societies in which they are placed. Young people experience gender inequality and discrimination in various forms and this affects well-being and chances of equally participating in society. Youth workers and youth leaders can also be the agents of change by recognising gender inequality, combating discrimination and understand their own role in strengthening or in reversing patterns of gender inequality and discrimination.

The Council of Europe youth sector supports youth organisations and youth workers to combat gender inequality by supporting their activities, encouraging them to adopt a gender equality dimension (such as in the activities supported by the European Youth Foundation or the activities held at the European Youth Centres) and by providing awareness-raising and educational materials for multipliers. The most recent of these is the manual Gender Matters on combatting gender-based violence affecting young people. Gender equality is also addressed in other educational manuals of the Council of Europe such as Compass and Compasito and was very present throughout the whole programme of the No Hate Speech Movement youth campaign.

Toolkit on Gender Equality in Youth Work

Despite the growing number of educational resources and policy documents highlighting the importance of gender equality, the understanding of its practical consequences and implications is very diverse, sometimes contradictory and often the source of misunderstanding that reflect the weight of deeply set prejudice and stereotypes about gender.

To support youth and organisations involved in youth work, and youth workers and young people themselves to apply gender equality in their activities and structures, the Council of Europe Youth Department is preparing a toolkit on gender equality in youth work. The toolkit will provide accessible and practical information and tools to promote gender equality and combat gender inequality in all areas of youth work and youth organisations.

The toolkit should be available in the course of 2020. It will be introduced and “tested” at the training course now being announced.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING COURSE

The training course will build capacities of multipliers, notably youth workers and youth leaders, to introduce gender equality standards and practices in their organisations and activities and to advocate for changes that support gender equality based on Council of Europe standards, approaches and tools as reflected in the Toolkit on Gender Equality in youth work. More specifically the programme of the course will enable participants to:

1. Understand, explore and discuss gender equality as a concept inherent to human rights and democracy applicable to everyday life and all dimensions of youth work
2. Know, make use of and advocate for the implementation of Council of Europe standards and instruments on gender equality
3. Recognise patterns of gender inequality in their organisations and to develop approaches to address and change them
4. Develop and apply approaches and strategies for gender equality in and through youth work based on the Council of Europe Toolkit on Gender Equality in youth work
5. Advocate and for effective gender equality in youth work and in society at large.

PARTICIPANTS

The course is designed for leaders and multipliers in youth work and youth organisations such as:

- Decision makers in the field of youth affairs in local or national authorities concerned by youth policy and youth work
- Leaders of national youth organisations and youth councils
- Managers of youth centres
- Youth workers and facilitators in non-formal education, especially within youth organisations and associations, in youth work activities and in other NGOs concerned with human rights education;
- Youth project managers and organisers.

All participants must also:

- be able to work in English
- be aged between 18-30 years old, exceptions can be made if justified
- be supported by a youth organisation, association or institution within which they can act as multipliers
- be able and committed to act as multipliers of gender equality
- be motivated to develop their competences in mainstreaming gender equality
- be committed to attend for the full duration of the course.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile of the activities, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All candidates must apply on-line at <https://youthapplications.coe.int>. Applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from their sending organisation/institution, to be uploaded on the platform. In case of several applicants from the same organisation, the support letter should indicate the priority of the applicants.

The Council of Europe will select up to 30 participants on the basis of the profile outlined above. It will try as far as possible to respect the organisations' priorities, but also to ensure a balance between genders, geographical regions, different types of experiences, cultural backgrounds and organisations, institutions and projects. A waiting list may be established. Candidates will be informed whether their application has been accepted or rejected, and if they have been put on the waiting list, **by 1 September 2020**.

Deadline for application: 23 August 2020, 23:59

NB: The training course is prepared on the assumption that sanitary conditions will allow for a residential training course at the European Youth Centre. The Council of Europe will adapt the course methodology and scope where appropriate and as a result of restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic.