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GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

of the Council of Europe Youth for Democracy
programme

*A study about the gender equality dimension of the activities
promoted by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe*

by

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Consultants

The ideas and the opinions expressed in this Study are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council of Europe.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The decision to carry out a Gender Impact Assessment of the Youth for Democracy programme was taken by the Joint Council on Youth in 2017 when adopting the guidelines on *Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners*. The Gender Impact Assessment should to strengthen the gender equality dimension of the activities proposed by, or organised with, the Youth Department of the Council of Europe within the context of the Youth for Democracy programme. The study also supports the implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023.

This Gender Impact Assessment seeks to provide answers to 4 key questions:

1. Is there adequacy between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality? Or, in other words, do the aims of the programme correlate appropriately with the promotion of Gender Equality?
2. Are there any correlations between the goals of the Programme and gender inequality patterns in the member states of the Council of Europe?
3. Do the objectives of the Programme, or the approaches to its implementation, affect women and men in a different way? Can they lead to inequalities? What measures would be needed to remedy or prevent them?
4. Do the guidelines on *Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners* reflect existing standards of the Council of Europe, and how can they support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023?

The authors of the study based themselves on a variety of sources of information and types of activities. The main conclusions and recommendations can be found in the executive summary. But the study is much richer and includes proposals to assess gender equality in youth activities and proposals of formats and contents of training activities for staff of the Youth Department and partners in view of consistently promoting gender equality and combating gender inequality.

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Before starting a business, Ilaria spent 18 years working and volunteering for different organisations in the youth sector. Her expertise on gender issue is recalled by an extensive experience at World Association of Girl guides and Girl Scouts where Ilaria was external representative as well as writer for different publications. After a successful career in the private sector, Ilaria decided to continue her career in the social field particularly in the areas of human rights, youth policies and education. Ilaria holds a degree in Education and she is a member of the Council of Europe Youth Department Trainers Pool.

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On March 2019, she has joined African Union as the assistant of the African Union Youth Envoy, appointed by the Chairperson of AUC, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender Equality is an important scope for the Council of Europe, and different bodies within it carry out gender mainstreaming activities in a wide range of areas. Through the different recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers, gender is mainstreamed in different areas, such as education, health, media and sport. Gender mainstreaming plays a key role in the current Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality 2018-2023, adopted on March 2018, with the aim of outlining gender equality goals and priorities of the Council of Europe from 2018-2023. In this regard, among its six strategic objectives, the final one aims to introduce measures to achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.

According to the Gender Equality Commission¹, some member states of the Council of Europe are actively promoting gender mainstreaming, as well as working on good practices to ensure the promotion of diversity and inclusion. Although the uniqueness of the efforts brings positive results, other member states struggle to face and address obstacles affecting women, girls and vulnerable groups. Intentionally, therefore, with objectives 1, 2 and 5, the Gender Equality Strategy² aims to combat gender stereotypes, violence against women, and to protect the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seeking women and girls.

This Study is designed to carry out a Gender Impact Assessment in order to strengthen the gender equality dimension of the activities proposed by, or organised with, the Youth Department within the context of the Youth for Democracy programme.

This Study was carried out within the Youth for Democracy programme in 2018, and follows the decision of the Joint Council on Youth in 2017 to adopt the guidelines on *Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners*.

This Study is divided into **eight sections**, preceded by a glossary and complemented by appendices. It aims to provide detailed and clear answers to four questions forming part of the Assessment, together with the provision of measures and proposals.

In Section 1, we provide readers with an insight into the research methodology. The Study has been prepared through the analysis of documents provided by the Secretariat of the Youth Department, complemented by policy papers, reports, other organisations' good practices, and tool-kits, all useful for preparing the deliverables. From the background analysis, it was possible to prepare the questionnaires forwarded to the collaborating youth organisations, and the Trainers Pool of the Youth Department. The in-depth phone and email

¹ The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) was established to help ensure the mainstreaming of gender equality into all Council of Europe policies, and to bridge the gap between commitments made at international level and the reality of women in Europe. The Commission, whose members are appointed by member states, provides advice, guidance and support to other Council of Europe bodies and to member states. The Gender Equality Commission supports the implementation of the six objectives of the [Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023](https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/gender-equality-commission). www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/gender-equality-commission

² The new Strategy sets six strategic objectives, aiming to: 1) Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism; 2) Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence; 3) Ensure equal access of women to justice; 4) Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making; 5) Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls; 6) Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures. <https://rm.coe.int/prems-093618-gbr-gender-equality-strategy-2023-web-a5/16808b47e1>

interviews provided useful information and details for identifying best practices and possible constraints in terms of promoting Gender Equality.

Section 2 gives an overview of the main concept and policies promoting Gender Equality in the Council of Europe. It has been developed from scratch, following an in-depth analysis of different studies, documents and research. By using this section as a reference, the reader – especially a non-expert – is guided towards understanding the criteria used to draw and present the main findings in the subsequent sections.

Section 3 looks at the specific methods applied for the research, from desk research to surveys and interviews to different stakeholders, and also provides a framework to enable the reader to understand trends in the replies. The questions and their answers focus on solutions and suggestions for the Youth Department and its partners for maintaining high standards in the youth programme delivery. This section also aims to examine comprehensively how, through the structures of the youth sector, namely the European Youth Centres, the European Youth Foundation and the co-management structure, the Youth for Democracy programme is promoting Gender Equality.

In section 4, there are the general recommendations. The first part focuses on youth organisations which usually partner with the Youth Department, while the second paragraph looks directly at the Youth for Democracy programme. In particular, the recommendations and suggestions on the training courses that the Youth Department programme should offer are elaborated on in more detail in a paragraph dedicated to the proposal of measures for strengthening the gender equality dimension in the. The training of staff, educational consultants and volunteers involved in the implementation of the Programme are part of the assessment requirements. In general, these recommendations are supported by additional tools provided in Sections 6 to 8 of this Study.

In Section 5, the conclusions note, first of all, that gender equality is at the core of the work conducted by the Youth for Democracy programme; additionally, the conclusions highlight that the Programme objectives can support the work of the Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe. Section 5 also examines correlations between the goals of the Programme and gender inequality patterns, where the discussion around the role of women in public and political life promotes some reflection. Additionally, this part explores how the objectives of the Programme, or the approaches to its implementation, affect women and men in a different way, meaning that this does not necessarily lead to inequality. In conclusion, it shows, through a table, how the guidelines on *Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners* can support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023).

Sections 6 and 7 present approaches on how to implement and evaluate the guidelines whether they reflect existing standards of the Council of Europe, and how they can support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023).

Section 8 is very much focused on measures and recommendations for strengthening the gender equality dimension in the Youth for Democracy programme. In reality, it provides a very practical approach in reminding the reader of the added value of integrating a gender

perspective into every aspect of the work carried out by the Youth Department. There is a list of measures that can be taken into consideration to use hand in hand with the work carried out by the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy, as well as considerations for the opportunity to design training courses for different teams and bodies of the Youth Department.

Key questions and main findings

The Study was carried out to answer four key questions:

5. Is there adequacy between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality? Or, in other words, do the aims of the programme correlate appropriately with the promotion of Gender Equality?
6. Are there any correlations between the goals of the Programme and gender inequality patterns in the member states of the Council of Europe?
7. Do the objectives of the Programme, or the approaches to its implementation, affect women and men in a different way? Can they lead to inequalities? What measures would be needed to remedy or prevent them?
8. Do the current guidelines on *Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners* reflect existing standards of the Council of Europe, and how can they support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023?

With regard to the key questions, it can be stated that **there is adequation between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality**. Moreover, the Programme is sensitive to the promotion of diversity and the inclusion of minorities and vulnerable individuals. The aims of the Programme are well implemented from the decision-making process to the physical accessibility, while the *Guidelines* on Gender Inequality 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. In fact, the Programme covers a broad range of human rights issues that are being object of a “backlash” in different member states, such as sexual orientation, gender identity, and the exclusion of Roma people and many other vulnerable groups. Therefore, **there are no correlations between the goals of the Programme and gender inequality patterns in the member states of the Council of Europe**.

The objectives of the Programme are an effective response against the current discriminatory, transphobic and homophobic narrative present in some of the member states. In fact, the first expected result is access to rights, with the objective of supporting young people and youth organisations in accessing their rights and advocating for human rights and citizenship education. In particular, the objective is sensitively addressed to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In contrast to the current cuts in funding and attempts to silence women’s and LGBTQIA+³ movements, the Programme is working to actively

³ LGBTQIA+ is an inclusive acronym to refer to most sexual and gender identities: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, Queer, Intersex and Asexual.

include the voice of *all* young people both at online and offline levels. The No Hate Speech Movement has to be mentioned as an action that has been created to counter and dismantle sexist speech, with the aim of creating a safe space for youth online.

Through the analysis of the findings presented through the Study, it appears clearly that **the objectives of the Programme and its implementation are not affecting women and men in a different way**. The objectives and implementation of the Programme are actually taking into consideration vulnerable individuals, through – but not limited to – the promotion of equality in dignity and in diversity.

When it comes to the guidelines on *Gender inequality of intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners*, it appears that **they reflect the standards of the Council of Europe, and can support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023**. All the aspects of the *Guidelines* can support the implementation of the objectives of the Strategy. A table has been included in chapter 5, with the aim of presenting the aspects of the *Guidelines* and the correlation with the Gender Equality Strategy objectives. Specifically, the table presents suggestions to the Programme to be considered in the context of supporting the implementation of the Strategy, as well as the work conducted by the Gender Equality Unit.

In undertaking the assessment, four factors have played a key role in the production of the final recommendations. Firstly, the desk research was useful for analysing the gender dimension and the gender perspective within the Youth Department. Through the production of manuals and activities offered by the Department, it can be easily stated that **gender equality is among the key priorities of the youth sector of the Council of Europe**.

Secondly, through the two surveys addressed to the youth organisations collaborating with the Youth Department and the one to the Pool of Trainers, it was possible to understand how gender equality is interpreted, and what the main challenges are when it comes to the promotion of gender equality and diversity. From the surveys, it appears that **both youth organisations and trainers agree on the fact that the Youth Department is actively promoting gender equality**. When it comes to the most pressurized challenges that youth organisations are facing in promoting gender equality, sexist speech and a lack of recognition of domestic violence as a form of violence are the challenges mentioned the most on the survey. On this subject, the No Hate Speech Movement has been mentioned as one of the most successful initiatives promoted by the Council of Europe. The Guidelines on the use of sexist language produced by the Council of Europe in the '90s are still relevant, and might be of great support in harmonising terminology and language.

Thirdly, the in-depth interviews played a decisive role in understanding both the internal and external structures of the Youth Department. From the interviews, it is possible to confirm that the commitment of the Youth Department is not limited to the promotion of gender equality, but that it is also determined to nurture its engagement to actively support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. Two main issues have been raised as a result of the interviews. The first one is that, to some respondents, gender equality appears as an isolated area of work, rather than a cross-cutting issue. The second one brings to light the fact that part of the staff and members of the decision-making bodies have never undertaken training in gender equality. However, the Youth Department has already started a discussion with the Gender Equality Unit, with the aim of developing together a training course on Gender Equality.

Lastly, the gender inequality patterns of the member states have played a fundamental role in drawing the conclusions of this Study. On the one hand, by analysing the gender inequality patterns, it is possible to state how the Youth Department plays a key role in supporting and providing a safe space for young people and youth organisations, to question and concretely analyse those patterns and their background. On the other, the effort of the Department in promoting Gender Equality and diversity oppose the current backlash(es) on the rights of women and vulnerable individuals currently taking place in different member state countries. The section dedicated to Gender Inequality Patterns is new in its structure and approach, and provides a general overview of the situation as it is now in some of the member states. On this subject, a study on the gender inequality patterns should be commissioned and used as a reference in support of the current Gender Equality Strategy and the Istanbul Convention.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Study highlights that the Programme specifically addresses inequalities, and is particularly sensitive with regard to the promotion of diversity. From the physical structures of the Youth Centres to the attention of staff members, the Programme promotes gender equality and ensures the creation of a space accessible to all, from young parents to youth with disabilities. From the in-depth interviews, it appears that youth organisations should promote even more the opportunities and facilities offered by the Programme in order to reach a broader audience of young people, in particular migrants, youth with disabilities and young parents.

Looking through the Study, it can be seen that gender is mainstreamed and that a broad range of activities has been offered and promoted by the Programme, such as the creation of a space for young migrant women to debate women's rights, and youth discussing gender equality in relation to environmental changes. However, from the in-depth interviews, it would also appear that gender is often mistaken and treated as an isolated subject. In this regard, a training course offered to staff members and decision-making bodies could facilitate the understanding of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue. However, as already mentioned, the Programme currently has on the table the design of a training course on Gender Equality in collaboration with the Gender Equality Unit.

To further strengthen the gender dimension, the following section presents a set of actions and recommendations to the youth organisations collaborating with the Programme, and to the Youth for Democracy programme. It is pivotal to specify that the following recommendations are suggestions aiming to foster the work that the Programme is already doing in order to achieve gender equality. Secondly, some of the recommendations were stressed directly by representatives of the different constituencies during the interviews.

Concerning youth organisations

The surveys directed to the youth organisations and the Pool of Trainers of the Youth Department were very useful for collecting and analysing data and information with regard to the promotion of gender equality and gender diversity. In particular, from the analysis of the first survey, it was possible to understand how – and to what extent – collaboration between

youth organisations and the Youth for Democracy programme can be reinforced. However, the aim of this section is to support youth organisations by providing solutions that can be developed to facilitate their work in promoting gender equality and gender diversity. The section dedicated to desk research shows the commitment of the Youth for Democracy programme in providing manuals and useful materials that the youth organisations can use to foster their gender-sensitivity approach, and their commitment to promoting and achieving gender equality. In this regard, youth organisations can refer to *Compass* – the manual for human rights education with young people, for designing activities and improving facilitation skills, using the different manuals and toolkits developed by the Youth Department.

Along with the extensive database offered by the Programme, and the specific reference to *Compass* in response to support from the Programme on designing activities and improving facilitation skills, the chapter dedicated to policy context can be used by the youth organisations to analyse their social context with regard to gender equality and gender diversity, especially in those countries where there is a current backlash on the rights of women and vulnerable individuals. Therefore, for youth organisations to understand the social context and how to address the different issues affecting women and vulnerable groups better, it is advisable **to develop a clear internal policy statement outlining why gender equality is important**, and consequently to collect sex and/or gender information to capture the participation of women and vulnerable groups.

Since youth organisations have positively mentioned the No Hate Speech Movement, and due to the online presence of young people, an idea to further promote gender equality and diversity is to foster, on the one hand, the online presence of the organisations to reach out to as many young people as possible at local and national levels. On the other hand, there has been the suggestion to use online communication to get in touch with members and to collect feedback on how to improve the work in promoting gender equality, in particular to ensure that it is treated as cross-cutting. Moreover, improving communication with members means informing them about the work that the Youth for Democracy programme is doing to advance accessibility and the promotion of diversity. On this subject, a mention goes to the role of youth organisations in promoting and fostering the participation of young parents in sessions and activities held in the Youth Centres.

To summarise, the recommendations addressed to the youth organisations are:

1. To **develop a clear internal policy statement** outlining why gender equality is important, in order to ensure a gender-sensitive approach within the organisation's structure and activities.
2. To **take into consideration the social context** where the organisation operates, in particular how the country is tackling violence against women and girls, and to find out which policies have been put in place to combat discrimination on the grounds of gender identity and sexual discrimination.
3. To **take advantage of the online presence** to get in touch with young people, and promote inclusion and diversity through, for example, social media campaigns and Q&A sessions.
4. To **promote blogging as an action to tackle discrimination**, to highlight stories written by young people collaborating with the organisation. Blog posts are an opportunity for young migrants and refugees, young people with disabilities and youth LGBTQI to communicate with society and to tackle violence, discrimination and stereotypes that affect their well-being and violate their rights.

5. To **launch a survey addressed to the members** of the organisation to collect suggestions and feedback on how to foster the commitment to achieve gender equality, and promote diversity.
6. To **collaborate with other youth organisations** known for their work on gender equality to receive support on the promotion and achievement of gender equality.
7. To **refer to *Compass* and to the vast database offered by the Youth Department** to design activities and improve facilitation skills.
8. To **increase the participation and involvement of young parents**, by presenting the opportunities offered by the Programme addressed to young parents, especially mothers (by adopting measures similar to those in place at the European Youth Centres or by being explicitly inclusive of young parents and their specific needs).

Concerning the Youth for Democracy programme

The aim of presenting the following recommendations and suggestions to the Youth for Democracy programme is to foster its commitment to promote gender equality and gender diversity, by undertaking different patterns. First of all, it can be stated that the Youth for Democracy programme has put in place and mainstreamed gender equality both internally within the Youth Department, as well as externally, and it is ensuring the promotion of both gender equality and gender diversity. Special mention goes to the work conducted by the Programme to ensure the active participation and involvement of vulnerable individuals and minority groups.

Compared to the current gender inequality patterns in the member states, **the Programme is extremely sensitive towards all individuals regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnic or social background**. Moreover, from the in-depth interviews, it appears that the Programme aims to further advance its commitment towards the achievement of gender equality by, first of all, implementing the Guidelines on *Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners* and, secondly, by supporting the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. On this matter, it aims to foster the collaboration with the Gender Equality Unit, in order to develop a Gender Equality training course. On this premise, the first recommendation to address to the Youth for Democracy programme is to **develop a training course on Gender Equality**. This offer is not just to the trainers collaborating with the Youth Department, but also to the members of decision-making bodies such the Steering Committee on Youth, the Advisory Council on Youth and the Joint Council on Youth.

Additionally, a recommendation is addressed to the collection of information in order to obtain gender statistics, while a solution has been suggested to the Programme to further promote the accessibility and inclusion of vulnerable individuals in the activities and sessions organised or supported by the Programme.

Specifically, to support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy, the recommendations and suggestions addressed to the Youth for Democracy programme are:

9. To strengthen the partnership / collaboration with youth organisations, in particular with those working in countries where a backlash towards women's rights is currently taking place.
10. To intensify the communication with youth organisations working primarily on gender equality to understand how the Youth Department can support their work at national / local levels, and to promote youth engagement and advocacy around gender equality.
11. To address to the Gender Equality Unit the importance of identifying the gender inequality patterns in the member states, particularly with regard to the Istanbul Convention and the current backlash on the rights of women, girls and vulnerable individuals.
12. To collect data by sex is important, as sex-disaggregated data "allow for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic grounds and are one of the requirements in obtaining gender statistics"⁴.
13. When it comes to young parents, it is important to mention the extension of benefits which are offered to young mothers to the fathers as well.

As noticed in the literature review, it is not always possible to have a gender balance in terms of representativeness; in fact, most of the documents show that the number of women participating in activities is higher than men. As raised by one of the survey respondents, "it looks like human rights are more appealing to women rather than to men". However, when different minority groups are present, it is essential to check that gender balance is present within each group attending the activity.

14. To increase the activities offered to same sex young people, especially young men, to debate topics such as stereotypes, machismo, masculinity and male violence towards women. There are advantages to questioning which ideologies boys and men (might) adopt to promote greater equality across sexualities and genders. What ideologies channel men's lives such that they are satisfied, socially engaged, and which resist the reproduction of inequalities between men and women, as well as among men?
15. To continue the promotion of activities addressed to young women to discuss women in power and the different forms of violence towards women.
16. The Youth and Gender Equality Departments should discuss and plan the possibility of increasing co-operation to ensure that:
 1. both departments are consulted in time and with enough notice when it comes to contributing to toolkits and documents, or to participating in meetings and events.
 2. the Gender Equality Division will be able to support the content review of specific training courses or activities, with the active participation of the designated Gender Equality Rapporteur(s).
 3. there is consistency in the use of the terminology between the two sectors.
 4. the Youth Department is supported to properly disseminate and promote the standards on Gender Equality, especially with the current attacks against the Istanbul Convention.
17. Include a specific session on Gender Equality in the training courses offered to trainers.
18. Give a wakeup call to trainers who have never received training on gender equality to attend a training course.

⁴ European Institute for Gender Equality

19. The training course on Gender Equality should not be delivered only to trainers but also to all those working within the Youth for Democracy programme. As one of the respondents has shared, “a statutory body of CoE made an inappropriate remark to another representative. I wouldn't call it a full-blown discrimination conflict, but the comment was gender-related and in conflict with the CoE's values”. In this regard, the Guidelines for Gender Equality address indicators to ensure the creation of a safe space, and these should be extended to the staff as well.

As part of the Assessment, a set of measures and proposals have been elaborated, in particular in terms of developing a training course for staff, educational consultants and volunteers involved in the implementation of the Programme.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Before you get started, the following glossary lists some useful terms, among the many used in gender discourse, with the purpose of facilitating the reading of the Study.

The main sources used as reference to prepare the glossary are *Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People* of the Council of Europe, the Europe Glossary of ILGA and the Gender Equality Glossary of the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe.

DIRECT / INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON SEX	Direct discrimination occurs when a difference in treatment relies directly and explicitly on distinctions based on sex and characteristics of men or of women which cannot be justified objectively.
GENDER	Gender is the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men.
GENDER ANALYSIS:	Gender Analysis is the study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc. between women and men on their assigned gender roles.
GENDER EQUALITY	Gender Equality means an equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference, and aims to promote the full participation of women and men in society. It means accepting and valuing equally the differences between women and men and the diverse roles they play in society. Gender equality includes the right to be different. This means taking into account the existing differences among women and men, which are related to class, political opinion, religion, ethnicity, race or sexual orientation. Gender equality means discussing how it is possible to go further, to challenge the structures in society which contribute to maintaining the unequal power relationships between women and men, and to reach a better balance in the various female and male values and priorities.
GENDER IDENTITY	Gender Identity refers to the gender to which individual persons feel they belong, which may be or may not be the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.
GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT	Gender Impact Assessment is a policy tool for the screening of a given policy proposal, in order “to detect and assess its differential impact or effects on women and men, so that these imbalances can be redressed before the proposal is endorsed” ⁵ . An analysis from a gender perspective helps to see whether the needs of women and men are equally taken into account and served by this proposal. It enables policy makers to develop policies with an understanding of the socio-economic reality of women and men, and allows for policies to take (gender) differences into account. Gender impact assessment methods do not only have to be applied to policy in the making, they can also be applied to existing policies. They can be used in the administration as well as by external actors; in both cases, they require a considerable amount of knowledge of gender issues. The advantage of these

⁵ Council of Europe, Gender mainstreaming - Final report of activities of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming (EG-S-MS), 2004

	tools lies in the fact that they draw a very accurate picture of the effects of a given policy.
GENDER MAINSTREAMING	Gender Mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender-equality perspective is incorporated into all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making.
GENDER NEUTRAL	Gender Neutral is having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or gender equality between women and men.
GENDER SENSITIVE	Gender Sensitive is addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.
GENDER STEREOTYPES	Gender Stereotypes are preconceived ideas whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex. Sex stereotyping can limit the development of the natural talents and abilities of boys and girls, women and men, their educational and professional experiences, as well as life opportunities. In general, stereotypes result from and are used to justify and maintain both the historical relations of power of men over women, as well as sexist attitudes which hold back the advancement of women.
SEX	Sex refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male.
SEX- / GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA	Sex-disaggregated data refers to any data on individuals broken down by sex. Gender statistics rely on this data and reflect the realities of the lives of women and men, and the policy issues relating to gender. Data collected and tabulated separately for women and men 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.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	Sexual Orientation refers to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of different gender, or the same gender, or more than one gender.
YOUTH DEPARTMENT	Youth Department refers to the youth sector of the Council of Europe, currently part of the Directorate for Democratic Participation, responsible for the implementation of the Youth for Democracy programme. The Department elaborates guidelines, programmes and legal instruments for the development of coherent and effective youth policies at local, national and European levels. It comprises a programme of intergovernmental co-operation and support to youth policy development, the European Youth Foundation, the European Youth Centres of Budapest and Strasbourg, a partnership with the European Commission and a Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility.

INTRODUCTION

The Youth Department carrying out a Gender Impact assessment

*Historically unequal power relations between women and men have led to domination over, and discrimination against, women by men, and to the prevention of the full advancement of women. However, both women and men are victims of stereotypes restricting their full capabilities.*⁶

According to the resolution of the Committee of Ministers (2008)23, the aim of the Council of Europe's youth policy is "to provide young people – girls and boys, young women and young men – with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society". The same resolution also sets as a priority "effectively implementing gender equality and preventing all forms of gender-based violence".

As such, Gender Equality can be understood as the access for "*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.*"⁷

In this respect, 'Gender' has to be considered the social aspect of our identity as women and as men: the way we dress, the way we behave in public, the way that we interact with members of the same and different biological sexes, the roles we have in our families, the expectations that we have for our lives. It is everything we absorb from our culture, society, and experiences that become part of our learning of 'being a woman' and 'being a man'. It is important to note that not everybody experiences 'being a woman' or 'being a man' in the way that is most common in their society and many people do not identify with either of these two binary categories.

There are norms, appropriate behaviours and traditions surrounding all kinds of gender identities, in all cultures. These impact the way that we feel about ourselves, as well as affecting how other people see us - in our relationships, at work, and in social contexts. Our gender identity, therefore, has an impact on how we experience and perceive everything.

It is duly noted that Gender equality has been a concern for the youth sector of the Council of Europe ever since its creation. Youth organisations, in particular, have consistently contributed to keep theme up to date in the programme of activities of the European Youth Centres. Gender equality is also present in the most popular educational resources of the Youth Department such as *Compass*, *Compasito*, *Bookmarks* and *Mosaic*, *Gender Matters*, and sexist hate speech has been one of the most mobilising issues in the "No Hate Speech Movement" campaign. These are only examples of the central role that gender equality plays in the policy and programme of the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

Gender equality is also an important area of activity of the Council of Europe through the

⁶ Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 - pg.7

⁷ Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 - pg.6

work done by its Gender Equality Commission, including the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023.

Through the structures of the youth sector, namely the European Youth Centres, the European Youth Foundation and the co-management structure, the “Youth for Democracy” Programme line aims to advance democratic citizenship through innovative forms of participation of young people in democratic processes, supporting the autonomy of young people and their access to rights. More inclusive and peaceful societies are promoted through action addressed in particular at young people in vulnerable situations.

The Programme includes a series of activities taking place in the European Youth Centres (training courses, conferences, seminars, consultative meetings, youth peace camps, study sessions) to prepare the beneficiaries to become multipliers for the Council of Europe’s values. The Youth sector’s gender perspective and educational manuals are also produced and widely disseminated, thereby reaching out to a wider population of youth workers, NGOs and national authorities. All activities are meant to be inclusive and to embrace a gender perspective.

Moreover, the European Youth Foundation (EYF) is actively promoting the integration of a gender perspective in the youth projects it supports, and has created a dedicated webpage on gender⁸ and a Gender toolbox.⁹ All youth NGOs submitting a grant application to the EYF are asked to explain how they will include a gender perspective in their project.

However, promoting Gender Equality in this case, comes with the constant effort of implementing policies and procedures at all levels, questioning the obvious and provide answers to gain a better understanding on how exactly Gender Equality is becoming a reality through the implementation of the Programme.

Concerned by the need to consolidate this work and preserve the consistency of approaches and measures, the Joint Council on Youth adopted in 2017 “Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners”. The Joint Council on Youth also decided that a Gender Impact Assessment of the Programme “Youth for Democracy” should be carried out. Consequently, this study aims to present how the Youth Department works within its structure and partners including the Joint Council on Youth, the European Youth Centres, the European Youth Foundation, the youth organisations and the trainers, to ensure that Gender Equality is featured and mainstreamed throughout the Programme.

As matter of fact a Gender impact assessment (GIA) is often considered exclusively for the assessment of legislative acts. However, as pointed out by the Council of Europe, this is an overly narrow reading of the potential of this instrument:

“Gender impact assessment can be applied to legislation, policy plans, policy programmes, budgets, concrete actions, bills and reports or calls for research. Gender impact assessment methods do not only have to be applied to policy in the making, but they can also be applied

⁸ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/gender-perspectives>

⁹ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/resources-on-gender>

to existing policies. They can be used in the administration as well as external actors; in both cases, they require a considerable amount of knowledge of gender issues.”¹⁰

Even though this method has been mainly used for legal documents, its capacity is much broader. Since it is an ex-ante evaluation, it should focus not only on legislation but also on strategic policy plans and action programmes.

Broader use of gender impact assessment would help policymakers and public servants to analyse and foresee the gender impact of any critical decision under consideration, to improve it from the start, while it is being designed and planned. The findings of the gender impact assessment should be timely available so that law regulations or policies can be changed or even abandoned, if necessary.¹¹

The study has been prepared thinking at the reader and user-friendliness and for being practically implementable especially by a non-expert or specialised public, including many volunteers and occasional facilitators of international youth activities. It has not been an easy work and that is why the GIA starts with a glossary, because whatever the inexperience everyone need to wear gender glasses to read or apply parts of this document.

The study is based mostly on analysis of the documents provided by the Secretariat of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. (See Appendix I). This has been complemented by interviews with a selected number of staff members, representatives of the Joint Council on Youth (including the European Steering Committee on Youth, the Advisory Council on Youth and the Programming Committee on Youth) and the Gender Equality rapporteur of the Joint Council on Youth.

The shortcomings of this approaches coming along with this methodology can be summarised by the fact that not everyone involved was familiar with documents and standards, some did not want to be interviewed because feeling that this was an issue to be dealt by expert. Interviews were postponed or directed to someone apparently more knowledgeable, and this did not help the delivery on time.

¹⁰ Council of Europe Gender Equality Glossary, *Gender Impact Assessment*

¹¹ Scope of Gender Impact Assessment, *European Institute for Gender Equality* : <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-impact-assessment/when-use-gender-impact-assessment>

1. RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the present study is to assess whether the gender equality dimension is adequately integrated in the Youth for Democracy programme and to strengthen it within the programme of activities of the Youth Department in the current biennium and beyond.

In particular, the Assessment addresses the following questions:

1. Is there adequacy between the aims of the programme and the promotion of gender equality? Do the aims of the programme correlate appropriately with the promotion of Gender Equality?
2. Are there any correlations between the goals of the programme and gender inequality patterns in the member states of the Council of Europe?
3. Do the objectives of the programme, or the approaches to its implementation, affect women and men in a different way? Can they lead to inequalities? What measures would be needed to remedy or prevent them?
4. Do the current Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners reflect existing standards of the Council of Europe and how can they support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023?

The study has been prepared through the analysis of documents provided by the Secretariat of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, and additional documents useful to prepare the deliverables. Thanks to an initial analysis, it was possible to prepare the questionnaires forwarded to the Youth Organisations collaborating with, and Pool of Trainers of the Youth Department. The in-depth phone and e-mail interviews provided useful information and details to identify good practices and possible constraints towards the promotion of gender equality.

1.1. Methodology

To answer the above research questions, the study gathered information through:

- A literature review;
- The analysis of documents provided by the secretariat of the Youth Department, and complementary documents;
- A survey addressed to youth organisations cooperating with the Youth Department;
- A survey addressed to the pool of trainers cooperating with the Youth Department;
- Stakeholders in-depth interviews;

In terms of the primary data collection for the study, it should be noted that the survey provided qualitative information on most of the research questions, while the in-depth interviews aimed to provide qualitative details in relation to the work that the Youth Department is doing on promoting the achievement of gender equality.

Intersectionality has been used as approach, especially to identify grounds of discrimination and to understand how young people are affected by those. Intersectionality in discrimination takes into consideration that the process happens with different layers. For instance, when it comes to Muslim veiled young women, the risk to be discriminated for their belief, culture and sex is high. Wearing a scarf expose them in a higher and different discrimination compared to young Muslim men.

1.2. Research overview

The next paragraphs present the methodology of the desk research, the surveys delivered to Youth Organisations cooperating with the Youth Department, to the Trainers' pool and the in-depth interviews conducted.

55 individuals have been reached through the surveys and the in-depth interviews, in specific 45 respondents have taken the surveys, while ten individuals representing the different constituencies have been reached out. As mentioned in the introduction, from the survey addressed to the youth organisations, it was not possible to collect data in terms of regional provenience from all the respondents. In fact, based on the response, being in possession of more geographical information, this could have supported or strengthened the findings on the gender inequality patterns in the Member States. Also, as already mentioned, it is still not certain the reason why the response to the surveys was not high as expected.

It is important to clarify that, although for the purpose of the Assessment was not fundamental to collect geographical information, the answers received from some individuals from Eastern Europe have been connected to the findings on the gender inequality patterns presented in Section 2.

To some extent, then the findings coming from the surveys had to be connected to the in-depth interviews with individuals representing the Youth Department and Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe.

Overview of the desk research

A review of sources was undertaken to obtain an up to date view of existing research, in particular in relation to the main questions above mentioned. **The Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023** and the **Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities** of the Youth Department have been used as the main reference.

Additional documents have been added to the ones provided by the Secretariat of the Youth Department, such as samples of the activities held in the Youth Centers or by other partners, to have an overview on the materials produced, and the role of the Youth Department on creating awareness about gender issues. A research about the structure of the Youth Department, from the Youth Centres to the co-management bodies has been conducted to assess the accessibility of physical structures and decision-making bodies.

The questions for the surveys and the in-depth interviews have been created from the analysis of the guidelines and the vast documentation produced by the Youth Department, along with the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023.

Survey implementation

Within the scope of the study, two surveys were undertaken: a survey of youth organisations and a survey of trainers' pool of the youth department. Both surveys were made available online through the software SurveyMonkey.

The aim of the survey was to understand youth workers and youth organisations' approach towards gender equality and diversity, and how working with the Youth Department is improving the participation of young people at local, regional and international level.

The two surveys have been prepared in reference to the concerns mentioned in the Gender Equality Matters Seminar held in June 2016, that has produced consequently the Guidelines on Gender Equality in the Intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners.

First of all, the online surveys used to collect the data were mainly distributed by the Youth Department, including the beneficiaries of the European Youth Foundation. Second, it is difficult to identify why the majority of the local organisations did not reply to the survey. Concerning the pool of trainers, 20% of its members replied to the survey. Nevertheless, the sample of respondent could be considered representative against the actual numbers of trainers receiving the link. Third, we assumed everyone had easy access to the internet, which consequently somehow restricts the number of individuals not using internet daily. Fourth, the surveys were anonymous and demographic data were not collected as such.

Therefore, the sample obtained is a non-probability sample for the reasons explained above.

The non-provision of a definition of "*gender*" and "*diversity*" used in the surveys was a choice to understand the knowledge related to each organisation or trainer and to give space for interpretation. This was useful to catch elements to include in the possible measures the youth department might implement.

The Survey for youth organisations was addressed to youth organisations working with the Council of Europe and disseminated where possible to the members of the Joint Council on Youth.

19 respondents provided inputs and answered to the questions designed to:

1. Understand how diversity and gender equality is understood in youth organisations.
2. Know how youth organisations promote diversity and which practices they have put in place to promote gender equality.
3. Get to know youth organisations' policies and activities to promote inclusion and gender equality.
4. Learn how youth organisations communicate with the society in terms of diversity and inclusion.

5. Understand which opportunities and challenges youth organisations face in terms of Gender Equality.
6. Learn about results to date on gender equality and diversity from youth organisations.
7. Understand which benefits and expectations youth organisations have from the Youth Department.

The table below presents the structure of the Survey that has been disseminated to youth organisations.

QUESTIONS	AIMS
1.How is diversity understood in your Organisation?	To understand how youth organisations define and work on diversity, and if their understand is intersectional in terms of class, race, gender, sexual orientation and disability.
2.How is gender equality understood in your Organisation?	To understand how youth organisations define Gender Equality, and if it is treated as a cross-cutting thematic or an isolated area of work.
3.How easy is it to promote diversity and gender equality in your Organisation?	The question was structured to allow respondents to select one of the provided answers. The aim is to understand if youth organisations find difficult to promote diversity and gender equality.
4.How does your Organisation promote gender equality? Please, give examples and highlight any good practice that you would like to share.	The question was structured to allow respondents to select one or more of the provided answers. Known good practices were listed as part of the possible answers. The aim is to understand how gender equality is promoted internally and implemented in the activities.
5.Does your Organisation have specific policies and concrete activities to promote inclusion and equal treatment?	The question was structured in a “yes” or “no” answer, to understand if youth organisations promote inclusion and equal treatment through specific policies and concrete activities.
6.How does your Organisation communicate with the society to make sure that its image reflects diversity and is actively inclusive? (e.g. information in different languages, the internet).	Respondents shared and described how their organisations communicate with the society through social media and internet. The aim is to understand how diversity is promoted through different languages, and how youth organisations are active in the internet sphere to reach young people.
7.What opportunities and challenges does your Organisation face in terms of Gender Equality? Please, share most important ones.	Respondents shared opportunities and challenges in terms of Gender Equality. The aim is to understand which challenges they face and consequently from the analysis to understand which instruments the Youth Department can provide in support of the organisations.
8.If your Organisation has worked on Gender Equality and Diversity, what results have you had to date? How are you measuring these results?	Respondents shared the work of youth organisations and their experiences. The aim is to understand which activities, materials and/or actions youth organisations have developed and produced in terms of Gender Equality. The focus is as well on the internal structures of the organisations in terms of leadership, membership and when it comes to collect data.

Table 1, Chapter 1: Questions addressed to youth organisations.

The survey to the trainers was addressed to the Youth Department trainers pool.

26 respondents provided inputs and answered to the questions designed to:

1. Perceive how gender equality is understood by youth trainers.
2. Understand how many youth trainers have ever received a training on gender equality and how it was delivered.
3. Receive their opinion on the gender equality perspective in the educational programme and in the training organised by the Youth Department.
4. Receive their opinion about the reasons that might prevent migrant and refugees young women to participate in youth activities.
5. Hear from them about possible gender-based discrimination conflict among the participants, and how they tackle this kind of conflicts.
6. Understand from them if a training on gender equality from the Youth Department can be useful to trainers and youth workers.

The table below represents the structure of the Survey that has been disseminated to the pool of trainers collaborating with the Youth Department.

QUESTIONS	AIMS
1. What do you understand by gender equality?	To understand how youth trainers and youth workers understand gender equality.
2. Have you ever received a training on gender equality?	The question is linked to the Q3 & Q4, based on their answers. Respondents had to select between “yes” or “no”.
3. If yes.	The question was structured in multiple choice to allow respondents to describe how many times they have received a training on gender equality, how the training was delivered and to know if the training was useful for their work.
4. If not, what are the reasons?	The question was addressed to those who have received a training on gender equality and structured to allow respondents to select one of the provided choices, to understand the reasons why the training they have received was not useful. This information helps in terms of recommendations. An open question was provided to respondents for further comments and inputs.
5. Does the educational programme have a gender equality perspective?	The question was structured to allow participants to select one of the provided choices. The aim is to understand in which terms the educational programme has a gender perspective. An open question was provided to respondents for further comments and inputs.

Table 2, Chapter 1: Questions addressed to the pool of Trainers.

1.2.3 Overview of the interviews

To understand how gender equality perspective is mainstreamed in all the activities, including in the physical buildings and in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, in-depth interviews have been chosen to collect additional information. Hearing directly from the people involved in the promotion of gender equality and diversity, has been necessary to evidence any gap in the application of the Guidelines and of the Standards. A set of prepared questions was sent to the representatives who took part in the interview via email. The interactive approach used during phone interviews provided useful information that have enriched the analysis, and subsequently the compilation of the Gender Impact Assessment.

8 staff members of the Youth Department and of the Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe, and 2 members of the Joint Council on Youth have been interviewed. In details, 6 staff members from the Youth Department, and two from the Gender Equality Unit. The selection of staff members of the Youth Department was made according to the criteria set for the desk research during the preparatory meeting held with the Youth Department, particularly regarding its work and its internal structure. Consequently, among the interviewed staff members there were representatives of the Youth Centers, the European Youth Foundation and Educational Advisors. Each individual has provided important information to conduct the assessment, however, some of the interviewees were not able to answer to the questions, and often referred to the Head of the Youth Department when talking about topics such as decision making and activities. Secondly, although each staff member provided an opinion in regards of the Gender Equality Strategy, it was not possible to collect data in regards of any plan or conversation around how the different bodies are going to implement it. In fact, by the time of the interviews, stakeholders held just one meeting to discuss the Strategy. Although for the purpose of this Study this was not helpful, the additional questions addressed to each individual based on their role, division and department have filled the gap in terms of data collection and analysis of information used to elaborate the findings.

The table below aims to present the areas covered by the questions, and the objectives useful for the purpose of the following study. Compared to the table presented for the surveys, this one does not list the specific questions addressed to the representatives, because additional questions have been presented to each respondent, according to their role, division and represented department.

DEPARTMENT	AREAS COVERED BY THE QUESTIONS	OBJECTIVES
The Youth Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Members • Decision making bodies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The role of young people on achieving gender equality. 2. Communication. 3. Decision making positions. 4. Structure of the Youth Centers. 5. Culture diversity of migrant and refugee young women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of young people on achieving gender equality. • Communication within the Department and with youth. • Understanding decision making structures. • Accessibility and inclusion.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Trainings. 7. Structure of the activities. 8. Data collection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality perspective in the activities, and follow up with youth organisations & participants. • Data collection methods.
<p>The Gender Equality Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality Rapporteurs • Staff Members 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The role of young people on achieving gender equality. 2. Gender equality and the Youth Department. 3. The Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and the Youth Department. 4. Gender inequality patterns of the Member States. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the Youth Department can support the implementation of the GE Strategy 2018-2023. • Inputs to design a training on gender equality. • Gender inequality patterns of the Member States, with a reference to the Istanbul Convention.

Table 3, Chapter 1: Questions addressed to representatives of the Youth Department and Gender Equality Unit.

Before presenting the main findings from the literature review, the analysis of the two dedicated surveys to youth organisations and pool of trainers, and the in-depth interview with stakeholders, we aim to provide an overview on the gender inequality patterns of the Member States, the key concepts and policy context used by the Youth Department, and the work conducted by the Council of Europe to promote Gender Equality.

2. THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND GENDER INEQUALITY PATTERNS

KEY CONCEPTS AND POLICY CONTEXT

The starting point? When we meet people along the day our mind automatically identify them according with our understanding about gender. Our mind directly distinguish between man or woman. Gender is always with us, is the first identity element we use to describe someone, hence we cannot avoid it. [9th Ministerial Conference, 2012]¹²

This section aims to collect the desk research and main documentation that has been used as reference to draw from very beginning an overview of the Gender Inequality Patterns and how they are tackled within the Council of Europe. Different factors and indicators have been used during the research, but the policy context has been consulted as the primary source of reference. Therefore, with the purpose to present a study accessible to no expert readers as well, the following section aims to provide information that can be used along with the glossary. It serves, also, as an introduction to the main findings related to the work that the Youth for Democracy Programme is doing to promote Gender Equality and Inclusion, and to provide references on the key concepts and policy context to all individuals implementing training and activities.

The Council of Europe is an intergovernmental organisation established in 1949, and it currently has 47 member States that have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights. The Convention protects and guarantees specific rights and freedom and prohibits unfair and harmful practices.

Member States are committed to non-discrimination, as stated in the Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Additionally, Member States of the Council of Europe are signatory of the Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms with the aim to protect “*the fundamental principle according to which all persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the law.*”¹³

“The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms outlined in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.”¹⁴

¹² 9th Conference: “Young people’s access to rights: development of innovative youth policies” 23-25 September 2012 in St Petersburg, Russian Federation. *Panel on Social inclusion of young people- Introductory speech*. Ilaria Esposito Gender Equality Rapporteur for the Joint Council on Youth 2012

¹³ Protocol No. 12 to the Convention for the protection of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms, *Council of Europe* – pg.2

¹⁴ Article 14: Prohibition of discrimination, *European Convention on Human Rights*.

In addition to the European Convention on Human Rights and to the Protocol No.12 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty that guarantees fundamental social and economic rights. It ensures a broad range of universal human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare. The Charter lays specific emphasis on the protection of vulnerable individuals such as elderly people, children, people with disabilities and migrants. It requires that enjoyment of the above-mentioned rights be guaranteed without discrimination.¹⁵

When it comes to young people, multiple discrimination affects them on the grounds of age, sexual orientation, gender, disability, ethnic origins and the structures of oppression are different. Social stigma, ineffective laws and racism leave victims without protection, and young people coming from a marginalised environment tend to be excluded. However, young people are also drivers of change, and with appropriate tools and opportunities, they can raise their voice and advocate for their rights.

“Effective youth participation is essential to a healthy, democratic society.”¹⁶

The Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on youth work recognises “the work undertaken by the Council of Europe’s youth sector to support youth policies promoting human rights, social inclusion, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and the active participation of young people”.¹⁷ In the meantime, the Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 states that “the aim of the Council of Europe’s youth policy is to provide young people – girls and boys, young women and young men – with equal opportunities and experiences which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competences to play a full part in all aspects of society” and sets different priorities, such the promotion of gender equality and the prevention of all forms of gender-based violence.¹⁸ Additionally, the article 5 of The Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)7 recommends that the governments of the member States improve young people’s access to rights by “establishing strategies to improve young people’s access to rights that reflect the principles of the universality and indivisibility of human rights, non-discrimination and equal opportunities, gender equality, accountability, democracy, participation and intergenerational solidarity. These strategies should recognise that youth work can make a particularly valuable contribution to facilitating young people’s access to their rights”.¹⁹

The Youth Department is part of the Directorate of Democratic participation within the Directorate General of Democracy (DGII) of the Council of Europe.²⁰ The Youth Department empowers and supports young people to access their human rights, and to combat discrimination and exclusion.

¹⁵ The European Social Charter, *Council of Europe* : <https://www.coe.int/it/web/turin-european-social-charter>

¹⁶ Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, *Council of Europe* – pg.5

¹⁷ Recommendation **CM/Rec (2017) 4** of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on youth work, *Council of Europe*

¹⁸ Resolution **CM/RES (2008) 23** on the youth policy of the Council of Europe.

¹⁹ Recommendation CM/Rec (2016) 7 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on research on young people’s access to rights, *Council of Europe*.

²⁰ Youth, *Council of Europe* : <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/home>

The youth sector of the Council of Europe helps young people, considered as “agents of change”, to become engaged and responsible European citizens through human rights advocacy and full participation in the democratic life.

“The active participation of young people in decisions and actions at local and regional level is essential if we are to build more democratic, inclusive and prosperous societies. Participation in the democratic life of any community is about more than voting or standing for election, although these are important elements. Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, space and the opportunity and where necessary the support to participate in and influence decisions, and engage in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society.”²¹

Therefore, in regards of participation and engagement, the Joint Council on Youth, a co-decision-making body which establishes the youth sector priorities, objectives and budget, has set three strategic priorities for the 2018-2019 biennium:

- **Access to rights:** *“Young people access their rights and advocate human rights and citizenship education as a result of the support provided by the Council of Europe to young people, youth organisations and member States.”*
- **Youth participation and youth work:** *“Young people participate in democracy and develop youth policy and youth work at local, regional, national and European levels as a result of the assistance provided by the Council of Europe to young people, youth organisations and member States.”*
- **Inclusive and peaceful societies:** *“Young people engage in and lead intercultural dialogue as a result of the Council of Europe’s support to young people, youth organisations and youth workers in preventing and combating discrimination, exclusion and violent extremism.”²²*

The Joint Council on Youth has also adopted on March 2017 the **Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners** to ensure a human rights-based approach to youth work and non-formal learning, gender-balanced participation in youth activities, language and representation in materials related to educational activities, gender-sensitive educational approaches and a safe environment.²³

The Guidelines are the result of the Gender Equality Matters! Seminar held in June 2016 where participants shared how gender is perceived in their national context and how gender equality and youth work intersect at national and international levels.²⁴ In too many democratic countries there is a denial of equal rights, and women, girls and others are often subject to gender-based discrimination. Despite the progress made by the Millenium

²¹ Preamble of the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, *Council of Europe*

²² Priorities, *Council of Europe* : [https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/priorities#{%2224902356%22:\[2\]](https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/priorities#{%2224902356%22:[2])

²³ Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners, *Council of Europe*.

²⁴ Seminar conclusion, *Gender Equality Matters! Seminar, June 2016* - pg 2

Development Goals and the on-going work on Sustainable Development Goals, the backlash against gender equality and women's rights is occurring.²⁵

To deal with discrimination and inequalities, the Council of Europe has set robust standards through the implementation of Conventions and Mechanisms to ensure the promotion and achievement of Gender Equality. Just to name a few:

- **The Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence - Istanbul Convention**, is a legally-binding instrument that recognises violence against women as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination. Psychological abuse, stalking, physical violence, sexual violence, rape, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, forced abortion, sexual harassment and crimes committed in the name of so-called "honour" are recognised as criminal offences that must be criminalised. An independent expert body, the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention.²⁶
- **The Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings** with its human rights perspective and focus on victim protection, has a comprehensive scope of application, encompassing all forms of trafficking (national or transnational). The types of exploitations covered by the Convention are, at the minimum, sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude and the removal of organs.²⁷
- **The Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on measures to combat discrimination on ground of sexual orientation or gender identity**, encourages Member States to take appropriate steps to prevent discrimination on multiple grounds, including on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit of Council of Europe (SOGI) is the focal point for work on sexual orientation and gender identity issues.²⁸
- **The Resolution "Bridging the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* equality to achieve real gender equality"** has set strategies for achieving gender equality in the fields of legislation and policies, on preventing and combating gender-based violence against women, combating multiple discrimination against vulnerable groups of women and girls, and combating stereotypes gender roles.²⁹

The Council of Europe has different instruments that can be used broadly to tackle gender inequality, along with the United Nations and the European Union standards. Some of the instruments and policy documents refer to the notion of sexism, such the Instruction No. 33

²⁵ Backlash in Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Rights, *EP Study*: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/604955/IPOL_STU\(2018\)604955_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/604955/IPOL_STU(2018)604955_EN.pdf)

²⁶ GREVIO, *Council of Europe* : <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio>

²⁷ What we do – Action Against trafficking in human beings, *Council of Europe* : <https://www.coe.int/en/web/anti-human-trafficking>

²⁸ **CM/Rec(2010)5** of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

²⁹ Resolution "bridging the gap between the *de jure* and *de facto* equality to achieve real gender equality", *7th Council of Europe conference of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity* - 2010

of June 1994 concerning the use of non-sexist language at the Council of Europe. The Guidelines are a useful reference that should be applied in all Departments and Units of the Council of Europe.

In addition to protection mechanisms and standards, the Council of Europe has produced fact sheets on its key areas of activity to promote gender equality. The new **Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023** outlines the goals and priorities of the Council of Europe on Gender Equality. Linked with the achievements of the first Strategy 2014-2017, the new strategy has set six strategic objectives. Among them, “*achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures*”.

Gender mainstreaming, intended as integrating a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects, is a concept that was established as a strategy in International gender equality policy through the Beijing Platform for Action. The Council of Europe defines gender mainstreaming as “*the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors usually involved in policy-making*.”³⁰

The Council of Europe has implemented a gender mainstreaming approach in different sectors, to ensure that the different circumstances of women and men when it comes to power, resources, human rights are taken in account, with the aim to enhance gender equality.

Gender Mainstreaming is present as well in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in where gender equality cross-cuts and is central to the achievement of all 17 SDGs.³¹

The Recommendation R(98)14 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Gender Mainstreaming states that “*one of the main strategies to achieve effective equality between women and men is gender mainstreaming*”.

Briefly, gender mainstreaming is a strategy to achieve gender equality by realising changes at many levels, including leadership, institutions, legal frameworks and in decision-making structures. No set formula or blueprint can be applied in every context. However, what is common to mainstreaming in all sectors or development issues is that “*a concern for gender equality is brought into the mainstream of activities rather than dealt as an add-on*”.³²

Council of Europe bodies carry out gender mainstreaming activities in a wide range of areas, including the Youth Department of the Council of Europe that integrates a gender equality dimension in its policy, educational approaches and practices. The intersectional approach promotes inclusion regardless of ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and recognises the

³⁰ What is gender mainstreaming?, *Council of Europe* : <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>

³¹ Turning promises into action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, *UN Women* : <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018>

³² Gender Mainstreaming: an overview, *United Nations* : <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf>

different gender identities. The above-mentioned Gender Matters! Seminar aimed at further mainstreaming gender equality in its activities and policies.

*“Women” and “men” are not homogeneous groups with single aims and needs: it is necessary to take into account women and men’s multiple identities regarding age, ethnicity, sexual orientation / identity, social status or (dis) ability – to name a few characteristics.*³³

The Youth Department has set measures to fight discrimination against LGBT people, to combat sexism, violence against women and challenging hetero-normativity. It also integrated a gender balance in educational teams and participants.

A work on sexist hate speech has been conducted with the aim to mobilise young people through “The No Hate Speech Movement” campaign. Materials and resources are produced and widely shared with and in cooperation with youth NGOs. Among the extensive resources provided by the Department, a mention goes to Compasito and Gender Matters, that have been used extensively during this study in reference to human rights education and the youth work led by the Department. Compasito - a manual on human rights education for children, “was designed primarily for educators and trainers working with children and provides practical tools to discuss values and social issues with children”.³⁴ While Gender Matters – manual on gender-based violence affecting young people, treats extensively gender in youth work, with a sensitivity in ensuring gender mainstreaming in youth training and youth projects. The manual is currently under revision and updating work carried by the Youth Department.

Also, it recognises the presence of discrimination on multiple grounds towards vulnerable groups, and the role of non-formal education and youth work for the prevention of discrimination, violence and exclusion. A plan to support Roma youth participation and countering the effects of discrimination on young Roma has been put into action. On this subject, on 2014 the Council of Europe has produced a manual called Barabaripen: Young Roma speak about multiple discrimination that provides an overview of the work conducted by the Council of Europe against the multiple discrimination of Roma youth, along with life stories of young Roma speaking about discrimination.

*“Hate speech and hate crime also affect the Roma population disproportionately and several political parties across Europe use the Roma population as scapegoats for social and economic problems in their countries. This widespread rhetoric of hate makes the Roma even more vulnerable and marginalised. As reported in the De la Negra story, anti-Roma marches have become a real problem in several countries. In many cases of hate crime against the Roma, hate speech plays an important role in fueling intolerance and racism towards the Roma. Within the No Hate Speech Movement, a youth campaign carried out from 2013 to 2015 by the youth sector of the Council of Europe, anti-Roma hate speech has often been reported from many European countries.”*³⁵

³³ Gender mainstreaming is not about: What is gender mainstreaming?, *Council of Europe* <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>

³⁴ Compasito – a manual on Human Rights education for children, *Council of Europe* – Whom is Compasito for?

³⁵ Barabaripen: Young Roma speak about multiple discrimination, *Council of Europe* – pg. 18

Among the strategic objectives of the Department is also the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has among its recommendations the development of *gender-sensitive approaches to the elaboration of youth policies in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and provide support for the capacity building and equal participation of young women and young men.*³⁶

Living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods increases the vulnerability and risks of social exclusion.

To achieve gender equality is essential to empower young people equally and help them to understand gender structural inequalities and to overcome potential barriers. Through awareness, enskilling and motivating young people, the Youth for Democracy Programme seeks to see young people taking decisive action in their own lives and communities.

³⁶ Access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, *Council of Europe* – pg.8

3. GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This section presents the main findings, used to analyse and assess if there is adequation between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality.

The focus of the analysis is on the literature review, analysis of the two dedicated surveys to youth organisations and pool of trainers, and the in-depth interview with stakeholders.

3.1 Desk research

The desk research has been conducted with the aim to have an initial overview on the four questions given by the Youth Department, as part of the Assessment. In particular, to analyse if there is adequation between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality, we first looked at the activities. The analysis of the documents provided by the Secretariat of the Youth Department provided useful information to understand whether the gender perspective was present.

3.1.2 Analysis of selected resources

As first step, the analysis has been conducted in 10 activities organised by or in support of the Youth Department. (Annex 1).³⁷

As a result of the analysis, the activities taken as reference **do not present any ground of discrimination**. For instance, an unconscious gender biased approach towards men in Kaluga camp on “intercultural dialogue” evidences how can be difficult to have a gender-balanced participation.

Usually, a gender-neutral approach ensures that no ground for discrimination is created based on social roles, sex or gender. However, a gender sensitive approach should be always present to ensure an understanding of the current social structures, where cultural factors might discriminate and exclude other genders in the public or private life. Having a perspective about gender roles might be useful especially in member States, where gender-based discrimination is recognised, and affects women and young girls daily.

Looking at some of the activities - Youth Peace Camp 2017 for example- which might be considered one of the long-lasting activity of the Youth Department, we could notice that exploring personal identities and tackling structural violence were a big part of the Programme, but there was no mention in the report about how people with different identities go through a difficult time like a country conflict, and how different genders become victim of violence. However, one of the follow-up project from participant was No Hate – Project Against Gender-based Discrimination. The aim was to enhance the knowledge and understanding of how gender and conflict correlate within a framework of local realities and finding out ways to combat sexist hate speech.

³⁷ The table present in the Annex 1 collects some of the activities organised or in partnership with **the Youth Department of the Council of Europe**.

1. Youth Peace Camp (Budapest) – Gender-neutral

Description of the project: The Youth Peace Camp brings young people and youth organisations coming from the conflict affected regions and engages them into dialogue and conflict transformation activities which are based on human rights education and intercultural learning during and after the camp. More specifically, the camp was focused on following: to assist participants to develop competences in human rights education, conflict transformation, intercultural learning and dialogue; sharing and introducing coping strategies in conflict and violent situations; supporting participants in peace building activities and encouraging to implement them; presenting CoE particularly in relation to its efforts to strengthening youth work connected to conflict transformational and intercultural dialogue.

Agenda (anything that addresses gender): n/a

Participants: 61 from communities as Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Kosovo, Serbia, South Caucasus and Ukraine

Trainers: 5 female and 7 male

While the example does not allow for a robust check or contrast with the results based on the fact that one of the follow up project focuses on gender, it is interesting to note that the analysis undertaken for this study largely confirms the importance of having indicators to assess and promote the gender equality dimension also in so called gender-neutral activity.

Secondly, different sources such as manuals have been included in the desk research to assess how the Youth Department is working on discrimination since a long time. Just to mention, Compass: The Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People “was first published in 2002 within the framework of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme of the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe.”³⁸ Along to Compass, we could refer also to Gender Matters, presented in the previous Section. Prior to introduce in details the documentation used to conduct the desk research, it is necessary to remind that the policy context presented in Section 2 has been used to assess, firstly, whether the Youth for Democracy Programme is adequately promoting gender equality, and secondly how the Programme is working to create a space of inclusion through the promotion of diversity.

Hence, by the review of the sources, it is possible to affirm that **the Youth Department has created a safe space of inclusion**. One of the latest example is the conference called “**Being Roma and LGBTI**” held in June 2017, by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit as part of the plan to create awareness towards vulnerable young people, considering the multiple and intersectional discriminations they may face.³⁹

³⁸ Compass: Manual for human rights education with young people – Council of Europe - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass>

³⁹ Sexual orientation and gender identity, Council of Europe : [https://www.coe.int/en/web/sogi/news/-/asset_publisher/fmIWyzADpL08/content/being-roma-and-lgbti-at-the-crossroads-of-discriminati-1?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fsogi%2Fnews%3Fp_p_id%](https://www.coe.int/en/web/sogi/news/-/asset_publisher/fmIWyzADpL08/content/being-roma-and-lgbti-at-the-crossroads-of-discriminati-1?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.coe.int%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fsogi%2Fnews%3Fp_p_id%3F)

Different initiatives towards vulnerable people have been created: a study on young people's initiatives to address homophobic and transphobic hate speech has been developed within "The No Hate Speech Movement". In reference, the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, recommends that Member States should *"take appropriate measures to combat all forms of expression, including in the media and on the Internet, which may be reasonably understood as likely to produce the effect of inciting, spreading or promoting hatred or other forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. Such "hate speech" should be prohibited and publicly disavowed whenever it occurs. All measures should respect the fundamental right to freedom of expression in accordance with Article 10 of the Convention and the case law of the Court."*⁴⁰

Another example is the Roma Youth Action Plan which gives priority to human rights and intercultural dialogue as response to discrimination and antigypsyism, together with the development and capacity building of Roma youth organisations and movements. Training and capacity building have, thus, an important role in the Roma Youth Action Plan, not only because of what individual Roma youth leaders may learn and develop individually, but also and especially by what they will experience and do together.⁴¹

Additionally, recalling one of the flagship project, The Enter! Access to social rights for young people project, started by the Council of Europe's youth sector, that aims at the development of youth policy in response to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people, particularly in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods, has among its recommendations:

- Recognising the role of non-formal education, youth workers and youth organisations in promoting active citizenship and preventing discrimination, violence and social exclusion.
- Ensuring that youth policies are gender-sensitive and support the equal participation of young women and men living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.⁴²
- Improving gender equality is among its thematic areas, to ensure the social inclusion and the access to the rights to young women living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.⁴³

A mention goes to the Seminar on Gender Equality in youth projects, "*Organised in the larger framework of the Enter! Project*"⁴⁴ that had as one of the objectives to identify the challenges that young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods face in relation to gender equality, and

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⁴⁰ Recommendation **CM/Rec (2010) 5** of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

⁴¹ Home – Roma Youth Action Plan, *Council of Europe* : <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/home?desktop=true>

⁴² The Recommendation – Enter!, *Council of Europe*: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/enter/the-recommendation>

⁴³ Documentation of the seminar Gender Equality in youth projects – Enter!, *Council of Europe* – pg.6

⁴⁴ Documentation of the seminar Gender Equality in youth projects – Enter!, *Council of Europe* – pg.6

to exchange experiences and good practices of gender mainstreaming in youth projects and youth work general.⁴⁵

Gender Equality is rightly present in Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, in where all the forms of violence towards women are included, such gender based violence, attacks on the sexual and reproductive health, and human trafficking. Among the topic defined as gender based violence domestic violence is duly explained, and the Manual provides data, terminology and questions to help the reader in a thematic reflection. While Gender Matters: Manual on gender based violence affecting young people is an extensive manual where, in addition to the areas mentioned above, masculinity and interconnected concerns are appropriately discussed.

The Information Document Gender Mainstreaming activities at the Council of Europe⁴⁶, draws attention to the importance of gender mainstreaming in relation to multiple discrimination and the needs of specific groups, such people with disabilities, the Roma issue and LGBT people.

Mainstreaming gender in migration, forced displacements, education, climate change, sport, culture and art, just to mention some, is important to ensure the achievement of gender equality.⁴⁷

The Youth Department, including the European Youth Centres and the European Youth Foundation, has integrated a gender perspective and gender equality in their policy, educational approaches and practices. The role of youth organisations ensured the integration of themes such fighting discrimination against LGBT people, combating sexism and violence against women, domestic violence and gender-based violence. The Agenda 2020, adopted in 2008, indicates that the aim of the Council of Europe’s youth policy is to *“provide young people – girls and boys, young women and young men – with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society.”*

As raised in the information document reporting the main outputs from The Gender Equality Matters! Seminar, different inadequacies have been identified:⁴⁸

- *“The concept of gender has varying meanings and connotations across Europe, including connotations that are perceived as a threat by conservative political forces”;*
- *“Organisations that do not specifically work on gender issues are more reluctant to mainstream gender, and if they do, only one person works on the issue without an overarching effect on the work of the organisation”;*
- *“Economic problems are used as an excuse not to mainstream gender, which is framed as a secondary concern for the youth”;*
- *“Many trainers working with the young people also lack understanding of gender and gender related considerations in educational youth work and training”.*

⁴⁵ Documentation on the seminar Gender Equality in youth projects – Enter!, *Council of Europe* - pg. 7

⁴⁶ Gender mainstreaming activities at the Council of Europe, March 2017 - *Council of Europe* : <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806b6c87>

⁴⁷ Gender mainstreaming in relation to multiple discrimination and the needs of specific groups, *Information Document Gender Mainstreaming Activities at the Council of Europe*

⁴⁸ Seminar conclusions, *Gender Equality Matters!*

3.2 Surveys

The following paragraphs aim to present the results of the surveys conducted to collect further information for the purpose of the assessment.

3.2.1 Highlights from youth organisations

The objective of this survey was to better understand how organisations mainstream gender and diversity in their environment, and which is the impact on the tasks of the Youth Department and vice versa. The questions addressed to the youth organisations have been enclosed in seven macro areas:

a) HOW DIVERSITY AND GENDER EQUALITY IS UNDERSTOOD IN YOUTH ORGANISATIONS.

Answers show that organisations understand diversity as “*uniqueness of each person involved in the organisation. Participation is open to any young person, regardless the nationality, gender, cultural or social background, income, education, gender, religion and other beliefs.*”⁴⁹

When it comes to gender equality, answers evidence that there is an understanding of the topic. Some respondents highlighted the LGBTQI debate and the non-binary gender structure on their answers. While, other respondents evidenced that gender equality is more than providing an equal representation in terms of gender balance.

However, a couple of respondents provided a detailed answer on their understanding of gender equality. Particularly, a respondent focused on the importance of recognising the mechanisms and patterns of violence towards women, especially in countries where the different forms of violence are perpetuated and not recognised as such. The reflection led consequently on how the vulnerable groups are exposed to violence, and how multiple discriminations affects the lives of these people. Nonetheless, desk research shows that the Youth Department is sensitive and conscious about the different types of violence affecting women and girls. Domestic violence has no boundaries and affects women at any age with physical and psychological consequences. By looking at the gender inequality patterns, **in some countries domestic violence is not properly considered as a form of violence towards women.** The intervention from the authorities is slow, and in some cases the legislation does not protect the victims at its best. The psychological trauma affects the lives of women and children living in such environments.

Domestic violence, as part of the forms of violence towards women, is present in the Istanbul Convention and in the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. To further raise awareness towards violence against women, the Youth Department should strengthen its cooperation with a variety of youth organisations working specifically on domestic violence, primarily in

⁴⁹ Answer from one respondent to the **Q1** addressed to Youth Organisations collaborating with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, *SurveyMonkey*

countries where there is a current backlash on women's rights and not considering signing or ratifying the Istanbul Convention.

Nonetheless, the educational mission of the Youth Department aims to see follow up in terms of local engagement, through the multi-players. In this regard, advocacy capacity building and awareness about gender-based violence need to be pursued, to allowing possible victims of violence to understand their rights, and to put in place appropriate responses, when the legislation or the authorities are not deliberating lawfully concerning cases of violence. Further to that, it is significant to mention that the **Youth Department offers seminars and trainings to and in cooperation with local authorities**. Some of these activities can be promoted in countries where violence against women, specifically sexual harassment and domestic violence, are not recognised as a form of violence.

b) HOW YOUTH ORGANISATIONS PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND WHICH PRACTICES THEY HAVE PUT IN PLACE TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY.

8 respondents out of 19 representing youth organisations find easy to promote gender equality and diversity, while 3 youth organisations find it difficult.

Respondents have not always specified the reasons why they find difficult to promote gender equality and diversity. In some cases may be the social and legislative background of the countries in where they operate, or lack of understanding about gender equality and/or not treating it as a cross-cutting thematic.

However some respondents have volunteered information about their countries to highlight issues on gender equality, such sexist speech and lack of cultural and societal understanding of gender-based violence, and how these barriers are affecting their work on achieving gender equality.

In terms of gender equality promotion, respondents selected the good practices used by youth organisations and the most used ones are:

- Involving people from diverse group in the planning and designing of programmes, campaigns and material to increase awareness on gender equality;
- Tools to ensure that external communication reflects gender equality and gender balance.

A practice presented by one of the respondent is the *women's quota in decision making positions in co-educational settings*, to ensure that at least 50% of the people in that position must be women. Overall, Pan-European organisations and UK based youth organisations have evidenced a strong work on gender identity and sexual orientation through their activities and materials.

c) TO GET TO KNOW YOUTH ORGANISATIONS' POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE INCLUSION AND GENDER EQUALITY.

In terms of numbers, just 3 organisations out of 19 have not developed a clear policy statement outlining why gender equality is important.

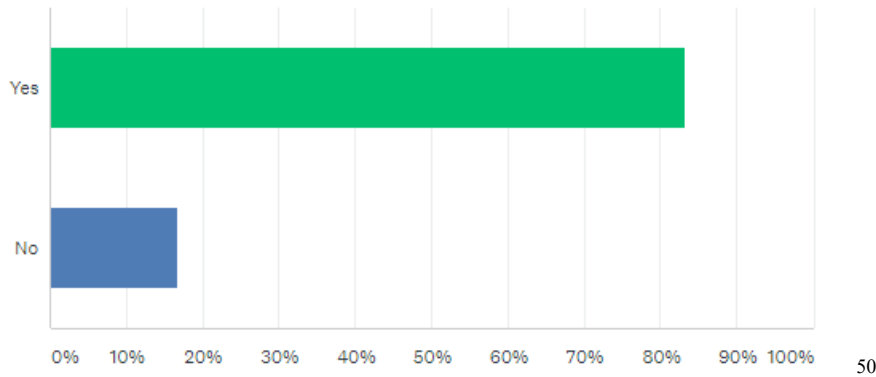


Figure 1, Chapter 3: How many organisations have developed a clear policy statement outlining why gender equality is important?

It is important for youth organisations to develop a clear policy statement outlining why gender equality is important in their agenda and how it is inextricably linked to their mission and vision. The policy statement can be used by youth organisations to showcase where they stand when it comes to gender. Such internal policies might be used with or refer to other documents and strategies developed by the Council of Europe, International Organisations and NGOs, to boost their endorsement strength.

In fact, the Youth Department has produced different resources that can be used as reference to produce specific policies and concrete activities to promote inclusion and equal treatment.

Another good practice that youth organisations could implement, is analysing the social context in where they operate, to understand how diversity is included or excluded, and how violence against women and sexual discrimination are perceived. Collection of sex and/or gender information is important in terms of capturing the level of participation of women and vulnerable groups. The data collection must have an identified clear purpose, such as *“tracking the level of participation of vulnerable groups in a specific activity”*, or *“tracking the level of participation of young migrant and refugee girls in certain activities”* and consequently be able to identify the possible restrictions in terms of participation, typically if those reflect the social context.

d) TO LEARN HOW YOUTH ORGANISATIONS COMMUNICATE WITH THE SOCIETY IN TERMS OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.

The communication within society happens mainly in the internet and in social media platforms.

Communities are also society. Society reflect everything that is happening online and offline, enlightens everything different communities do, no matter how big or small, how temporary or permanent and solid they are. Youth Organisations are communities and what they do has an effect is society as a whole.

⁵⁰ 83,33% of respondents affirmed that the youth organisations they represent have developed a clear policy statement on gender equality, *SurveyMonkey*.

Those who replied to this question reported that posts and materials are constantly updated in the online platforms and are at least translated in one language. Another form of communication mentioned was the access to local media.

Since it was not possible from the survey, to collect information about the contents of the online platforms, it is not possible to provide detailed suggestions or an analysis of the online communication between youth organisations and young people in this particular section.

e) TO UNDERSTAND WHICH OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES YOUTH ORGANISATIONS FACE IN TERMS OF EQUALITY.

Along with the different opportunities shared by the respondents, the most mentioned was in regards to the financial resources provided by the European Youth Foundation. Whilst, when it comes to challenges faced by youth organisations in terms of equality, the different answers can be summarised in:

- The way gender equality is perceived by the different members of the youth organisations increases the difficulty of developing a common strategy to be used;
- The social environment in where the youth organisations work;
- Marginalisation of young women and young people identifying themselves in other genders.

f) TO LEARN ABOUT SUCCESSES ON GENDER EQUALITY AND GENDER DIVERSITY FROM YOUTH ORGANISATIONS.

Majority of the respondents assert that youth organisations they are representing have achieved an equal and diverse balance in terms of structure and leadership. For the purpose of the study, a mention goes to few initiatives led by youth organisations to promote gender equality and gender diversity, such as:

- Production of manuals and toolkits offered as an open source to youth organisations;
- Launching of different projects to promote debates between young women and young men.

g) TO UNDERSTAND THE EXPECTATIONS OF YOUTH ORGANISATIONS.

Young people and youth organisations have been supported in accessing their rights and advocating human rights and citizenship education	66,67%
Youth organisation and member States have been supported in developing youth policy and youth work for democratic participation of young people	44,44%
Youth workers and youth organisation have been supported in their work on peace-building and intercultural dialogue to prevent and combat discrimination, exclusion and violent extremism.	66,67%
Other, please specify:	11,11%

Figure 2, Chapter 3: Which benefits youth organisations get from the YfD Programme.

According to the respondents, the major benefits youth organisations get from the Youth and Democracy Programme of the Council of Europe are:

- Support in accessing their rights and advocating for human rights and citizenship education;
- Support in their work on peace-building and intercultural dialogue to prevent and combat discrimination, exclusion and violent extremism.

Besides, 8 respondents out of 19 affirm that the youth organisations they are representing, receive support from the Youth for Democracy Programme in developing youth policy and youth work for democratic participation of young people.

Moreover, respondents have shared suggestions in terms of additional support that youth organisations would like to receive from the Youth for Democracy Programme:

- Tools / material to be used in trainings and seminars;
- Gender Equality as a cross-cutting thematic within other areas of work, as some respondents remarked that sometimes the intersectional approach is not adopted.

When it comes to gender equality as a cross-cutting thematic, on March 2017 the Youth Department of the Council of Europe has supported a study session on the topic of gender equality and gender perspective in environmental youth projects, with the aim to address gender equality in the work of environmental youth organisations.⁵¹ Moreover, by the analysis of the Desk Research **it is possible to affirm that the Department treats gender equality as a cross-cutting thematic, although the in-depth interviews have raised some concerns in regards of how some representatives see gender equality as an isolated theme.** When it comes to tools and materials, the previous and current Sections list part of the vast documentation and materials that the Programme has produced.

3.2.2 Highlights from the pool of trainers

“The Trainers Pool of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe is a list of trainers and educational experts experienced in non-formal education and intercultural learning applied to international youth activities. Trainers from the pool are contracted to support the educational staff of the Youth Department in the implementation of the youth programme of the Council of Europe and to contribute to the quality of its education and training activities.”⁵²

The questions addressed to the the Youth Department trainers' pool have been enclosed in six macro areas:

a) HOW GENDER EQUALITY IS UNDERSTOOD BY YOUTH TRAINERS.

The answers evidence a good understanding of gender equality and can be summarised in the words of one of the respondents:

⁵¹ Study session “Exploring gender equality in environmental projects”, *European Institute for Gender Equality*

⁵² Trainer Pool, *Council of Europe*: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/trainers-pool>

“Different genders (beyond binary) having equal chances not only to access different services and opportunities (including leadership roles, recognition, etc.), but also to freely express their gender identity.”

b) HOW MANY YOUTH TRAINERS HAVE EVER RECEIVED A TRAINING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND HOW IT HAS BEEN DELIVERED.

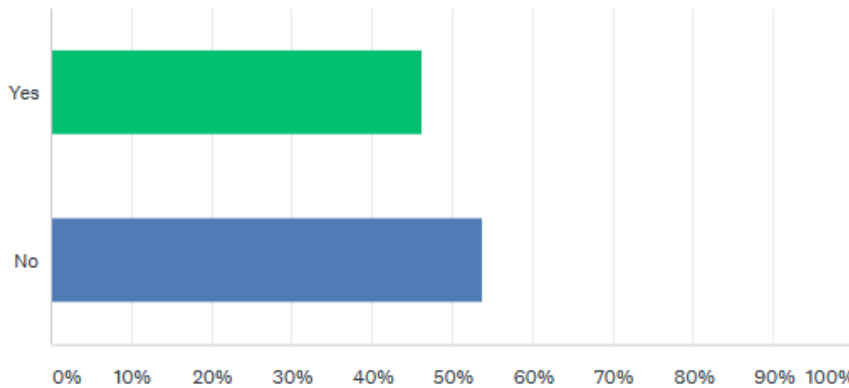


Figure 3, Chapter 3: How many trainers have ever received a training on Gender Equality?

The result shows that 53,85% of the youth trainers participating at the survey have never received a training on gender equality.

The others have received a training on gender equality online or during a study session, while a respondent highlighted how the “No Hate Speech” events and debates have been an opportunity to gain knowledge on gender equality.

The Guidelines for Gender Equality in international youth activities consider a training on gender equality as a good practice to ensure the creation of safe environments.

“It is a good practice to train all staff involved in youth activities in gender equality, from restaurant personnel to administrative staff and educational teams. However, while this might be possible for the European Youth Centres, it might not be the case for activities held outside the EYCs. This should not prevent organisers from briefing and explaining to all those involved what gender equality standards require”.⁵³

Among the requirements to be eligible for the pool of trainers, there is the *“attendance to a training course for trainers of a minimum of five working days with the Council of Europe Youth Department or other partners implementing similar trainings and have proven competencies in running intercultural non-formal educational activities.*

In regards of the training to trainers offered by the Youth Department, respondents agree that it has a gender equality perspective, particularly when it comes to clarifying how stereotypes are transmitted in very different and subtle ways, even when they are not intentional.

⁵³ Creating safe environments and facilities, *Guidelines on Gender Equality in intercultural youth activities – Council of Europe*

Due to the structure of the survey, it was not possible to obtain information on the structure of the training offered to the trainers; however, this question has been adequately addressed during the in-depth interviews, with the aim to analyse how and in which terms gender equality is present.

c) TRAINERS' OPINION ON THE GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME OF THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT.

▼ There are specific activities to promote gender equality	41,67%
▼ The programme tries to break gender stereotypes	62,50%
▼ Gender equality is an educational objective	58,33%
▼ Non-gender-stereotypical-behaviours is included in the educational programme and communications	41,67%

Figure 4, Chapter 3: Trainers' opinion on the gender equality perspective of the educational programme of the Youth Department

Respondents agree that **the educational programme has a gender equality perspective.** The most selected answer among the ones provided was that *the educational programme tries to break gender stereotypes*. Also, a good percentage of respondents agreed that gender equality is among the aims of the Youth Department.

d) TRAINERS OPINION ABOUT THE REASONS THAT MIGHT PREVENT MIGRANT AND REFUGEE YOUNG WOMEN ATTENDING YOUTH ACTIVITIES.

Answer	Text	Count	Percentage
A	Language barrier	19	73.08%
B	Lack of simultaneous translation	10	38.46%
C	Language of the application form	10	38.46%
D	The structure of the program	7	26.92%
E	Access to the opportunities (logistics, sharing of the opportunities and of the activities, difficulty on filling the application forms..)	23	88.46%

Figure 5, Chapter 3: List of reasons that might prevent the participation of migrant and refugee young women in youth activities.

The purpose of this Study is to provide detailed answers to four key questions that are presented in details in the next Sections. In particular, one question addresses how the Guidelines on gender equality in intercultural youth activities can support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. As well, the assignment requires an analysis of the objectives of the Programme and if its implementation creates any ground of discrimination between women and men. As already presented in the desk research, the Programme is working to ensure access to rights for young people, in particular to vulnerable

individuals and youth coming from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Different activities having as the target group migrant and refugee youth have been analysed, in order to understand how the aims of the Programme along with the Guidelines can support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. In fact, one of the strategic objectives of the Strategy is addressed to the inclusion of migrant and refugee women, and to the protection of their rights and well being. With these premises, it was important to hear from the trainers about possible constraints that may affect the attendance in youth activities of migrant and refugee young women.

Respondents found that access to the opportunities and language barriers are the main reasons that might prevent the participation of young migrant and refugee women in youth activities.

It was not possible through the survey and the in-depth interview to get an approximate percentage of the participation of young migrant and refugee women in the activities promoted by the Youth Department and/or held in the youth centers. We think that the Youth Department has collected data from the application forms, concerning those elements. It's our understanding that such data might be exported from the database of the Youth Department. However, it is certain that the Youth Department offers different activities designed in particular to young migrants and refugees women, such the study session held on March 2018 at the European Youth Center in Budapest and organised in cooperation with the European YWCA, with the aim to create a space for migrant and refugee young women to share the challenges they are facing and to discuss about their rights.⁵⁴

e) TRAINERS OPINION ABOUT POSSIBLE GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION CONFLICT AMONG PARTICIPANTS, AND HOW THEY CAN BE POSSIBLY MANAGED.

13 respondents out of 26 have experienced, recognised or managed a gender-based discrimination:

Sexist speech: Participants make sexist jokes towards other participants. A respondent recognised, as a trainer, that sexist jokes are part of certain cultures and particularly young men easily fall in the trap to find such jokes “normal” and “funny”.

“Multiple factors contribute to sexist hate speech, including the prevalence of patriarchal societies, the dissemination of degrading messages about women or girls, violent and hypersexualised images, notably in the media, and the expectations about women and men’s sexuality and roles in society. (...) Social media, education, stereotypical textbooks and toys, the family and social circles, as well as art (cinema, music, videos, books) are all influenced by existing social and cultural norms. They therefore tend to perpetuate gender stereotypes and to contribute to the persistence of sexist hate speech.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Programme of Education and training activities, *Council of Europe*: https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/calendar-of-activities/-/asset_publisher/5VAiE7TKKR5m/content/study-session-leading-change-for-young-women-migrants-and-refugees-rights-across-europe?inheritRedirect=false

⁵⁵ Combating sexist hate speech, *Council of Europe* – pg.3

Answer	Text	Count	Percentage
A	A toolkit on the different forms of gender-based violence and gender stereotypes	17	65.38%
B	A training to understand how to tackle gender-based discrimination and gender stereotypes	21	80.77%
C	Facilitation skills	14	53.85%
D	Other (please specify)	7	26.92%

Figure 6, Chapter 3: List of resources that the youth department might provide to the trainers to tackle gender-based discrimination.

The second part of the question aims at understanding what the Youth Department can provide to the trainers to tackle gender-based discrimination and situations of conflicts. According to respondents it could provide:

- **Training** to understand how to recognise and how to tackle gender-based discrimination and gender stereotypes;
- **Toolkit** on the different forms of gender-based violence and gender stereotypes;
- **Support on improving facilitation skills;**
- **A series of workshops**, including coaching sessions to trainers, how to understand power dynamics and foster self-development;
- **Campaigns** similar to the No Hate Speech;
- **Manual on Gender-Based violence and gender-based discrimination;**

f) TRAINERS OPINION ON THE USEFULNESS OF A TRAINING TO TRAINERS AND YOUTH WORKERS ON GENDER EQUALITY DELIVERED BY THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT.

Yes	96,15%	25
No	3,85%	1

Figure 7, Chapter 3: Trainers' opinion in receiving a training on gender equality developed by the Youth Department.

25 respondents out of 26 found that could be **useful** to receive a training on gender equality from the Youth Department. According to respondents, the training should cover:

- Versatile approached on dealing with gender discrimination;
- Better understand of young refugee / migrant women's social structures;
- A background on member Countries in where the achievement of gender equality is proceeding slowly.

3.3. Common views

This paragraph aims to present the common views between the results obtained by the survey addressed to the youth organisations collaborating with the Youth Department, and the one addressed to the Pool of Trainers. Firstly, the presentation of the common views is willing to support readers in understanding the recommendations and suggestions presented in the last Sections of this Study. Secondly, this paragraph aims to summarise the previous two in terms of data and information presented. It clearly appears that both representatives of the youth organisations collaborating with the Youth Department, and representatives of pool of trainers, agree that **the Programme promotes adequately Gender Equality and diversity**. As well, both **representatives agree that the programme is trying to tackle gender discrimination**. However, as emerged from respondents working in Eastern Europe, the Youth Department may support both youth organisations and the pool of trainers by providing a training that includes: how to tackle gender-based violence, and how to concretely discuss different forms of violence such as the domestic violence. In fact, it has been pointed out that the national context in which youth organisations operate results in the work they are conducting at grassroots level, in different ways, as well in the mindset of young people participating in youth activities organised by or in collaboration of the Youth Department.

The answers collected by the surveys were also helpful to draw the paragraph about the gender inequality patterns.

Furthermore, it has been noticed that some respondents were not aware of the vast publications offered by the Youth Department in support of implementing gender equality in the youth work. Therefore, as already mentioned, the previous Section has been developed with the aim to provide to the pool of trainers and youth organisations collaborating with the Youth Department a reference of the existing documentation that can be used in support of their work.

3.4 Stakeholder interviews

Stakeholder interviews were vital to analyse how gender equality perspective is put into practice, and how the Youth Department and the Gender Equality Unit can foster their collaboration to promote gender equality, and ensure an effective implementation of the gender equality guidelines.

The interviews have been conducted through emails, skype and phone calls with 10 representatives selected based on their work within the Youth Department and the Gender Equality Unit, with the aim to examine in depth the outcomes from the desk research, and to better understand how the Youth for Democracy Programme can promote Gender Equality.

It is important to highlight that, apart from the Gender Equality Rapporteurs and the representative from the Gender Equality Department, the respondents were not experts on gender equality; the in-depth interviews varied from one representative to another, with the

purpose to obtain an overview on how the gender equality perspective is applied and to collect good practices and possible constraints.

The information and proposals collected during the stakeholder interviews can be presented in five macro areas.

TRAININGS.

- **Training Course to Trainers:** To understand how much – and to which extent – is present gender equality in the training course for trainers offered by the Youth Department or other partners.
- **Training on Gender Equality to the “staff”:** It is currently on the table a proposal to develop a training on gender equality to be delivered to the staff, especially within the Youth Centers, to ensure the safety and well-being of participants. According to some respondents, the aim would be to create a training that has the gender equality and gender identity perspective included. However, some interviewees found the training to staff unnecessary, whilst would prefer to focus on developing the gender dimension among the trainers.

DATA COLLECTION.

At the moment, the collection of personal information from participants and guests of the Youth Centers are basic data such name, surname and date of birth. The collection of information based on sex occurs in certain circumstances according to the central system of the Council of Europe.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION.

- **Young parents:** The Programme promotes the participation of young parents in the activities by covering the costs of the child and someone who can assist the mother. Moreover, a space for breastfeeding is provided in the European Youth Centers.
- **Languages:** The official languages of communication are English and French; however, the activities carried out with the support from the European Youth Foundation can be in any language. Moreover, the European Youth Foundation supports, through its grants, the translation of toolkits and materials in different languages. While, for activities carried out at the European Youth Centers, along with English and French, youth organisations can submit the request for the simultaneous translation in a third language. In addition, the European Youth Centers have regularly activities with sign language interpretation and with the speech-to-text reporting, known as well as palantyping. When it comes to the Youth Department and the vast material produced that can be used as reference from the youth organisations, a mention goes to **Compass** that has been translated in more than 30 languages.

GENDER PERSPECTIVE.

- **Gender perspective:** Gender perspective is required by the European Youth Foundation in the application process from youth organisations, along with the gender balance among the participants and the team, included the speakers time. To support youth organisations during the writing process, the European Youth Foundation has produced guidelines and a gender toolbox that can be used as reference.⁵⁶

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY 2018-2023.

Information collected from the desk review, the two surveys addressed to the pool of trainers and youth organisations collaborating with the Youth Department, and during the in-depth interview show that **the Youth for Democracy Programme is promoting gender equality, by adopting an inclusive and non-discriminatory perspective in its structures and activities.**

Yet, practical steps can be taken to improve the gender equality dimension, and to implement successfully the Guidelines in the intercultural youth activities. In regards of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, it is necessary that all policies, programmes and institutions related to youth include a Gender perspective, in order to contribute *de facto* to the achievement of Gender Equality. Gender is an evolving matter. Honestly, from the time of the interviews, we could not get a detailed feedback in regards of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, and subsequently to get to know about any possible conversation around it, since stakeholder of the Youth Department held just one meeting to discuss about it. Therefore, any progress in the conversation around the Gender Equality Strategy would add additional references to this study.

⁵⁶ Gender perspective in youth activities, *European Youth Foundation* - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/gender-perspectives-in-youth-activities>

4. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this section is to present the overall results based on the Questions provided to conduct the Assessment. Each question will be presented in a separate paragraph, and readers are invited to refer to both the Glossary and the policy context, in particular in relations to the presentation of the gender inequality patterns in the member States of the Council of Europe.

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Is there adequacy between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality?	x	
Are there any correlations between the goals of the Programme and gender inequality patterns in the member states of the Council of Europe?		x
Do the objectives of the Programme, or the approaches to its implementation, affect women and men in a different way? Can they lead to inequalities?		x
Do the current Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners reflect existing standards of the Council of Europe, and how can they support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023)?	x	

The previous section provides already detailed information to affirm, first of all, that gender equality is at the core of the work conducted by the Youth for Democracy Programme. Secondly, it certainly appears that the Programme objectives can support the work of the Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe. Forby, different solutions can be adopted between the Programme and the Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe in response to the current gender inequality patterns in the member States.

Thirdly, it is important to clarify that the recommendations presented in the previous Section, and the measures elaborated at the end of the Study, aim to complement and further support the work of the Programme.

4.1 Is there adequacy between the aims of the programme and the promotion of gender equality?

The Youth for Democracy Programme seeks to achieve the active participation and autonomy of young people in peaceful and inclusive societies of Europe.⁵⁷ The Programme involves a double perspective, with the first objective that aims to encourage young people to influence decisions in democratic processes and increase their involvement in the development of peaceful societies, and the second objective that aims to support member States to take concrete measures for youth policy development to facilitate young people's access to rights. Additionally, for the 2018-19 biennium, the Programme has set three strategic priorities with the aim to achieve three expected results around access to rights, youth participation and youth work, and inclusive and peaceful societies. Through the series of activities offered by the Programme such as training courses, conferences, seminars,

⁵⁷ Youth for Democracy – Council of Europe: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/programme>

meetings and study session, along with the research and manuals disseminated widely, the aim is to prepare beneficiaries to become multipliers for the values defended through the youth programme.

Firstly, it appears from the information collected and elaborated that the aims of the Programme adequately promote gender equality, and the promotion of diversity, as well as the inclusion towards vulnerable individuals. Secondly, it can be stated that the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality are concretely implemented in the different constituencies, from the decision-making process to the physical accessibility and resources addressed to ensure to reach out to as many young people as possible. Thirdly, aligned to the aims of the Programme there are the Guidelines on Gender Equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners with the aim to support the organisers and educational teams in ensuring gender equality in all phases of an activity / project.

However, in order to understand how the aims of the Programme adequately promote gender equality, it is important to bear in mind, first, that gender equality is a cross-cutting thematic. Secondly, along the implementation of the Recommendations used as reference to design the aims of the Programme, it is important to include a reference to the Istanbul Convention. In this regard, the next chapter aims to present the gender inequality patterns, and to further explain the importance of referring to the Istanbul Convention to foster the support to the Gender Equality Unit of the Council of Europe. To support *de facto* the achievement of gender equality, the Programme should refer to the gender inequality patterns. In order to do so, the Gender Equality Unit should carry out a report in regards of this subject to address promptly the current backlash that is taking place in some of the Member States of the Council of Europe.

4.2 Are there any correlations between the goals of the programme and gender inequality patterns in the member states of the Council of Europe?

The following paragraph is the result of a research that has been conducted by using as reference the Istanbul Convention and the work conducted by GREVIO, with the aim to provide an overview of the present gender inequality patterns in the member States of the Council of Europe. Additional researches and studies have been used as reference to ensure a short, but yet effective and clear, presentation of the current situation in Hungary, Italy, Poland, Austria, Romania and the Republic of Slovakia. The criteria adopted to design the paragraph from the beginning, are the participation of women in power domains, the gender pay gap, the restrictions around civil society and women's rights movements, along with the violence towards vulnerable individuals.

As already mentioned, it is clear that there are not correlations between the goal of the Programme and gender inequality patterns in the member States of the Council of Europe. Firstly, within the goal of the Programme, it is evident the aim to create an inclusive, progressive and equal society.

Secondly, as emerged during the in-depth interviews, the Programme has supported or organised activities and sessions around the concept of power, in particular in regards of the participation of women in political and public life. When it comes to power, it is a proven fact that women are still marginalised in political and public life, although member states are making significant progress. However, *“the over-representation of men in positions of power in political, economic or social domains persists”*.⁵⁸ Strictly linked to the concept of power, it is the gender pay gap, and in particular the discrimination towards women who are less likely to hold high level and high paying jobs than men, although statistics show a slight improvement at European Level.

Thirdly, while the gender pay gap may appear as one of the few discriminations towards women, statistics show a backlash towards gender equality and women’s rights, in where countries make an attempt to diminish the different forms of violence towards women. Recently a study requested by the FEMM Committee of the European Parliament focused on the Backlash in Gender Equality and Women’s and Girl’s Rights.⁵⁹ The information and data analysed for the Gender Impact Assessment evidence definitely the different ways and means of support provided by the Programme to youth organisations, and in particular to activities having as target vulnerable groups. Compared to what the Programme is already doing, in some member States restrictions and changes to the laws on assemblies are reducing the space for civil society. Meanwhile *“certain forces in society aim to discredit women’s NGOs and feminist approaches, while the importance of women’s rights services tends to be denied by right wing, nationalist and anti-European parties”*,⁶⁰ with campaigns targeting NGOs with the aim to deteriorate their credibility and legitimacy. In 2013, different organisations in Hungary – including those combating violence against women and promoting LGBT and reproductive rights – have been targeted by government media friendly and state actors and labelled as “fake leftist NGOs”. The next year, those organisations were included on a list of NGOs considered problematic.

Generally, has been reported an alarming decrease or centralisation of funding in the last years for NGOs working for women’s rights, and particularly for marginalised and vulnerable groups.

When it comes to vulnerable groups, alarming data have been collected regarding the social exclusion and violence towards Roma women and girls, victims of forced sterilisation and frequent racial insults. Consequently, young girls tend to drop school and are vulnerable to early pregnancy. Roma girls, along with migrants and refugees, mainly from Eastern Europe and Nigeria are helpless victims of sexual exploitation and forced prostitution. According to the 2017 US Report on Human Trafficking, Hungary is ranked in Tier 2 watch list⁶¹ due to the high number of victims involved in trafficking. Another concern is about Female Genital

⁵⁸ About the domain of power: Gender Equality Index 2017, *European Institute for Gender Equality*.

⁵⁹ Study: Backlash in Gender Equality and Women’s Rights, *European Parliament* - 2018 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/604955/IPOL_STU\(2018\)604955_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/604955/IPOL_STU(2018)604955_EN.pdf)

⁶⁰ Backlash against Gender Equality and Women’s Rights and Girls’ Rights in the EU, *EP Study* - pg. 21

⁶¹ According to the Trafficking in Persons Report, in TIER 2 Watch List are ranked countries in where the number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is significant, but whose governments are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance of the standards, *State.gov*

Mutilation (FGM) due to the large migrant population from African countries where this harmful practice is common.

Meanwhile, GREVIO⁶² reports an attempt to block the Istanbul Convention by conservative political forces using homophobic and transphobic arguments. On this subject, it can be easily declared that the aims of the Youth for Democracy Programme do not present any correlation with the gender inequality patterns, but also confirms that the work of the Youth for Democracy Programme is a positive and effective response against the homophobic and transphobic arguments that in countries such as Hungary, Poland and the Republic of Slovakia are used in opposition to the Istanbul Convention. In Poland, the Convention was ratified on 2015; however, some MPs continued to call for a withdrawal from the convention, seen as *“a danger to traditional families and values, including the traditional role of women and men”* and considered discriminatory towards men. While, in the Republic of Slovakia, the prime minister announced in February 2018 that the country would not ratify the Convention, because it is a controversial document that *“could violate the constitution and lead to the introduction of same sex marriage”*.

4.3 Do the objectives of the programme, or the approaches to its implementation, affect women and men in a different way? Can they lead to inequalities?

The next paragraph aims to provide an in-depth scrutiny of the objectives of the Programme, to highlight how the Youth for Democracy Programme is an effective response against the current discriminatory, transphobic and homophobic narrative present in some of the Member States.

The Youth for Democracy Programme has set three strategic objectives for the 2018-2019 biennium with the aim to support youth organisations, youth workers and young people at different levels.

The first priority is access to rights, with the objective to support young people and youth organisations in accessing their rights and advocating for human rights and citizenship education, through the implementation of recommendations and measures at local, national and European Levels. In particular, the aim is to ensure the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, and the implementation of relevant experiences of “The No Hate Speech Movement” campaign. Again, both the objective and the approaches to implement it do not affect individuals in a different way. In fact, “The No Hate Speech Movement” and the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education⁶³ aim to dismantle violence, racism, xenophobia, discrimination and

⁶² GREVIO is the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) by the Parties. - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/grevio>

⁶³ EDC/HRE : The Charter is an important reference point for all those dealing with citizenship and human rights education. It provides a focus and catalyst for action in the member states. It is also a way of disseminating good practice and raising standards throughout Europe and beyond. - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/edc/charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education>

intolerance. In fact, along with the activities supported and organised by the Programme, the 2018 EU-CoE Youth partnership programme includes the implementation of the objectives in activities such “Connecting the dots: Young people, social inclusion and digitalization”, “open online course ‘Essentials of youth policy’” and “Bridges to new beginnings: Developing synergies between different sectors supporting the inclusion, human rights and participation of young refugees and migrants”. The partnership has seen the publication of documents such “Step by Step together: Support, tips, examples and possibilities for youth work with young refugees” added to the extensive database of materials already produced by the programme.

Hence, it seems that the internet governance and the digital divide is part of the main objectives of the Programme, to ensure inclusion and safety at both offline and online level. The success of the No Hate Speech Movement is the result of current problematics affecting, in particular, young women and young individuals in vulnerable groups, as there is an evident arise of sexist and homophobic speech in the digital world. However, within the youth work and youth participation objective, the aim to support youth organisations and member States in developing youth policy and youth work for democratic participation of young people requires a certain sensibility in regards of the already existing policies and recommendations that are currently ignored in some member States. This certainly does not mean that the objectives are leading to inequality towards women and men; however, to apply the full Programme potential, the current gender inequality patterns should be considered. Also, the backlash on women’s rights and vulnerable individuals, which are discriminated for their gender and sexual orientation, should be exposed. Following that, the third objective has a specific focus on Roma youth participation, social inclusion of young refugees, and the multiple discrimination and intersectionality when it comes to gender equality, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability.

At the different level of intersectionality, the Youth for Democracy Programme has proved its experience on having a strong background on both the gender equality and gender identity dimension. As well, from its structures to the activities, the Programme has built a solid environment in terms of accessibility and inclusion. As mentioned, at the end of the study there are measures and solutions provided with the aim to give additional support on the achievement of the objectives.

4.4 How do the guidelines on gender equality in the Intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners can support the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023)?

The Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners, adopted by the Joint Council on Youth, are the result of the seminar “Gender Equality Matters” and have as purpose to support the organisers and educational team of intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners in ensuring gender equality in all phases of an activity. Definitely the guidelines reflect the existing standards of the Council of Europe, and the table below aims to enclose the guidelines in

relation to the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and the recommendations already presented in the previous Section.

ASPECT	AIM	STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY 2018-23
Human rights based approach	“to prevent, combat and overcome any form of discrimination grounded on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.”	Reflect the existing standards; however, it is important to strengthen the reference to the Istanbul convention , especially in activities organised for / with local authorities.	A human rights based approach supports the implementation of all the strategic objectives;
Gender-balanced participation in youth activities.	“Balance in the participation of all genders”; “no-binary system of reference”; “continuation of same sex activities”	Reflect the existing standards. In addition to the same sex activities, it would be useful to introduce and reactivate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young men speaking about violence and masculinity ● Young women in leadership 	A gender-balanced participation in youth activities supports the implementation of all the strategic objectives; in particular strategic objective 1 and 6 .
Language and representation in material related to educational activities	Gender-neutral pronouns and non-sexist language.	Reflect the existing standards. Within the youth department, both Gender Equality and Gender Identity perspective are taken into consideration. To implement the GE perspective, it is important to have consistency in the use of terminology between the gender equality and the youth department.	Language and representation in material related to educational activities supports the implementation of all the strategic objectives, in particular the strategic objective 1
Gender-sensitive educational approaches	“Be aware of the existence and functioning of discrimination” “gender glasses”	Reflect the existing standards. The youth department has for long time worked on recognising and tackling discrimination. To ensure that “gender glasses” includes a gender perspective, the youth department should develop a training on gender equality, including issues that “seem far from our reality” such FGM and early marriages. + implement the gender equality dimension in the training for pool of trainers.	Gender-sensitive educational approaches support the implementation of all the strategic objectives, in particular the strategic objective 1,2 and 5 .
Creating safe environments and facilities	“to train all staff involved in youth activities in gender equality” “a specific policy on sexual harassment”	Reflects the existing standards. It is important that staff, administrative staff, educational team and policies and decision-making bodies receive a training on gender equality.	Creating safe environments and facilities supports the implementation of all the strategic objectives.

By the analysis of the information collected and elaborated, **it is possible to affirm that there is adequation between the aims of the Programme and the promotion of gender equality**. Also, the current Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities reflect the existing standards of the Council of Europe, and they can support the implementation of the Gender Equality strategy by strengthening and put in place the provided solutions, along with the indicators illustrated in the next Sections.

5. ASSESSING THE GENDER EQUALITY DIMENSION IN PROPOSALS OF ACTIVITIES BY YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

This section explores content from the *Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe*⁶⁴, the work carried by the European Youth Foundation in guiding youth organisations, but also assessing applications of pilot and international activities. Besides, this part takes into consideration criteria for applications by youth organisations for activities to be held in co-operation with the European Youth Centres⁶⁵ and the Guidelines on gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe.

It also reviews recent activities of the Council of Europe, selected on the following criteria:

1. Long term – activities also called flagship that aim to policy development and implementation;
2. Gender sensitive⁶⁶, gender neutral⁶⁷ and gender blind⁶⁸ study sessions and activities;
3. Activities held in Strasbourg and Budapest or in other countries to include geopolitical diversity.

The analysis drags essential elements from the resources provided, leading to the formulation of indicators and checklists to be used at any convenience.

The Council of Europe has been working on gender, gender equality and gender identity from various angles and adopted a recommendation on gender mainstreaming already in 1998.

Based on the premise that achieving gender equality is central to the protection of human rights and the functioning of democracy, the Council of Europe adopted a Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, focusing among other things on combating gender stereotypes and sexism, preventing and combating violence against women and achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making. The New Gender Equality Strategy 2018 - 2023 recalls achievement of the previous one and reinforce the concept of having everyone on board to make gender equality a reality.

The Council of Europe's Youth Sector has been integrating a gender dimension in its policy, educational approaches and practices for many years, through the European Youth Centres

⁶⁴ Quality standards in education and training activities of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe Revised in 2016 Adopted by the Programming Committee at its 36th meeting in December 2016.

⁶⁵ Information about and criteria for applications by youth organisations for activities to be held in co-operation with the European Youth Centres Revised version Adopted by the Programming Committee on Youth at its 36th meeting, December 2016

⁶⁶ Addressing and taking into account the gender dimension. Ibid.

⁶⁷ Having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men. Council of Europe Manual Supporting Gender Equality Rapporteurs in their role, 2014. Source for this term: European Commission, 100 words for equality, *A glossary of terms on equality between women and men* - 1998

⁶⁸ Ignoring/failing to address the gender dimension (as opposed to gender sensitive).

and the European Youth Foundation, mainly thanks to the role of youth organisations, and the supporting role of the co-management system.

In addition to their own programme of education and trainings, the European Youth Centres carry out a yearly programme of study sessions and other activities held in co-operation with non-governmental and governmental youth partners. The study sessions, symposia and other similar activities reflect the principles of co-management and partnership with young people and their organisations that are at the heart of the youth policy of the Council of Europe.⁶⁹

However looking at the results of this study, there might be the opportunity to implement a more systematic procedure to assess whether an activity is taking into consideration the gender dimension or not.

Youth-work settings often provide a unique and crucial safe space for young men and women to discuss and share their thoughts and experiences on gender and sexuality. Someone may have direct or indirect experience of domestic violence, or another may be confused about their sexuality or bullied because their actual or perceived gender does not fit the accepted norms.

Being prepared to challenge discriminatory attitudes towards women or LGBT+ people is important.⁷⁰

Having to hand a list of advice on these issues is important. So is being prepared to challenge discriminatory attitudes towards people with different gender identity unveiled by young people in sessions. It is also important to use gender mainstreaming as a tool when making decisions on the topics, participants, and methods to be used in the activities.

The Youth Department has demonstrated a pioneering attitude to challenge such situations and promote gender equality, also enlarging the angle on gender perspectives⁷¹, or working closely with the Council of Europe Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit, growing its sphere of action towards gender issues.⁷²

However, youth organisations that responded to the survey expect the Youth Department to be more specific in terms of participation of women, girls, and individuals who do not fit into these categories. They expect to include gender as a thematic topic into other areas (e.g. migration, or youth work). While there are plenty of activities on gender run by recipients of EYF/study session funding, there still seems to be a lack of space for organisations to share good practices and tackle the core issues of sexism within their own structures.

⁶⁹ Information about and criteria for applications by youth organisations for activities to be held in co-operation with the European Youth Centres Revised version Adopted by the Programming Committee on Youth at its 36th meeting - December 2016

⁷⁰ Gender and youth work, *Compass – the Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People*.

⁷¹ The term 'gender perspective' is a way of seeing or analysing which looks at the impact of gender on people's opportunities, social roles and interactions. This way of seeing is what enables one to carry out gender analysis and subsequently to mainstream a gender perspective into any proposed programme, policy or organisation GE glossary CoE. Taken from the Glossary of the UN Women training Centre

⁷² Which promotes and seeks to ensure that the human rights of every individual are respected, including equal rights for LGBT+ persons. It combats discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

“There is the need for gender equality to exit the stereotype of 50/50 quota, whereas recognising the existence of other genders apart from the binary. The youth department might take the lead in introducing small but crucial changes starting from the assessment of the application forms.”⁷³

There is also a request to see gender being tackled from an intersectional approach, being considered alongside other forms of discrimination and beholding how inclusion can be tackled more broadly.

Then, for the Council of Europe to remain a trend-setter and a provider of high quality non-formal education in the youth field, based on the values of human rights and human rights education, research and updated information are needed, possibly sustained by reflected intercultural learning practices.

5.1 The European Youth Foundation Approach

The European Youth Foundation has been piloting and promoting such approach, raising awareness on various gender issues. The EYF expects that youth NGOs will consider how to plan, implement and evaluate activities which are inclusive, allow equal participation, question the status quo when it comes to gender. While providing the definitions of the Council of Europe, the EYF refers to gender perspective and takes inclusive approaches, including different context.

Nevertheless, many organisation are not familiar with the gender dimension, therefore a further look at existing resources, can guide towards the compilation of more specific questions. This should give youth organisations a clearer picture on how gender perspectives can be included and why it is important to do so.

In this regard, the EYF developed a non-exhaustive toolbox, a hands-on guide for youth NGOs on how to integrate a gender perspective when organising youth activities. It proposes six key methods that NGOs could easily adopt in the process towards effective: preparation, implementation, and follow-up. It was first piloted during the 2017 EYF (RE)wind Seminar in Strasbourg, during which the EYF discussed this tool with representatives of youth NGOs and received their feedback.

We can recall the main gender issues addressed within the Youth for Democracy Programme listed in the table below. It is possibly a good practice **to ask organisation to use it as checklist according to the topic that applies to their proposal for activities**. This way they can be guided to choose correctly the gender- based topic they are working on.

⁷³ From survey pool of trainers

Table n. 1: Guiding table for the assessment of the Gender-based activity topic-support for youth organisations applying for proposal of activities

TOPIC	EXAMPLE OF REFERENCE ACTIVITIES	CHECK
Gender-based violence and trafficking.	Consult Gender Matters manual or help-online-course-on-violence-against-women	
Sexual and reproductive rights.	Consult women's-sexual-and-reproductive-rights-in-europe	
Sexual orientation and gender identity.	Consult SOGI website and links to study session reports	
Combating discrimination against women, including misogyny and sexism – including in social media.	The No Hate Speech Movement team and the Gender Equality Division jointly organised a seminar Combating Sexist Hate Speech , on 10-12 February 2016;	
Heteronormativity and discrimination of “invisible” groups such as intersex .	Gender Matters manual is a helpful resource when addressing heteronormativity and gender identity;	
Combating discrimination and homophobia.	Gender Matters manual is a helpful resource when addressing Bookmarks and Compass	
Integrate gender equality dimension in youth policy development	1 The Enter! Recommendation integrates the gender dimension; 2 The European Youth Foundation promotes the integration of a “gender perspective” in the activities it supports run by non-governmental youth organisations, contributing to the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (Objective 5: “Achieving Gender Mainstreaming in all policies and measures”) 3 The Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.	
Addressing multiple discrimination issue ⁷⁴	Consult Roma Youth Action Plan Compass , Compassito	
Advocacy to promote gender equality	Consult No Hate Speech Movement campaign (specific action days concerning homophobia, misogynist attitudes and sexism: 8 March on sexist hate speech, 22 July on hate crime, and 10 December on Human Rights online).	

5.2 Educational approaches and learning environments

We recognise Gender being mentioned in the major projects of the CoE Youth Sector. Those examples might be used to explicitly guide youth organisation in proposing activities tackling specific gender issues and using the right terminology adopted by the Council of Europe. For example the Council of Europe has introduced the use of non-sexist language in 1990

⁷⁴ **Multiple discrimination** describes discrimination that takes place on the basis of several grounds operating separately. Another term often used in this regard is intersectional discrimination, which refers to a situation where several grounds operate and interact with each other at the same time in such a way that they are inseparable. SOGI glossary – *Council of Europe*

believing firmly that language plays a fundamental role in forming an individual's social identity, and the interaction which exists between language and social attitudes.⁷⁵

Education, Learning, Information also play a central role in promoting gender equality. Non Formal Education expands this opportunity by raising awareness, broadening horizons, confronting misinformation, expanding the knowledge, and offering new models of behaviour.

It should be clear by now that because, Non Formal Education debunks many commonly held beliefs about gender matters, the Youth Department can contribute massively to the achievement of the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, just being mindful about the use of existing resources.

It is not always this way, though. The purpose of education and learning brings up some questions: **Why do we educate? Who do we educate? What should be taught? How do we educate?**

The purpose of education differs depending on the perspective and focus of the activity. Therefore, it looks clear that many activities delivered by or in cooperation with the Youth Department did not look at gender as dimension to be explicitly included, but more like an issue to be tackled when needed. An important aspect of the development of an individual, though, relates to the kind of activities and tasks through which, such education is organised and delivered. Both, trainers and participants are involved in a mutual pathway of learning from each other, from the process. Even icebreakers and team building can take the experience to a new level and have a long-lasting impact on the lives of participants. Teams surrounding such environments learn too. Reviewing, fixing activity and ensuring they are inclusive and avoid perpetuation of stereotypes.

For instance, youth organisations recognise the value of learning promoted by the Youth Department, and reveal that a substantial range of non formal education activities implemented, include the gender dimension. However, they raise the challenge to ensure gender balance among participants, if its presence lacks already among applicants / eligible candidates, At the same time, they talk through the difficulty to guarantee a gender dimension within the programme. The reason lies on a systematic failed attempt in raising money or lack of resources for projects promoting gender equality, and of course, this can affect the quality of the programme and the outcomes to follow.

There is no perfect recipe, no quick fix! Indeed, the Youth Department uses criteria applicable to all activities which put the basis to include more specific indicators to assess the gender dimension. The already existing criteria state that all activities taking places in cooperation with the youth department must conform to the principles laid down in the Statutes of the Council of Europe and the European Youth Centre and, specifically, show a commitment to a European society respectful of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, cultural diversity and social cohesion, and the participation of young people involving them as a resource. Following, we read that:

Activities must aim to develop synergies and have a multiplying effect, on local, regional, national and/or European level, involving participants residents from at least 8 member states of the Council of Europe and secure a balance of the geographical origin of participants among all the Contracting Parties to the European Cultural Convention.

⁷⁵ RECOMMENDATION No. R (90) 4 OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES ON THE ELIMINATION OF SEXISM FROM LANGUAGE (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 February 1990 at the 434th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

Activities must be an experience in participation, planned intercultural learning and human rights education. They must be prepared, run and evaluated by a predominantly young international multicultural educational team in cooperation with the Centre's educational staff. Activities must secure gender balance among participants, except in the cases of single-sex partner youth organisations and of activities that are specifically planned for single-sex groups and this is specifically explained and requested in the application form.

Once looked at the criteria, it is possible to use the gender balance among participants to assess the gender equality dimension of the activity, also from a different perspective. Interestingly, we learnt from the survey that having a women's quota is perceived active involvement of women by some organisations, and it is preferred to the practice to use different tools to reach a balanced number of women and men in decision making positions in co-educational settings'. But is this practice called "including a gender dimension"? It can be debatable! Representatives from youth organisations volunteering these information were aware, to a certain extent, that there is more to do to ensure gender balance. And yet misconception still arise! Lack of knowledge/ information, examples, practices not available at hand tend to lead towards the usual and simple-to-apply practice of the women quota.

In this regard it is worthy to mention and disseminate a good practice started by the European Youth Foundation. It asks NGOs to put their "gender glasses" on and think critically of the current ways of "doing things" to avoid malpractice. The "*gender glasses*" should be used in the planning, implementation and evaluation of an activity.

According to youth organisations, the assessment for proposal of activities often includes: working in teams, planning and running of activities, leading groups, living with people from other cultures and preparing and delivering speeches and presentations. Activities such as programme administration, fundraising, liaison with stakeholders and budget management, are less frequent discussed with gender glasses.

The following table, instead, includes questions/ideas to keep in mind when aiming to include a "gender perspective" into every phase of a project proposal, no matter its nature.

Table n.2 Guiding table for a pre-assessment of the Gender equality dimension

GENERAL QUESTION	SPECIFIC QUESTION
How does the action/activity affect people on the basis of their gender/gender identity?	Are there any differences?
Does it respond to the needs of everyone?	Have you identified specific needs?
How could it be changed to include the needs of everyone?	Can you get support for adapting your activity to specific needs?
What language is being used?	Is gender-sensitive and inclusive language being used? "They" instead of "he or she"; "chairperson" instead of chairman

There are more specific questions in EYF applications for pilot and international activities as well as in the report form, which might lead to a further assessment of the gender equality dimension. It is relevant to note that the application forms speak about *gender perspective* which includes different gender aspects and gives more space for sharing and elaboration on the matter.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ More information on gender perspectives can be found on the Resources/Gender perspectives page of the EYF website <http://eyf.coe.int>

Table n.3 Assessment of the Gender equality dimension - Indicators exported from EYF application forms

PURPOSE OF THE INDICATOR	INDICATOR	CHECK	COMMENTS
It asks if needs of men and women have been equally taken into consideration and served into a purpose.	Your project include a gender perspective		
It asks the organisation to explain how a gender perspective is included in a project. Meaning equity in numbers of female and male participants is not the only thing to consider.	Your project takes an inclusive approach, considering the needs of every individual		
It asks the organisation to put on the gender glasses whatever the issue they are working on. It also asks to consider sexual orientation and gender identity among differences.	Given the main issue(s) that you want to address, important differences in the way people experience this issue (social, cultural or material) are tackled from a gender perspective How is this project taking those differences into account?		
Think about the different phases of your project: for example reviewing icebreaking activities used to make sure they do not perpetuate gender stereotypes.	You plan to apply gender inclusive processes during the implementation		
Establishing a gender code of conduct and safe spaces; reaching out to other organisations with relevant experience.	You have safeguarding procedure in place. You have support and or resources from expert.		

At the moment the initial assessment provided by EYF is used by the youth organisation and mostly open to the interpretation of the individuals filling the forms. Additional Indicators would give more guidance and need to be more specific, should be developed and included in application and evaluation forms as check list including glossaries explaining gender related terms.

How do we move forward, then?

The Gender Equality strategy defines gender stereotyping as preconceived ideas whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex. The new strategy focus also on the fact that Gender stereotypes and patriarchy negatively affect men and boys too. The strategy suggests some clear indicators to assess the GE dimension of youth activities.

The history of gender stereotyping which has led to inequalities between men and women, is long and complex and it is recognised that legislation, though crucial, and positive actions alone do not necessarily achieve *de facto* gender equality. A conscious effort on the part of society to change attitudes and to accommodate difference is a prerequisite for an inclusive society.

Activities run by the Youth Department or in cooperation with are the demonstration of this effort. Knowing that, there is a chance to reason an appropriate response to every step of an activity.

The following table gives a more descriptive idea on how the gender dimension has been included or can be experimented. Also among the detailed indicators' purposes, different gender perspectives can be considered.

Table n.4 Assessment of the Gender equality dimension - Indicators complying with the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

PURPOSE OF THE INDICATOR	INDICATOR	CHECK	COMMENTS
Checking understanding. Gender stereotypes are preconceived social and cultural patterns or ideas which presents a serious obstacle to the achievement of real gender equality and feeds into gender discrimination.	The activity presents stereotypes as preconceived social and cultural patterns or ideas. The activity shows the consequences gender discrimination and the obstacles to gender equality		
It checks clarity about stereotyping consequences: they limit the development of the natural talents and abilities of young people their educational and professional preferences and experiences, as well as life opportunities in general.	The activity gives examples of limits arising from stereotyping		
It asks if it explains that Gender stereotypes it is believed they justify and maintain the historical power relations of men over women, as well as sexist attitudes which are holding back the advancement of gender equality	The activity tackles power relations between men and women		
It asks if the activity talks about how stereotypes are reinforced by Violent and degrading online content, including in pornography, normalisation of sexual violence,rape, reinforce the idea of women's submissive role and contribute to treating women as subordinate members of the family and society.	The activity address Violent and degrading online content?		
It ask if the activity tackle consequences: results are: violence against women, sexist hate speech targeting women, particularly feminista.	The activity tackles specific consequences contributing to maintaining and reinforcing gender stereotypes and sexism.		
It checks about Stereotypes about men and boys also result from, and the cause of, deeply ingrained attitudes, values, norms and prejudices.	The activity discuss masculinity and machismo		
It checks about Hegemonic masculinities as contributing factor to maintaining and reinforcing gender stereotypes, and homophobia as one of the results,	The activity confronts homophobia		

Being able to explain a project/activity implies making an effort to reflect deeply on gender perspectives. It is not important to tick all the boxes, because every step in the right direction, however small, can make a big change. This is an important message to pass on to the youth organisations and people working with the youth department. Consequently, Indicators to assess the gender equality dimension of an activity falling under the Youth for Democracy Programme of the Council of Europe should be used in partnership with standards, guidelines, practice and resources already in place. As role model the Youth Department can commit to a small dusting work of the resources in its possession which could gather in the additional and summarised indicators below. These indicators could be preferably used in long terms activities involving a multi-stakeholders partnership and different events. However, Study sessions reporting phase might benefit a lot from the application of such indicators, as well as organisations aiming at becoming more inclusive and diversity mindful.

Table n.5. A Assessment of the Gender equality dimension - specific Indicators for preparation/planning

PREPARATION			
INDICATORS	YES	NO	Comments
Has a gender analysis of the context, sector, problem, stakeholders considered during the formulation of the project/activity?			
Has any analysis been done of how inequality on the grounds of gender intersect with different inequalities or discrimination on the basis (for instance) of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, social groups etc.?			
Is gender equality integrated in the project/activity (Theory of Change ⁷⁷ / Logic of Intervention)?			
Is the consultation (if any) leading to the formulation of the project/activity inclusive of stakeholders, including relevant Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on Gender Equality?			
Is time allocated to introduce and discuss gender with participants?			
Will you develop activities and objectives in line with the needs of all genders?			
Does the topic/theme you address in your project affect everyone, regardless of gender, in the same way or not?			
Do the activities allow for equal active involvement of everyone, regardless of gender?			
Are you representing gender roles in your activities? (For example what images are you showing?) Any stereotypes? Could gender roles be represented differently?			
How does your planned budget reflect the needs of people of different genders?			

⁷⁷ CREATING YOUR THEORY OF CHANGE NPC's practical guide, *Ellen Harries, Lindsay Hodgson and James Noble November - 2014*

Table n.5.B Assessment of the Gender equality dimension -specific Indicators for activity implementation

IMPLEMENTATION			
INDICATOR	YES	NO	Comments
Have Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE) objectives been considered within the wider context of human rights and human rights education and translated into specific actions? How has this been done?			
Have specific risks and challenges inherent to the achievement of GM/GE adequately taken into consideration and mitigated? How? What assumptions were made with regard to gender division of rights, labour, responsibilities, etc.? Were these assumptions accurate and relevant?			
Have gender and age-specific constraints taken into consideration when implementing activities?			
Is the project team gender balanced? What about the group of participants?			
Do you have any experts/speakers contributing to your activity? <i>Try to ensure diversity in their selection!</i>			
Are you working in partnership with another NGO? <i>(Choose partners that have the same values regarding gender equality, gender identity and sexual orientation issues).</i>			
Are you adapting the programme/activities (as planned in the planning phase) to respond to the needs of all participants and towards a significant participation of all individuals? ⁷⁸			

Table n.5.C Assessment of the Gender equality dimension - specific Indicators for activity evaluation

EVALUATION			
INDICATOR	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Have competences been gained respectively by different genders as a result of the activity/project?			
Does the activity add benefits to or link to Member States' interventions in the area of Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE)?			
Can the results of the Activity in the area of GM/GE trigger further interventions of the MSs?			
Do the results validate the Theory of Change / Logic of Intervention of the activity in the area of GM/GE?			
Were women and men from a range of diverse social groups, age and abilities represented in the process?			
Were inter-sectional perspectives taken into account?			

⁷⁸ If you hand out material to participants, or ask them to prepare in advance, you can reference the European Youth Foundation Gender page (as an EYF supported organisation, you are encouraged to provide visibility for the Foundation and you have an obligation to mention the EYF support on any material produced with EYF funds).

What measures were taken to guarantee a meaningful participation of stakeholders (e.g. timely notification, language, location and timing) resources (financial, time, people, technical and gender expertise) sufficient to address the gender inequalities defined at the formulation of the activity?			
Were resources spent or allocated as to target the structural causes of inequality? Were these resources easily and unambiguously identifiable? Were these resources consistently allocated throughout the activity and over time?			
In case of no consistent resources allocated] What are / will be the costs of not addressing this since the formulation phase?			
Were there any gender issues raised during the activity?			
Did the participants evaluate the project also from a "gender perspective"?			

Table n.5.D Assessment of the Gender equality dimension - specific Indicators for activity follow up

FOLLOW UP			
INDICATORS	YES	NO	comments
What is the likelihood that the Action will have expected/unexpected impact on human rights & GM/GE? Are they expected to be positive or negative and in which ways will they affect the different stakeholders?			
Did the Action promote sustainable changes in the area of Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE)? How?			
What more could have been done to promote greater sustainability with regard to GM/GE and changes in gender power relations? If so, how?			
Was an appropriate exit strategy planned for and implemented? How did this strategy address elements of GM/GE?			
To what extent and how were the local partners and different beneficiaries (including rights holders and duty bearers) involved in defining and implementing the exit strategy?			
To what extent do the partners of the activity own its results in the area of GM/GE and are committed to their sustainability after the end of the intervention?			
To what extent have the results of the Action complemented/been supported by the human rights components / programmes of individual MSs?			
To what extent have the results of the Action complemented/been supported by other interventions in the area of external action and foreign policy?			
Was the activity coherent with the CoE strategies in the areas of GM/GE and with the member states action throughout its duration?			
Did it contribute to the implementation of GE strategy and other regional policy documents that include reference to gender equality?			
How and to what extent did the activity promote and enhance donor coordination by addressing GM/GE issues?			

5.3 Evaluating the gender equality dimension in youth activities

Evaluating might be a subjective task to perform, but with the selection of appropriate questions it is possible to collect results and indicators to strengthen the gender equality dimension in follow ups, for instance. Providing standard questions for participants can facilitate the collection of data, inclusion of vulnerable groups, and any unintended impact, results or output as outcome of the activity. Comparing the information collected from questionnaire, can provide references to measure any change over time and in different contexts. Newly acquired competences can work towards the inclusion of a gender equality dimension in all the aspects of the activities.

Indeed, educational teams and the group of participants have an influence on how gender equality is perceived. Those in charge for developing the activities for young people or those creating educational programmes should not only show shades of the gender equality dimension, but make them clear to the team and to the participants. However this may largely mean evaluating the climate in which people interact during the activity.

Besides, holding the responsibility for ensuring that the Programme is not promoting stereotypical gender roles passes by preventive work during preparatory meetings, brainstorming and evaluations. The practice of including standard questions on the gender equality dimension will become the norm once one team after another will start to apply them.

Proposal of standard questions for educational teams

The following questions are just a suggestion for teams willing to include the gender equality dimension in a youth activity and can be adapted or chosen ad hoc for the situation.

1. How the team assessed the educational needs of participants?
2. How did you ensure everyone's voice was heard?
3. How did you ensure equal participation was accessible to everyone?
4. Did you use a balance of gender terms in your activity and use female and male forms in language?
5. Did all participants had an equal opportunity to join the different activities, to take action and participate in different sessions disregarding their gender?
6. Did you provide space for feedback?
7. How do you ensure you collect feedback on the programme from young people and leaders of all genders?
8. Was the activity lacking participation because of a gender-related reason? For example, do some people felt that an event / activity was not suitable for their gender or based on stereotypes?
9. Are the members of the educational team, regardless of gender, are equally active in all types of session?

10. How did you ensure that the programme was not defined based on gender; e.g. expecting less of either girls or boys in a particular activity?
11. Did you ensure that the programme was not informed by and created on gender stereotypes?
12. Did you capture specific information about the impact and relevance of programme when someone do not participate in a session?
13. Do you ask about which sessions were relevant / useful or not relevant / less useful for the participant and the reasons?
14. Who makes the final decisions on which feedback to take on board and any changes made?
15. Was gender equality taken into account and included throughout the activity (design, implementation and monitoring?). How was it done? If not, why not?
16. Was the action consistent with national policies or international instruments on gender equality and relevant international human rights obligations? How? If not, why not?
17. To what extent did the planned activities address the causes of gender inequality and discrimination and reach the relevant beneficiaries, including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged?
18. To what extent has the project / programme effectively contributed to the creation of favourable conditions for advancing gender equality?
19. To what extent did the action outputs contribute to achieving its expected results, respectively for men/boys and for women/girls, and for those marginalised or in a vulnerable situation?
20. What expected and unexpected results were achieved for women and girls, and for men and boys, also taking into account an intersectional perspective, where relevant? Who benefited most, how and why?
21. What factors played in favour or against the achievement of the expected results, respectively for men/boys and for women/girls?

Proposal of standard questions for participants

It is apparently custom to believe that gender cannot be present in every activity. However, just the fact of having male and female participants in an activity is a precondition for gender to be essential part of the “game”. In order to break the persisting taboos about gender each activity should have dedicated space – *LET'S TALK GENDER*-. Only allowing the matter to be discussed for what it is could eventually change behaviours and attitudes towards gender as a topic.

The proposal for participants is not long, considering their evaluation already filled with several questions. This can be complemented with a small glossary, useful to interpret gender terms.

1. Did you feel adequately challenged and enriched?
2. Could you express yourself freely?
3. Considering the programme, where there stereotypes you could identify?
4. Do you think gender biased occurred within the group? Did this influence your motivation?

5. Do you think the programme, considering the group, has succeeded to create a safe space?
6. Have you received detailed information about the structure and the content of the programme?
7. Has the programme / activity reflected your expectations?
8. Do you think that the programme / activity helped you to increase your knowledge about gender equality?
9. Has the group been provided with a space to talk about gender equality dimension of the activity?

6.INDICATORS FOR EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES ON GENDER EQUALITY IN THE INTERCULTURAL YOUTH ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND ITS PARTNERS

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.⁷⁹

Identifying indicators linked with gender equality results, along with the concrete actions needed to achieve these results, and the indicators needed to measure progress—are essential steps for implementing human rights, advancing gender equality, and achieve the active participation and autonomy of young people in peaceful and inclusive societies of Europe.

Gender equality needs to be pursued in its own right for a just and equal society, and has been acknowledged as important objectives for many decades, including in the current 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs. Moreover, there is considerable evidence and broad international agreement that advancing gender equality helps reduce poverty, supports inclusive growth and other broad development outcomes, and enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of development initiatives.

⁸⁰Despite long-standing international commitments and the demonstrated benefits of addressing gender inequalities, incorporating gender perspectives into development work remains a significant challenge.

One of the most important lessons is that actions to address gender inequalities must be explicit throughout development planning and programming if consistent progress is to be made toward gender equality. Without explicit objectives, strategies, targets, and actions to ensure young people’s equal participation and outcomes, the needs of those young persons despite their gender, will continue to be overlooked.

Identifying clear indicators to measure gender equality results is essential to measure and improve performance.

Data is at the heart of impact management. To evaluate impact and implementation data is crucial and is collected setting up indicators which will give you any kind of information that help you understand or make a decision, for example information you collect from people when they apply, attendance records, feedback from people and any surveys or evaluation.

⁷⁹ Gender Equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/gender-equality-guidelines>

⁸⁰ The Council of Europe comprehensive and extensive body of instruments and work provides important input towards the efforts of the member States to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). The Council of Europe contributes to achieving the goals set in relevant international instruments, such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. GE Strategy 2018 - 2013 pg 13 paragraph 29

The proposal for indicators should help collecting relevant data for evaluating the implementation of the guidelines as well as to learn about effectiveness and maximise impact.

What are the signs that we have been successful? How can we tell we have made progress in implementing the Guidelines? The answers to these questions will generally make strong indicators.

It is a good practice to set at least two indicators to measure each outcome. When putting indicators together we combine numbers (quantitative data) and descriptions or narrative (qualitative data) to give you a fuller picture of what might change when implementing the guidelines.

Example: to assess whether or not women and girls experiencing violence feel more confident in interviews, we could ask them about how anxious they felt about sharing their story during the activity. If the activity offers a method to help people practice feeling confident, we could also ask the trainer/facilitator about what they thought of the participants' performance – how confident did they appear?

Combining subjective and objective indicators. This can give a more robust picture of whether or not a change has happened. For example, if we wanted to know if people attending programmes and activities had increased their skills around advocating for gender equality, we could ask them how confident they would feel about speaking out about the topic or joining/starting a campaign – this gives a subjective view on whether or not the outcome has been achieved. A more objective measure could be the percentage of advocacy action started (although other factors could also influence this).

The guidelines are an expression of the commitment of the Council of Europe and its youth sector to advance gender equality.

The guidelines are to be used by staff and educational teams involved in intercultural youth activities held in the European Youth Centres and in the member States, and promoted by the beneficiaries of the European Youth Foundation. They should be used in conjunction with other documents (e.g. quality standards for educational activities held in the European Youth Centres of the Council of Europe) and should be reviewed regularly.

The aspects covered by the Guidelines are:

- 1.** A human rights-based approach;
- 2.** Gender-balanced participation in youth activities and measures to ensure the participation of young parents;
- 3.** Language and representation in materials related to educational activities;
- 4.** Gender-sensitive educational approaches;
- 5.** Creating safe environments and practical concerns: accommodation, working facilities, access to toilets, etc.

6.1. A human rights based-approach to youth work and non-formal learning

As youth work and non-formal learning are practised and promoted by the Council of Europe are based on human rights values and principles, also a human rights- based approach in youth work and non-formal learning recognises that achieving equal opportunities remains a common goal.

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. This might indicate visible changes which need to be observed and measured.

INDICATOR (WHAT WILL WE MEASURE?)	HOW WILL WE COLLECT IT?	WHEN?	WHO?
Profile of attendees respect equal opportunities policy and procedures (age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, organisation.) Number of sessions where the topic was tackled Number of attendees who would support it or not Number of incidents from bad to worse and recovery, if any. How often groups work together towards this point Describing the type of work they cooperate on % of events were inequalities are recognised % times when support is provided to bridge the gaps.	Application forms Observations Comments and outcomes registered in the training session outlines	Before during and after the activity	TBC
% of successful understanding of the ethical and normative framework List of policies discussed, presented and debriefed Number of attendees actively participating in the discussion Number of attendees needing more educational and action – oriented support % of people sharing experiences on the topic	Ground rules, group contract Legal standards Policies Observation Application forms Activity Evaluation App form and activity	Before and during the activity, after to a certain extent	TBC

6.2. Gender-balanced participation in youth activities

As suggested by the guidelines, the Youth Department included the following text in all calls for applications for activities carried out by the Youth Department (recommended for the Youth Department's partners when they recruit their own participants, e.g. study sessions):
"The Council of Europe (and partners) welcomes applications from all candidates who meet

*the above-mentioned profile, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation”.*⁸¹

This calls upon some Council of Europe standard implementation such as the historical step that was made on 31 March 2010 with the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 to member states on measures to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

This recommendation is the first instrument in the world dealing specifically with one of the most persistent and difficult forms of discrimination. It sets out the principles deriving from existing European and international instruments, with particular emphasis on the European Convention on Human Rights, in the light of European Court of Human Rights case law. It identifies specific measures to be adopted and effectively enforced by member states in order to combat discrimination, to ensure respect for human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons and to promote tolerance towards them. It should serve as a reference for the governments, international institutions, non-governmental organisations, media professionals and to all those who are professionally or otherwise involved or interested in protecting and promoting the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. But legal responses and political declarations, whilst essential, are not sufficient. They need to be combined with educational, cultural and awareness-raising measures likely to eradicate discrimination and intolerance in the long term.

Relevance for same sex and coeducational activities.

At the same time the *Guidelines on Gender equality in the intercultural youth activities of the Council of Europe and its partners Adopted by the Joint Council on Youth at its 36th meeting – March 2017*, highlight that same-sex activities should be clearly advertised as such. Why these may still be important in limiting the gender equality gap is linked with the fact that the experience of “being gendered” surrounds us always, even when we are alone, regardless of other genders being present or not. In a girl only environment, gender expectations can be just as limiting as in co-educational settings. Both educational settings offer a variety of options to work with the topic of gender.

The practice demonstrates that a girl-only environments, can provide a unique support that individuals who have been through similar experiences can offer to empower each other. Still activities activities can be designed considering different roles and attitudes from the ones participants usually are in, or the ones that society expects from their gender. Mainstreaming for both gender and diversity is equally important in both same sex and coeducational activities. Regardless of what kind of organisation you are from, you will be able to ask yourself and your fellow members if you are applying an effective strategy to achieve equality between women and men.⁸² However, a research conducted in the ERW Gender and Leadership project of WAGGGS⁸³ showed that it’s important to consider the gender identities even in girl-only groups, for several reasons:

⁸¹ Combating discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity Council of Europe standards Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, June 2011

⁸² UN Women: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/gendermainstreaming.htm>

⁸³ The Gender and Leadership Project was a research project conducted in 2016 by WAGGGS in partnership with Girlguiding UK (Scotland) and Scouting Nederland (SN), with the consultancy of Oxford Brookes University. Using

- Youth activity do not happen in a social vacuum. While young people carry with them all the prejudices about gender from their wider society and culture. This can impact not only the way they treat each other, but the way they view themselves and the confidence that they have in their ability to pursue opportunities within and outside of a youth activity.
- Young people’s intersecting identities means that they do not all experience their gender in the same way. A girl-only activity will be full of young people who have different ways of living with their gender. Having shared a wider perspective of Gender-balanced participation in youth activities, this need to be considered at all stages.

INDICATOR	HOW WILL WE COLLECT IT?	WHEN	WHO ?
Inclusive approach used to organisational and educational team during selection; A balance in the participation of all genders is encouraged through explanatory text in the call;	Written assessment of the application forms Observations Applications returned	Prep meetings	
Equal participation of women and men ensured together with inclusion measures towards under-represented genders;	Ground rules, group contract Legal standards Policies Observation	Before, during and after the activity	
The use of a non-binary system of reference (female/male) in application forms. ⁸⁴ The same criteria is applied for the criteria ‘sexual orientation’	App form <u>delivery</u>	Before and during the activity	
The gender-normative titles, i.e. Ms/Mr is omitted in invitation letters and other formal documents to participants.	Invitation letters; Application forms;	Before	
The organisation/team reflect on the purpose this information serves in the selection process and composition of the group;	Selection criteria	Before and after the activity	
Number of same-sex activities clearly advertised as such; Explanatory text provided with gender perspective.	Calls	Before	

a Participatory Action Research approach SN (co-educational setting) and Girlguiding Scotland (girl-only setting) investigated how their young members perceived gender norms and whether girls and young women felt they had equal opportunities to pursue leadership roles both within and outside of the movement.

⁸⁴ The application form either include information about: sex, with the inclusion of the option ‘other’ for those who do not fit the male/female categories; or o gender, with an empty field allowing participants to define freely depending on how they identify themselves.

The specific text suggested by the Guidelines is included in all calls for applications for activities carried out by the Youth Department.	Calls YD Calls of Youth Department's partners when they recruit their own participants, e.g. study sessions):	Before	
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6.3 Language and representation in materials related to educational activities

Language has immense power to replicate gender inequality by the use of general masculine forms. This includes all of the forms of visual representation, both on and offline, used in youth work activities, such as social media announcements, flyers, reports, or presentations during activities. Languages are alive and constantly developing, however, and it is important that teams involved in multi-lingual activities research solutions for gender- neutral language.

In intercultural youth work, people come from different language backgrounds and certain words might not make sense to everyone (e.g. some languages have no gendered pronouns) when the language used is other than English.

It will be noted that the trend in English is to drop feminine endings (so that terms like “poetess” are disappearing) and that there is a growing preference for terms that apply equally to both sexes. In French, on the other hand, a tendency to introduce new feminine forms of titles and occupational designations (such as l’“agente”) is emerging. These differences can be accounted for by basic structural differences between the two languages, rather than by differences in the socio-political context.⁸⁵

While this might be easier in English, it might not be so in other languages used in youth work activities.

Sam Killermann⁸⁶ shows how makes sense to use ‘they’. It is neutral If you’re trying to make an example of a hypothetical, general person, “they” makes them as general as one can imagine. As soon as you refer to a person with a pronoun, you’re implying thousands of unsaid things (whether you mean to or not), particularly if the assumed default is “he,” and only “she” marks a person’s identity. “They” changes the assumed default from being “he” (the old standard) to being truly neutral. In everyday speech, singular they, the use of they/them to refer to one person, feels completely natural. But in more formal contexts, and in writing, that usage has long been frowned upon. And not just frowned upon, but banned as ungrammatical. However, it is not ungrammatical in the same way as “*I didn’t knowed that*” or “*what are you cook for dinner tonight?*” Those sentences do not sound natural in any context.

Other institutions are sure to follow suit. Professional associations of copy editors have been chafing at the restriction against it for years, and now that a major publication has approved it, it won’t be long before more do the same. It is easy and inclusive. on the other hand not everybody agrees. Indeed, there is a debate among professionals, in journalism for example having no issue with their used in its proper place, as a plural pronoun. That’s completely fine, even necessary, and the usage is quite valuable. But why must we accept *their* as a singular? They say, use anything instead. Use he or she. Use one. Use a person’s name. Or rewrite! Pluralize throughout, if you must, for consistency: Others argue that there is a reason we have distinct pronouns, and that is so we can be specific. If we do not know the specifics, we should try to find them out, or use one of those

⁸⁵ Instruction No. 33 of 1 June 1994 concerning the use of nonsexist language at the Council of Europe

⁸⁶ Author of <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/>

handy words – he or she or one, for instance – that get around the problem. Those are more real and individualized than a collective they.

There is criticism that the use of *he* as the generic pronoun is an example of linguistic sexism of a sort, if you do not know the gender of the person about whom you are speaking. The message that something should be easy, that we all understand anyway, that it does not really matter and we should conform may be the most galling part of this argument, though. Break the rules if you must, for a purpose, to make an impact. Do not do something because it's easy and everyone else is doing it. If a word sounds like it's landing with a horrid thump in your ear, it's landing that way to at least some of the people next to you.⁸⁷

Despite the debate, which in our opinion has reason to remain alive, the Council of Europe gives instructions on the use of non sexist language. From these guidance, we can reflect on the language and visual representations used at all stages of a youth activity. The following indicators might serve to avoid gender-specific pronouns when the sex of the person concerned is not known.

INDICATOR (WHAT WILL WE MEASURE?)	HOW WILL WE COLLECT IT?	WHEN?	WHO?
Situations where, gender-neutral pronouns are used, ie they/them/themselves instead of gendered versions, when referring to groups of people whose gender identities are varied or unknown. % communication elements containing gender - neutral pronouns.	Communication from announcements of the activity, to reports, to Welcome speeches, etc;	Before, during and after the activity	
The Council of Europe instruction on the use of non-sexist language have been consulted and/or applied (see guiding statements below)	Speeches, dialogues, group work	Before, during the activity	
Number of activities where time has been set to explain the reasoning behind the use of a gender-neutral and gender-sensitive language;	Informal moments sessions	During the activities	
A balanced and non-stereotypical representation of all genders is ensured regardless of the topic of the activity.	Communication and contractual agreements with third parties responsible for the production of certain deliverables (i.e. videographers);	Before and during the activity	
Verbal and written communication as well as pictures, illustrations, infographics, videos or any other medium that may convey or reinforce stereotypical or discriminatory views on gender checked with the guidelines.	Invitations, info-packages, video, graphics, social media	Before, during and after the activity	

⁸⁷ Extract from Jen Doll - Article reported on the Atlantic January 2013

6.4. Gender-sensitive educational approaches

As stated in the quality standards for educational activities of the Youth Department, an integrated approach to intercultural learning, participation and human rights education should be adopted in each activity and articulated according to its specificity.

Hence, protecting human rights in this framework implies that a gender-sensitive approach has to be discussed for the activity.

From where do we start?

All international human rights treaties apply equally to men and women. However, recognising that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979. CEDAW defines discrimination against women and sets out what should be done by national governments to combat it. 187 countries in the world have signed up to this treaty, including all European countries. The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence take stock from CEDAW reinforces that is the obligation of the state to fully address it in all its forms and to take measures to prevent violence against women, protect its victims and prosecute the perpetrators. This Convention is the first legally binding instrument in the world creating a comprehensive legal framework to prevent violence, protect victims and end the impunity of perpetrators. It defines and criminalises various forms of violence against women, including forced marriage, female genital mutilation, stalking, physical and psychological violence and sexual violence. It also foresees the establishment of an international group of independent experts to monitor its implementation at national level.

When it comes to prevention work a member state has to put in place measures and involve civil society in order to educate current and future generation.

The same approach is valid for activities happening under the Youth department. Non-governmental organisations also take an active role in protecting women's rights and LGBT rights, both at international and national level.

For instance, The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO) and (WAGGGS) World Association of girl guides and girl scouts, have a long lasting relationship in working with the youth department of the Council of Europe. They are youth-led membership-based organisations with more than 50 member organisations. They respectively promote values of acceptance and non-discrimination, increase participation of young LGBT and queer people in democratic decision making, and empower women to develop their fullest potential to become better citizens of the world. They cooperate with other youth organisations, such as national youth councils, European student organisations and European political youth organisations. They organise study sessions and conferences, but also very active in advocating at the political level. Their resources and practices are actual and up to date and the youth department benefits from including their suggestion concerning a gender sensitive approach in all activities.

These indicators are built considering gender and diversity.

INDICATOR (WHAT WILL WE MEASURE?)	HOW WILL WE COLLECT IT?	WHEN?	WHO?
Educational teams are ready to observe human rights at all times, they deal accordingly with discriminatory attitudes though the topic of the activity might not be gender related	Observation Expectations from participants Ground rules Set a reporting system during the activity	Before and beginning of the activity mostly	
Trainers and organisers are aware of the existence and functioning of discrimination and its possible expression among the participants.	Training to trainer provided in advance Observation Incidents recording	Before and during the activity	
The teams consistently value and take into account perspectives and points of view of minority or under-represented groups, participants' access needs and show commitment to gender equality;	Set of specific questions in activities debriefing	Evaluation and reflection groups	
Teams in intercultural youth activity view their approaches with 'gender glasses'. Teams do not make assumptions about the gender identity of participants.	Observation of informal times, Specific activities allowing everyone to express themselves in their own pace and time while being aware that some young people may need longer to prepare and may require more support.	Preparation Implementation and evaluation	

6.5. Creating safe environments and facilities

The creation of safe environments should be the cornerstone of all elements of a youth activity including the venue, the attitude and behaviour of all staff, and all practical considerations. Human rights education also entails learning through human rights. It is a good practice to train all staff involved in youth activities in gender equality, from restaurant personnel to administrative staff and educational teams. However, while this might be possible for the European Youth Centres, it might not be the case for activities held outside the EYCs. This should not prevent organisers from briefing and explaining to all those involved what gender equality standards require; for this reason a set of indicators to hand out in this area might help the organisers to apply CoE standard. The Gender toolbox of the EYF suggests to establish a *gender code of conduct*, creating a safe space where everyone can express themselves freely, with simple understandable rules.

Creating a gender code of conduct (or a general one that includes gender) offers a space for everyone to feel safe but also a guide to those who are not familiar with the topic and might unwillingly step out of line. It should also include procedures and policy for when something

happens, so that you are prepared to deal with unfortunate situations and the implications are known in advance. A code of conduct should be easily understandable, easily accessible and ideally presented to everyone in the activity to make sure everyone knows it. *If you have the opportunity to involve as many people as possible in creating a gender code of conduct, this will create more ownership among participants or members and the discussion itself can be a good way to introduce some concepts and practices.*

INDICATOR (WHAT WILL WE MEASURE?)	HOW WILL WE COLLECT IT?	WHEN?	WHO?
Safety and security around venues where activities are held has been checked according with participants needs	Observation Expectations from participants Ground rules Set a reporting system during the activity	Preparation	
Concerns related to the comfort of participants is reflected in choices of accommodation Setting up a training room to welcoming all and create a safe space.	Sharing of rooms (where necessary), toilet facilities (generally gendered),	Before	
Codes of conduct should be developed and discussed with participants in youth activities;	Training to trainer provided in advance Ground rules Set a reporting system during the activity Observation Incidents recording	Before and during	
Discriminatory attitudes by participants, trainers or organisers is dealt with promptly, using a human rights approach and with regard to the specificity of the activity.	Check informal time	During the activity	
Discriminatory attitudes manifested during informal time, have a clear procedure to be addressed with the organisers;	Set a reporting system during the activity Evaluation and reflection groups	During the activity	
Confidentiality is applied by the trainers when an accident is reported.	Safeguarding procedures	During the activity	
Appropriate measures are taken while considering the safety of the group and the specificity of the situation.	Code of conduct	During or after	
Particular attention is paid to situations that may require legal or judicial action;	Observation	During or after	
Policy on sexual harassment of the CoE are consulted Information is available to everyone.	Info pack and intro session	Preparation, during the activity	

7. STRENGTHENING THE GENDER EQUALITY DIMENSION IN THE YOUTH FOR DEMOCRACY PROGRAMME

7.1 The importance of strengthening

Everyone should have in mind basic consideration while travelling to “Gender Equality land”. We do not want to propose a short encyclopaedia about gender but rather highlight what taking part to an activity implies and what are the info to retain.

To what extent is the Youth Programme part of a plan to develop the skills and competences of staff and young people in terms of gender equality?

Gender is a transversal issue in training; thus, any kind of session can have an explicit focus on gender. For example: How does an outreach campaign involve or reach both boys and girls? What is the gender dimension of an intercultural youth project? How should a trainer involved in Euro-Mediterranean youth work address gender issues? What role does gender play in an anti-racist campaign? How do you apply a gender analysis to conflict transformation?

This kind of approach makes the gender dimension visible without having to limit it to a session on ‘gender’. Of course, there is always a gender dimension to activities, but ignoring it in the planning and implementation of these activities may leave out part of your target group, reinforce stereotypes or just simply miss an opportunity to address a central aspect of human rights and participation.⁸⁸

The seminar *Gender Matters* held in June 2016 concluded with inputs and possible measures to be implemented by the Youth Department and with a recap of what had been discussed, that can be summed up in the following key paragraphs:

- Gender based discrimination;
- Gender based violence;
- Equal opportunities;
- Gender equality in youth work and youth training.

Measures concerning gender-based discrimination

Gender is a traversal aspect of every focus in youth work and youth training in Europe. Most obviously, gender could be an aspect of, or the focus of, a human rights education training. Discrimination and unequal treatment due to sex and gender are breaches of human rights. Therefore, introduce a gender perspective into a session can be possible simply including tailored questions in an exercise or debriefing. However, other steps need to be taken by the Youth department in different areas of work. For instance, equal balance and non-stereotypical representation of all genders should be taken into consideration in selection processes.

⁸⁸ Gender matters, - *Council of Europe* pag.75

Gender training for staff, employees of the Youth Department is paramount. None of us escape the issue of sex and gender. Therefore, each of us has an experience and probably an opinion on a range of gender issues. We are all free to engage in debates or organise activities or write articles on the issue of gender. When it comes to youth workers and trainers, however, is that gender knowledge should be a prerequisite, because is a well-resourced nowadays. It is studied in many fields academic and grassroots. Including the experience of gender issues as a criterion for applying to the trainers' pool of the Youth Department gives the signal of working seriously with the issue of gender.

Moreover, doing background research and know when to consult different expertise or experience among NGOs, and partners cooperating with the Youth Department, positively question the action already in place. It promotes critical thinking of the gender approach, heteronormativity, intersectionality, historical data (to always question the norms presented and one's own assumptions).

Hence, the fact that we are all gendered does not mean that gender is just a question of opinion. It needs substantial arguments!

Measures concerning gender based violence

Raising awareness on victims of gender-based violence is potentially a good starting point, because there will be at least one individual having experienced it in every group.

Consider gender human safety: change in space and change in socialisation. Young people experiencing violence, they might be triggered by sexual harassment and assault cases. So, creating safe space means being welcoming, and not to be questioned on uncomfortable situations, meaning having the right to "pass" on a difficult question.

Practically, **establishing a gender code of conduct**, a mechanism to protect from harassment and/or even thinking about organising a workshops on consent, would be a good practice, since trainers taking part to this study, volunteered information about being discriminated or harassed.

Appointing a gender watch group/gender moderator in the planning or throughout the activity might be well welcomed by the young people taking an active role.

Also, **documenting incidents of gender-based violence is crucial** for collecting accurate information, and monitoring incidents of gender-based violence is important for developing a response to the victims and the perpetrators. However this may imply an evaluation of the climate in which people interact. If there are issues that need to be discussed, as effective intervention strategies that are aimed at potential perpetrators, potential victims they need to be part of a participatory process, where main stakeholders could be involved.

Unlikely other realities, Youth work has the potential to really make a difference, but also be an object of critical scrutiny: The youth department offers a safe environment to young people?

Violence and the threat of violence: The fear of being subject to violence is a strong factor restricting people's behaviour and freedom of movement. For example, having to take a long route home in order to avoid violence, or not daring to go out at night due to potential violence, are everyday realities for a lot of young people. In terms of feeling safe, individual rooms should be considered in activities for participants who do not feel comfortable sharing;

Always question cultural relativism: norms and traditions that help violate human rights should not be accepted. Be careful in assuming that the western society is more inclusive. Do not give anything for granted, there are forms of violence not visible at the human eye, but they are scandalous - genital mutilation for example is still practiced in Europe. A report last year on FGM by a coalition of medical groups, trade unions and human rights organisations estimates that there are 66,000 victims of FGM in England and Wales and warns that more than 24,000 girls under 15 are at risk. More than 2,000 victims of FGM sought treatment in London hospitals alone in the past three years.⁸⁹

Ensure the dignity of the participants introducing the concepts of code of conduct, safe spaces, simple understandable rules, mechanism in place to protect individuals or groups from harassment.

Finally, as gender-based violence can in some cases involve criminal violence **you need to know the limits of intervention**, and when it is advisable to involve specialists from other NGOs, services or even the police.

Measures on gender equality in youth work and youth training

The training scheme in place at the youth department should mainstreams gender, so a gender perspective is adopted at every stage. Also, specific training opportunities on gender should be offered to consultant and trainers to enable them to understand gender dynamics and adopt gender-sensitive approaches in their educational roles. One way it could be done is to:

- Analyse the current training system gender-wise;
- Include gender sensitive approaches in the training methods and scheme;
- Provide training opportunities specifically dedicated to gender addressing teams at different levels;
- Provide them with resources (already available or created by the Youth department) to help them in using gender-sensitive approaches and promote gender equality.
- Make sure there is time for the team to develop links with participants;
- Update current resources and premises: Foresee a plan to introduce gender equality in the framework of Quality Label for Youth Centres and to review and amend Gender Matters accordingly.

On top of that, considering gender mainstreaming in youth work is highly important. Although most of the time volunteers, staff, trainers do not see gender issues at first sight, this does not mean that they do not exist around them. Especially NGOs not exclusively working on gender should adopt measures on the topic, because gender is closely monitored by society: toys, colours, clothes and behaviours are examples. The work started by the EYF should be continued so that everyone working directly or indirectly with the youth department can keep reading, informing, observing social dynamics, not judging others and being open to analyse behaviours and see issues related to gender from different angles.

Ultimately, because raising awareness of gender issues has been recognised as a first much needed way to promote gender equality, inclusive language in every aspect of the work

⁸⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/sep/07/uk-us-border-officials-join-forces-in-bid-to-tackle-female-genital-mutilation>

carried online and offline should be persevered as well as selecting proper channels for communication (e.g. for the call for participants).

Measure to ensure Equal Opportunities

The Youth for Democracy Programme clearly works on eliminating discrimination on any grounds. Therefore all applicants should be treated equally regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin, culture, sex, sexuality, marital status, age and disability. According to article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights the core principle that all of us, no matter who we are, enjoy the same human rights and should have equal access to them.

Besides the nature of the activities and tasks that young people undertake, a good match between preventive work and sensible attitude can help improve the outcome concerning gender equality and not only. For instance make inequality visible through positive wording and the use of data, and reflect on structures and norms within the group and the work carried: review the occupation of space and time, the division of positions, and the decision-making process (settings and way decisions are taken, formal and informal), the jokes (how jokes and comments impact and normalise certain issues like words that associate women with children); review icebreakers, team building and *getting to know each other methods*, ensuring they do not perpetuate stereotypes, heteronormativity.

Being explicit about difference from gender identity and sexual orientation

In accordance with the guidelines, the Youth Department can monitor its decisions on selection of participants to assess whether or not such policies are effective.. In terms of data protection, this information might be detached from applications, stored separately and only be used for statistical purposes, to ensure that the Youth Department recruitment process is free from bias. It will not be used in assessing an applicant suitability for a specific activity. The same is valid for age, religion and marital status.

If Other, please state			
GENDER			
Gender *			
Please Select an Option	Other		Prefer not to say
If Other, please state			
MARITAL STATUS			
Please specify your marital Status *			
Please Select an Option	Other		Prefer not to say
If Other, please state			
AGE			
Please specify your age *			
Please Select an Option			Prefer not to say
RELIGION			
Please specify your religion *			
Please Select an Option	None	Other	Prefer not to say
If Other, please state			
SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
Please specify your sexual Orientation*			
			prefer not to say
if other please state			

7.2 Main issues to be addressed in 1-day training of staff of the European Youth Centres

The value of having a gender sensitive staff is exemplary. Improving quality of role models at all levels, in the structure, management, relationship with society, is what makes gender equality a reality. The consideration given to train staff, organisers and logistic teams should be the same given to the trainers dealing with the activities.

Emphasise the added value of integrating a gender perspective for the members of the staff, as well as for the content, giving at hands - examples related to the topic. Also, providing a team that is gender aware, highlights the importance of a welcoming workplace and safe space for guests.

Invest in terminology and common language. Make sure everyone knows what they are talking about and uses the same terminology. Agree on the same understanding. Investments in terms of talking a common language will pay in due time, and will make your work more effective. Common language is crucial and indispensable, even to be able to agree or disagree. Be aware of possible linguistic challenges with regard to gender.

Show the 'win-win' situation. Keep it pleasant and challenging but without judgment. Involve people, find allies in them, ask them for suggestions. Encourage questions: Remind the team that formulating a good question is the beginning of good solutions and that they should not feel disadvantaged if not accustomed with gender as topic.

Disseminate information on gender equality in the work of the youth centres. Show an evidence-based approach in the work carried. Analyse and discuss the process with the staff.

Trainings and preparation of educational consultants and teams of volunteers involved in the activities

The Youth Department deals and work with human rights education, citizenship, active participation, minority youth, intercultural learning, anti-racism or anti-discrimination - to name just a few work areas intrinsically involved.

Despite this, it is worth asking how often gender is an explicit topic in youth work, training and activities. For a number of reasons. gender issues may be considered the work of specialised organisations. People may sustain that there are no gender issues to deal with: because for some, gender conjures up images of feminism and 'yesterday's politics', or given that gender is often equated with women's issues, it is often the case that it is dealt with in special girls' groups. And sometimes you may even hear that 'there are more important

⁹⁰ Adapted from TACT- The largest fostering and adoption Charity in the UK

things to deal with'. This is a lost opportunity. Young people can instigate change by taking responsibility in attitudes' change and by challenging themselves.⁹¹

Promptly, **reminding the team of the added value of integrating a gender perspective**, ensure that a gender perspective is properly integrated into activities. Deciding to put on the gender glasses is not always immediate. Although there are different trends in organising a training on gender, this depending on the particular skills teams' members have, the Youth Department can decide when and where to use on-line or residential settings might be appropriate.

Concerning the contents they might focus on basic or specific knowledge, competence building in gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of a gender perspective in youth activities.

The following list of contents might look like a shopping list. However, we would like the organisers to *pick and mix* the topics according to each situations. It is realistic to build at least 3 different training pathways in this regard, which can be used at the Youth Department convenience. If training is not an option, ad hoc workshops can be designed using the same approach.

Main topics:

- **Gender and Sex**, plus clarification between gender identity and sexual orientation should be a must.
- **Support on improving of facilitation skills.**
- **Understand on how to tackle gender-based discrimination and gender-based stereotypes.**
- **Teams should challenge their own stereotypes and assumptions on a chosen topic:** *When planning a sessions for which topics and activities might a gender perspective be relevant?* They might reflect on the topic with some guiding questions: *What are your own assumptions on the topic? Have you put on your gender glasses?* Honestly, sharing one own preparation and reflection on the subject will give an example of how integrating gender perspective begins with a personal decision and reflection on one's own mind-set.
- **Human rights issues relating to gender and sexuality:** The use of Compass and its section on gender is fundamental to give basic knowledge on how gender is linked with poverty, armed conflicts, reproductive rights, participation, violence. Secondly, sharing the experience of other CoE committees which deal with gender aspect like prenatal sex selection. Other committees might still struggle to find the gender aspect in specific activity, this might be sometimes the case of the Youth Department. Other good practices might be easily transferable. Think of the example from the sport committee (CAHAMA)⁹² on women representation in positions of decision-making, or the EPAS⁹³ and its handbook on good practices on gender equality in sport, and last but not least SOGI with its commitment in implementing CM/Rec (2010)5 of the

⁹¹ Adapted from Gender Matters - Council of Europe pag 67

⁹² Ad Hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (CAHAMA)

⁹³ Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity.

- **Understanding the process of gender mainstreaming and gender equality.** More concretely the use complementary strategies:

Practice: Gender mainstreaming (i.e. integrating a gender perspective in regular policies and activities) cannot replace specific policies which aim to redress situations resulting from gender inequality.

Practice: Specific gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming are dual and complementary strategies and must go hand in hand to reach the goal of gender equality.

If necessary plan specific gender equality activities compatible with efforts to integrate a gender perspective in regular activities and policies:

- **Teams should speak the same language when it comes to gender.** They should also know *Why they do what they do?* (Use the “test your knowledge”⁹⁴ exercise or the 6 questions model from Centre for Youth impact⁹⁵.)
- **In organising a training session, conference or other event they should know how to collect data using pre – compiled indicators:** *Are women and men equally represented among those giving their opinions as well as in the organisations and stakeholders they represent?*
- Investigate the **impact on both men and women** and ensure the results benefit both sexes.
- When preparing the activities, they should make sure they talk on **achieving more equal representation of men and women.**

Reflections to address:

Might differences between men and women play a role?

Which relevant social and cultural differences between men and women might play a role?

How should the suggested activity/legislative text/ policy take those differences into account?

Gender and the media - What to keep in mind while planning an activity:

- Plan an adequate and complementary communication.
- Be aware of the political and societal trends around your topic and gender.
- Use potential media interest for promoting the activity.
- Do not underestimate the possible interest of the media in the activities with regard to the gender perspective.

Presentation of good examples and best practices.

⁹⁴ Gender Equality Commission resource for GERS

⁹⁵ <http://www.youthimpact.uk/>

- How to involve the Gender Equality Rapporteur of the Joint Council on youth and/or another from another committee who has developed activities that could be useful for an activity and ask for advice.
- How to get specialised information and training, for example the free online course offered by the Istanbul convention (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/help-online-course>)

Last but not least, if you need the team to be prepared on policy making and the gender dimension we advice to practice on how “Assess Gender Impact” where participants could try to draft:

- New activity proposal
- Identifying priorities
- Preparing a legislative text
- Giving advice on legislation
- Monitoring a convention
- Assisting member states in promotion, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the CoE measures and standards

To conclude, as already mentioned in section 3 in relation to the recommendations addressed to the Youth for Democracy Programme, it is extremely important to develop a training on gender equality that has to be offered to the trainers and to the representative of the decision making bodies such as the **European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ)**, the **Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ)** and the **Joint Council on Youth (CMJ)**. As per some respondents, often positions on gender equality are discordant and the reason can be identified on the fact that not all the members of the decision making bodies have a proper understanding of gender equality. First of all, in order to deliberate in a shared position, and to set strategic priorities, it is important that all members consider gender equality as a cross-cutting thematic. Secondly, to successfully support the implementation of the GE Strategy 2018-2023, both trainers collaborating with the Youth Department and members of decision making bodies have to understand the current challenges faced in terms of the promotion of gender equality. This includes taking in consideration the gender perspective in migration issues, and an alarming rise of harmful practices in the continent such as female genital mutilation and the existence of religious “courts” in certain European countries.

A training on gender equality can facilitate the digestion of a gender perspective and can support the promotion of gender equality sensibly, in particular as a cross-cutting thematic. For the design of the trainings, the Programme can refer to the extensive database of materials provided by Youth Organisations, Council of Europe tool-kits and handbooks. However the involvement of the Gender Equality Unit is extremely important, to ensure that every aspect of the training reflects the ongoing work to promote Gender Equality.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – Analysis of the activities organised by or in support of the Youth Department

Enter LTTC (Budapest, Strasbourg) <i>Council of Europe</i>	Gender aware and slightly gender sensitive
Kaluga camp on “intercultural dialogue” <i>Council of Europe</i>	Gender aware and slightly gender biased
50-50 with Ukraine (Ukraine) <i>Council of Europe</i>	Gender neutral
Housing solutions to youth homelessness based on a Human Rights Approach (Budapest) <i>FEANTSA Youth</i>	Gender neutral
Youth Peace Camp (Budapest) <i>Council of Europe</i>	Gender neutral
50-50 with Russia (Budapest) <i>Council of Europe</i>	Gender neutral
Exploring gender equality in environmental projects (Strasbourg) <i>Youth and Environment Europe</i>	Gender sensitive
Youth against online discrimination (Strasbourg) <i>YSAFE Network ; IGLYO ; Digital Leadership Institute</i>	Gender sensitive
Youth in the hearth of Human Rights Education (Strasbourg) <i>International Federation of Liberal Youth</i>	Gender neutral
Think Global, Learn International, Act Local (Budapest) <i>Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe AISBL</i>	Gender neutral

APPENDIX 2: Instruction No. 33 of June 1994 concerning the use of non-sexist language at the Council of Europe

Use a plural form. This is often the simplest solution.

Instead of	Use
The child and his rights	Children and their rights
The director... he...	Directors ... they ...
A nurse must inform her patients	Nurses must inform their patients

Reword the sentence.

Instead of	Use
When a staff member arrives at the Council he must ...	On arriving at the Council, a staff member must ...

Delete the pronoun.

Instead of	Use
Anyone disagreeing should give his reasons.	Anyone disagreeing should give reasons.

Replace the pronoun by “the”, “a” or “an”.

Instead of	Use
When submitting his application, a candidate should ...	When submitting an application, a candidate should ...

Use “we”, “one” or “people”.

Instead of	Use
The individual is influenced by his family’s values.	People are influenced by their families’ values.

Use “he or she”, “his or her” (to be used sparingly).

Instead of	Use
A director should be appointed for four years. He shall ...	A director should be appointed for four years
Avoid “man” words	
Instead of	Use
Chairman, chairwoman	Chair
Spokesman, spokeswoman	Spokeperson
Craftsman	Craft worker
Businessmen	The business community, industry, business managers, executives, companies
Man, mankind	People, the human race, human beings,

	humanity
Manpower	Workforce, workers, personnel
Manmade	Artificial, synthetic, manufactured, constructed, of human origin
To man	To operate, to be on duty

Forms of address.

Instead of	Use
Mrs, Miss	Ms [except where the woman in question expressly objects, in which case a footnote to this effect should be added] Alternatively, the first name and surname may be used without a title.

Use parallel language.

Instead of	Use
Men and ladies	Men and women, ladies and gentlemen
Men and girls	Men and women, girls and boys
Man and wife	Husband and wife, man and woman

Avoid stereotypes.

Instead of	Use
Ambassadors and their wives	Ambassadors and their spouses or partners
A man doctor, a woman nurse	A doctor, a nurse

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