

# GENDER EQUALITY AND EDUCATION

## GOOD TO KNOW

- Girls' academic success has not led to the elimination of employment inequalities (gender pay gap, pension gap, lesser access to decision-making positions).
- Proportion of young Roma women not in employment, education or training (NEETs: young people who are not in education, employment or training): 72% as compared to 55% of young Roma men.
- 85% of Roma men can read or write compared to 77% of Roma women, 19% of Roma women have never been to school compared to 14 % of Roma men, and 37% of Roma women aged 16-24 remain in education after the age of 16 compared to 50% of Roma men (2010).
- Only 15,3 % of the teaching staff at primary education level are men in Europe (2014).
- Only 36 % of the teaching staff at secondary education level are men in Europe (2014).
- 29% of women aged 15-64 years and 25% of men have attained tertiary education (EU, 2016).
- Only 20 % of heads of higher education institutions are women (EU, 2014).
- Only 33% of researchers in the EU are women (2014), a figure unchanged since 2009.
- A disproportionately low number of girls take STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), qualifications (European Commission, She Figures 2015).
- Women scientists and engineers made up 2.8 % of the total labour force in the EU (2013).

# WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE DO ABOUT IT?

- Committee of Ministers (2007), Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 on gender mainstreaming in education
- Committee of Ministers (2010), Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education
- Committee of Ministers (2012), Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 on ensuring quality education
- Actions related to the objective on Combating Gender Stereotypes and Sexism in and through education of the Council of Europe Strategy 2018-2023.
- Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region
- Gender Commission (2015), Gender Equality Commission: Compilation of good practices to promote and education free from gender stereotypes and identifying ways to implement the measures which are included in the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in education
- Committee of Ministers (2012), Monitoring report on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13: 7.1 Gender mainstreaming in education
- Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy Factsheet (2015), Combating gender stereotypes and sexism in and through education
- Gender Equality Commission – GEC (2015), Conference on “Combating gender stereotypes in and through education” Report
- Prepared by the Gender Equality Unit (2016), Gender mainstreaming: Policy Briefs and Council of Europe Activities, 3<sup>rd</sup> Update
- Handbook for Council of Europe Gender Equality Rapporteurs: Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming in Practice (2016)

## GENDER EQUALITY ASPECTS

- Investment in the education of girls and young women has the potential to deliver huge returns: not only in fulfilled potential, but also lasting economic independence, and economic growth.
- By utilising the skills and talents of girls and young women this helps to improve a country, region or area's economic well-being and even national global competitiveness.
- The choices which girls make interplay often between heavy cultural messages, societal expectations and challenges, peer and parental pressures, people they meet and self-determination. There are still strong influences regarding perceptions of what is thought of as “Men's Work” and “Women's Work”. This can be seen even at nursery school age. These differences then continue to affect the areas where women work, and also where men predominate. These choices have far reaching negative impact on the gender pay gap and around a third of the gap is due to occupational segregation.
- Access to education: to ensure access to quality education at all levels to both women and men students.

- Curricula and education materials: to create awareness among curriculum and textbook developers on gender bias and gender stereotypes in content, language and illustrations in curricula and in text books; encourage teachers to analyse, challenge and help to eliminate gender stereotypes and distortions which these textbooks, materials and products may convey (**Section 4, Gender-sensitive communication for co-operation work and projects**).
- Content of curricula: to create awareness among curriculum and textbook developers regarding the gender dimension in course programme content and general curriculum development (particularly for scientific and technological subjects) to revise curricula as necessary to include gender equality issues and make women's contribution to arts, science and history more visible (**Section 4, Gender-sensitive communication for co-operation work and projects**).
- Choice of subject and career orientation: women are under-represented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM fields) which are often well-paid and high-status professions – promote activities to encourage girls' participation in these fields. Due to similar gender stereotypes, men are under-represented in subjects related to social sciences and humanities.
- Sports and leisure activities: gender-based stereotypes and expectations may affect girls' and boys' self-image, identity-building, health, skills acquisition, intellectual development, social integration and gender relations – promote activities to deconstruct and combat such stereotypes.
- Participatory processes at school: provide equal opportunities for girls and boys to be active in school mechanisms for students' participation. Similarly, parents' involvement in school - equal representation and voice of mothers and fathers is needed.
- Infrastructures: availability of safe infrastructures (cloakrooms, toilets, etc.) for girls and boys in all educational institutions, including in those areas where girls are under-represented.
- Employment: to ensure equal opportunities for women and men at all levels and categories of education. Linked with stereotypes and income, women are over-represented as teachers in primary and secondary education but under-represented as university professors.
- Management structures and decision-making: ensure equal representation of women and men in decision-making at Ministry, on national, regional and provincial levels as well as at schools, and higher education institutions - men are over represented in decision-making in the educational sector.
- School governance and organisation: democratic school culture, co-education vs. single-sex schools, to ensure students involvement in decision making, to ensure parity between girls and boys in participation.
- Teaching methodology, teachers' attitudes: everyday practices in the classroom and teachers' attitudes may also reflect gender bias – disseminate research on this and further research, raise awareness and training for teachers and decision-makers.
- Capacity building: After the assessment of existing capacities, plan and carry out necessary gender-sensitive training courses and training in gender equality issues for school management, teachers, inspection bodies, etc.
- Parents' awareness-raising: raise awareness of the value of education among parents for both girls and boys, e.g. in Roma communities girls are less encouraged than boys to pursue education beyond the lower secondary level.

- Institutionalisation of gender equality/gender mainstreaming: creation of gender equality machinery and adoption of gender equality strategies, action plans, etc.
- Gender impact assessment: analyse the impact of your activities, actions, programmes and policies on boys and girls, as well as on men and women. To do this, you need to have gathered quantitative and qualitative sex-disaggregated data (**Section 3, Gender analysis and Gender impact assessment**).
- Gender responsive budgeting: analyse resource allocation to ensure that budgets at school or other levels contribute to gender equality (**Section 3, Gender budgeting**).
- Monitoring and evaluation: develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the level of gender mainstreaming and to produce tangible data to feed policy making. Indicators need to be developed to ensure measurable outcomes (**Section 3, Gender mainstreaming in monitoring and reporting**).

## DO NOT FORGET

Gender may be an exacerbating factor for the educational challenges faced by girls and boys from vulnerable socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds, such as Roma children or girls and boys with a migration or vulnerable socio-economic background.

## GOT INTERESTED?



- European Institute for Gender Equality – EIGE, Education website
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – UNESCO, Education and gender equality website

## Sources of gender-disaggregated data on education:

- She Figures: Publications of the European Commission monitoring new developments related to careers, decision-making and, most recently, how the gender dimension is considered in research and innovation content in the European Union
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD Data on gender equality in education