

## First Youth & experts meeting on gender equality

17-20th October 2022, Copenhagen, Denmark  
Folkevirke NGO



[www.genderjourney.eu](http://www.genderjourney.eu)



# I Youth and Experts Meeting on Gender Equality „Gender Journey and Young Woman“

## Final Report

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17-20th October 2022, Copenhagen, Denmark

Venue: Folkevirke office (Niels Hemmingsens Gade 10, 1153 København)

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## I Youth and Experts Meeting on Gender Equality

### „Gender Journey and Young Woman“

#### OFFICIAL OPENING

- **Basil Golikov – Opening Speech (Peace Child Estonia, Estonia)**
- **Head of the Folkvirke office – Opening Speech**

#### EXPERTS' PRESENTATIONS

- **Anna-Liza Starkova:** The Main Principles of Gender Theory and Norm Criticism
- **Susanne Kallanvaara (Burgårdens Gymnasium, Sweden) – Norm Criticism on Practice**
- **Laura Maria Rajala:** Toolkit

#### Working part I (Training: Equality in schools and educational institutions)

#### WORKSHOP I: Create 1-2 Country-based exercises (a game/an exercise on Gender Approach Implementation and Gender Equality principles

In this section of the conference, each team suggested two-three educational games/exercises based on the national context: challenges and opportunities, weaknesses and strengths, resources, and limitations, relying on the principles and values of gender approach and norm criticism.

#### Estonia

**National context, challenges, and aims.** Challenges: homophobia, racism, and sexism are still highly relevant issues to handle among Estonia's entire social structure and ethnic communities. That should be done through education and culture. The main goals to achieve mutual recognition between women and men as subjects with equal opportunities and empowered agency; combating solid stereotypes, including sexualization and objectification of women; understanding that women and men are human beings of a common nature in the first place while they are very different entities in terms of biological and psychological conditions. Based on that, during the workshop, participants elaborated on the following exercises (target group: pupils of elementary and high school, students, and trainers involved in informal education).

**Game I:** Students are divided into couples (girl and boy). Each team pulls out a paper that lists several personal qualities (strength/weakness/care/responsibility/articulateness/elegancy/responsivity, decisiveness, an ability to compromise). The qualities are considered to be as conventionally masculine or feminine. The goal is to go beyond the strict borders of the stable normalized definitions of those qualities. Each couple discusses what they think about a certain human quality. Then they come to a conclusion about what it means to be “strong” from each one’s perspective. It will reveal the differences (including those that are conditioned by one’s biological sex) in their attitudes to life. Secondly, it will reveal similarities that can become a common ground for better understanding of each other and mutual recognition, embracing the differences each other. For example, strength as a universal human quality can be understood differently by a girl and a guy. Still, at the same time, their perspectives can demonstrate an unconventional

understanding of a quality (the understanding that goes beyond the prevailing norm in a certain society).

**Game II:** Students are divided into couples. Each member of a game pulls out a paper by chance. There is a problem written on paper. The problem either is conventionally inherent in to a certain biological or it is a universal problem for both sexes (for example, „I am shy of my body“, „I am extremely jealous to my partner, “I think all girls never will be interested in me“, etc.). Then both participants must find a solution for each other from their perspectives and discuss the possible solutions. As a result, this game shows that they are not alone in their problems; that these issues are not necessarily inherent for a particular sex. Rather they are universal. As a result, youth can elaborate on personal bits of advice to their counterpart of the opposite sex and solidify a common ground in these terms.

### **Finland**

**National context, challenges, and aims.** Finland is one of the top countries that achieved a very efficient implementation of gender principles across many realms, especially in education. Finish participants and their students presented the following four games regarding norm criticism.

**Game I:** "Would you trust the person? ". This game is a norm criticism game that aims to overcome a normalizing order. Each photo presents professional "normality ": would you trust a professional with a non-conventional look: such as queer-styled dresses, tattoos on his face, etc.? **Game II:** "Monopoly game ": characters walk and collect skills; characters obtain multiple and very diverse identities – then we detect how identity influences one's choice of activity/profession/skills/job preferences. The result: enriching the character's personality. **Game III:** "Imagine the image of a non-conventional nanny. "This game focuses on participants' imagination skills to break prejudices through a free flow of imagination on how it could be otherwise. **Game IV:** "Create your dream team that covers the topic of *intersectionality*. "In other words, each team should consist of different individuals that share specific common values. Each participant should collect a team relying on diversity principles: in age, gender, skills, education, and experience (20-25 cards that represent a character each). The goal is to collect 5-people teams: diverse in terms of gender, age, culture, and national backgrounds, but at the same time skillful and professional, regardless stereotypes and prejudices.

### **Sweden**

**National context, challenges and aims.** Sweden is highly developed in implementing gender theory principles across multiple fields: policies of different levels, education system, science, etc. However, there are still some gendered-based problems that must be solved, especially in the field of domestic violence, racist's or gendered based violence in secondary schools and high schools. Thus, the Swedish participants (specialists in education, practitioners, and young students themselves) introduced the following education techniques that had already been tested.

**Game on Norm Criticism. “Find a norm”.** The exercise aims to find a normalized order of things and power structures depicted in a picture (photos, commercials, posters, etc.). At the same time, some images depict something outstanding in the normalized order. In other words, they break a power structure (for example, by the unconventional portrayal of a woman among men; or some exaggerations of gender principles implementation). In general, some pictures depict a normalized order (ways of portraying femininity, masculinity, family, relationships to values, etc.), some show moderate norm criticism, and some of the pictures present an excessive appropriation of gender values that is also not helpful. Thus, the secondary aim of the game is to find an adequate balance in norm criticism. During the game, the question is posed: *find a norm that this picture depicts*. Then students reflect on whether a picture confirms or breaks norms. An example of a picture is a commercial that depicts a healthy white, sportive man with the title “freedom” on the background and other small details that speak; images of the necked bodies of women in any visual art that can be perceived as objectification and sexualization of a woman in normalized visual art (imagine paintings of the Enlightenment); vulnerability vs. empowerment of women); Swedish Royal family picture (breaks stereotypes in depicting the place of woman and man within the existing social/power structure). Thus, there should be a balanced, harmonic way of implementing gender principles in everyday life, culture, and ethics of communication with others, etc., considering the multiplicity and uniqueness of individuals.

### **Presentation of the 1st working day results and summary of day - by all participants**

In this section, the moderator presented the conclusions that the working groups agreed upon

## **PRACTICES SHARING**

### **Denmark**

Folkevirke Crisis Centre. The hosting organization Folkevirke – Copenhagen’s Crisis Centre for Women shared their experience in helping women across different generations, cultures, and nationalities who suffered any violence or are experiencing the vulnerability of any kind. The main concern of the center is handling violence and post-traumatic syndrome. The most widespread problem of their clients is gendered-based violence: domestic violence, economic violence, discrimination at the workplace, and other psychological issues that women face. Thus, Danish female society Folkevirke as a crisis center has achieved to reduce some violence and helped numerous women with empowerment therapy and providing them with all the necessary conditions to build their independent life and acquire more stability in their everyday life. Help is needed for both Danish women as well as for immigrants in a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds. Moreover, violence towards men becomes an issue as well. However, there are several challenges that the organization still faces, such as limited funding and the lack of government support for women-rights organizations.

## Working part II (Toolkit + guidelines development for institutions)

### WORKSHOP II – FUTURE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES THAT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED FOR GENDER EDUCATION

In this section, participants discuss their ideas about best practices or new rules that should be suggested for schools, NGOs (psychological help organizations/crisis centers, LGBT organizations, etc.), as well as recommendations for the local, regional, and national governments. During the workshop, each team (country-based groups) suggested their techniques for education, principles that should be implemented in educational institutions, or policies that governments should introduce on each level or by educational institutions themselves. Moreover, the youth's perspectives on the possible ways of improvement of gender education and protection of vulnerable individuals were essentially considered. Besides, the young participants (ages 16-19) contributed significantly to the discussions by adding to the following points from their perspectives.

**Context and challenges.** Each country has many challenges and issues that have not been solved yet. Participants agreed that the following problems and challenges have a place. Homophobia, increasing racism, gendered based violence, violence in school, bullying, low-paid “female” professions (especially in Estonia), women need more channels for empowerment (course on entrepreneurship, especially from women with traditional patriarchal family background), spreading of sex education, spreading of hygiene care for girls in secondary and high schools, accessible and free tools of contraception, conditions and management culture at the workplace.

### RESULTS OF THE WORKING PART II

Thus, the solutions and suggestions are the following:

- Establishing centres/courses/autumn, spring, summer, and winter schools that focus on gender education, gender theory, civil society, and entrepreneurship.
- Implementation of a mandatory curriculum - courses in secondary and high schools: gender theory, sex education, basic ethics, entrepreneurship, psychology, and social sciences.
- A course “Gender theory and Norm Criticism” -mandatory in schools/ in a format of informal education.
- A course “Gender Equality as a Tool for Democracy.”
- Informal additional education: courses for young families that are oriented on young parents.
- Offices of mental/psychological support in schools, improvement of existing services.
- Accessible and free means for female hygiene and contraceptives, free and accessible consultation in schools, high schools.
- Implementation of new techniques, toolkits, including those that the present Report proposes, and an improvement of educational methods.