



Deliverable 2.1 (D5) – Report with each country analysis and EU assessment

Work package 2: Mapping the EU / Needs Assessment

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Aims of the deliverable

Deliverable 2.1 (D5) gathers the three national country analyses: Portugal, Spain, and Croatia, as well as the EU overview. Each country analysis will be available in their national languages on KINDER website.



Educational policies, pedagogical practices of reference: a look at the promotion of Gender Equality in Pre-school and Basic Education (1st and 2nd cycles): Portuguese Case.

Authors: Sofia Gonçalves and Tatiana Moura

1. Introduction

As stated in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, one of the primary objectives of the Portuguese State is the promotion of equality between women and men, namely:

"Article 9 Subparagraph (h) The following are fundamental tasks of the State: To promote equality between men and women".

This reason is not far from the importance of social equality and freedom being defined as structural bases of democracy.

Equality between women and men is also referred to as gender equality.

Gender equality, or equality between women and men, presupposes an equal acceptance and appreciation of the differences between women and men and the various roles they play in society. A focus on how gender equality is a situation of equal rights between women and men. Based on the literature consulted, both men and boys should be involved in the quest for equality from an early age. Based on the mission of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG), "the idea prevails that all human beings, regardless of gender, are free to increase and progress in their skills, whether personal or professional, as well as to be able to make their choices without constraints so often mandated by stereotypes and prejudices, rigid conceptions of the social roles granted to men and women." (CIG)

Education and communication are two fundamental areas that present themselves as an essential vehicle to reinforce these conceptions, a dimension of coadjuvant questioning and transformation.

As we know, gender inequality has its basis in the social undervaluing of women and girls, except for the specific functions of reproduction. This factor has been the basis in the historical inequality between men and women and, despite the progress achieved in many countries of the world, it persists and can be reproduced through the new technological means of communication.

Based on the framework that the IGC conceives for equality between women and men, "equality between women and men is seen around the world as a human rights issue and a condition of social justice, fundamental for societies to become more modern and more equitable. The guardianship and the state bodies have the responsibility to actively intensify



the initiatives and actions in favour of equality between women and men. This dimension must therefore be taken into account in all aspects of political and public decision-making. One of the main political strategies for the promotion of equality between women and men is its integrated and transversal approach in all areas and sectors of the Government and the State. The CIG is responsible for coordinating gender equality and non-discrimination policies on the grounds of sex. To this end, the activity it develops with all the Ministries and with the Local Authorities is essential. The mission of the CIG results from these principles and from the commitments undertaken by Portugal at international level, as a member of the United Nations Organisation, the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP).

The main reference documents for the work of the CIG are the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (of a normative nature), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (of a programmatic nature) and the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020). "(CIG)

In recent years we have followed several mottos that accompany political decisions, with the purpose of drawing the attention of society, as a whole, to inequalities and discriminations that arise from unequal power relations between people and groups. It has been crucial to combat such situations of injustice in order to ensure respect and compliance with human rights.

The UN approved in 2015 the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which call on countries to join forces to solve global problems in the medium term. They are critical to meet by 2030. One of the SDGs, number 5, is gender equality. It should be noted that despite appearing independently, it is known that it is complementary to the others, in a perspective of gender mainstreaming. This means that policies aimed at promoting equality between women and men in different spheres of society should, at all stages, from preparation to implementation, monitoring and evaluation, take into account the mostly silent and invisible structural factors that favour the conditions for perpetuating inequalities.

The Council of Europe in 2018 adopted the new Strategy for Gender Equality (2018-2023), intensifying that strengthening institutional mechanisms in each country will be critical to future progress on gender equality. More recently, the European Union Strategy for Gender Equality (2020-2025) highlights the challenges across countries and within individual nation states, stating that it is necessary to work together to build a "Europe where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are equal - where they are free to follow their chosen path in life and reach their full potential, where they have equal opportunities to thrive, and where they can participate equally and lead European society" (p. 19).



According to 2019 data from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Portugal's rate in achieving equality between women and men was only 59.9% (based on 2017 data), therefore below the European average, which stood at 67.4%. The approval by the Portuguese Council of Ministers (Resolution No. 61/2018), of the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination (ENIND) (2018-2030) - Portugal + Equal, following five previous National Plans for Equality, highlights the political and ethical commitment of our country to progress from de jure equality to de facto equality. It is true that there is not a single country in the world where the rate of achievement of equality between women and men is 100%, but it is known that factors such as the level of education of the population, the level of socio-economic development, the quality of democracy and the promotion of citizen participation are positively related to the speed with which objectives are achieved. We should therefore continue to cooperate so that the objectives do not remain a distant goal for many women and men in our country. Local authorities are undoubtedly privileged agents of this desired change, due to their territorial and emotional proximity to the people.

After this brief preamble we will present, in a first moment, a mapping of international and national references on gender equality between men and women, as well as educational references where the promotion of gender equality is presented as a structuring and integrating domain of action. In a second moment, we reflect on the policies issued by the State to implement the decentralization and municipalization of education, in the context of educational policies. In a third moment, we address the reference documents issued by the Ministry of Education, starting with Education for Citizenship, where we highlight the creation of a working group composed of experts in the area of Citizenship and Education to outline a National Strategy for Education for Citizenship, to be implemented by schools and guidelines for the promotion of gender equality from 3 to 12 years. Then, and to give tone to the profile of students for the twenty-first century and essential skills and curriculum flexibility, we deepen the educational policies around the processes of autonomy and curriculum development. Finally, we will share examples of reference practices identified in Portugal.

2. General International and National Benchmarks - Gender Equality

2.1 Main global policy frameworks for gender equality (equality between women and men)

1975 - The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination is approved by the UN General Assembly which reaffirms and reinforces the principle of equality between women and men. In 1980, Portugal ratifies this Convention which is also known by its English acronym as the CEDAW Convention.



With a normative nature, it is one of the major human rights treaties and often dubbed the Magna Carta of Women's Rights or the Charter of Women's Human Rights.

1979 - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, hereinafter called the Women's Convention, in force since 1981, is the first international treaty that broadly covers women's human rights. It proposes two fronts: to promote women's rights in the search for gender equality and to repress any discrimination against women in the States.

1993 - The UN International Conference on Human Rights is held in Vienna, where it is recognized that "The human rights of women and the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights" (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993, par. 18).

This new paradigm influences the evolution of equality between women and men from an abstract, merely formal and legal issue to a concrete and material result to be achieved, which integrates a transformative dimension of human societies.

1995 - The UN International Conference on Women, Development and Peace is held in Beijing, where the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted with the objective of achieving women's rights throughout the world.

With a programmatic nature, it presents 12 areas of action (Women and poverty, Education and training of women, Women and health, Violence against women, Women and armed conflicts, Women and the economy, Women in power and decision-making, Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, Women and the media, Women and the environment, Girls) and calls on States to integrate gender equality in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies and actions, in what was called gender mainstreaming strategy.

2015 - The UN approves the 2030 Agenda and enunciates the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calling on States and institutional and private actors to fulfil the promise of leaving no one behind. The gender dimension is considered cross-cutting the entire Agenda and constitutes the 5th SDG "to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls" (UN, 2015). (Source: IGC)

International General Reference

UN - United Nations Organization

[Charter of the United Nations](#)

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)



EU - European Union

[Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#)
[Lisbon Resolution](#)

International Reference Points on Equality between Women and Men

UN - United Nations

[2019 Report on the Strategy for Gender Equality 2018-2021 \(UNDP\)](#)
[Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women \(CEDAW\)](#)
[Optional Protocol \[IGC PUBLICATION\]](#)

EU - European Union

[Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025 - European Commission](#)
[Framework Strategy for Equality](#)
[Roadmap for equality between men and women - 2006-2010](#)

CPLP - Community of Portuguese Language Countries

[Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in CPLP](#)
[Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of Ministers responsible for Gender Equality of the CPLP](#)

National - reports and instruments on GI

[Guidance for the elaboration of Equality Plans](#)
[Report on wage differentiation by sector of activity \(2014\)](#)
[Guidance for the implementation of Equality Plans in companies \[CIG publication\].](#)
[Guide for a Language to Promote Equality between Women and Men in Public Administration \[CIG Publication\].](#)

National specifics of other areas of importance for Gender Equality

[Strategic objectives and recommendations for an action plan on education and training for citizenship \(2008\)](#)
[National Strategy on Education for Citizenship](#)

(Source: IGC - last updated 16 March 2021)

2.2 Main international and national benchmarks for gender equality – EDUCATION

The following list is by no means exhaustive of the curricular documents **that influence and guide** education/training in the Portuguese education system; rather, it aims to give a general idea of those that a professional/researcher/student of education/pedagogy should



take into consideration when starting the study of a domain present in the curriculum references.

Their selection was based on the meeting of three fundamental axes: **timeliness** (the reference to older documents is justified by their relevance); **provenance** (in terms of the bodies and agents that produce them); **diversity of theoretical orientations** (and temporal location of these orientations).

DOCUMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL SCOPE

- **Guiding documents that affirm the universal right to education**

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. European Convention on Human Rights, 1950.
- Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959. Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.
- Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights, 2010.

Access: <http://www.dgidc.minedu.pt/educacaocidadania/index.php?s=directorio&pid=256>

- **Guiding documents: International bodies**

- [European Parliament \(2013\). Rethinking Education \(Report\)](#)

Access: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2013-0314+0+DOC+XML+V0/EN>

- [European Union \(2009\). Key Competences for Lifelong Learning: European Reference Framework. Belgium.](#)

Access:

http://www.dges.mctes.pt/NR/ronlyres/90DBE6475CB6484688F1<01180D9E425/4890/TheEQFforlifelonglearning_brochure_EN.pdf

- [European Union \(2014\). The NMC Horizon Report Europe: 2014 Schools Edition.](#)

Access: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/default/files/2014-nmc-horizon-report-eu-en_online.pdf

- [Country Report Portugal 2015 Including an In-Depth Review on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances](#)

Access: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/cr2015_portugal_en.pdf

- [UNESCO. \(2010\). Culture of peace: from reflection to action - Review of the international decade for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence for the benefit of the world's children. Brasília.](#)

Access: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001899/189919por.pdf>



- UNESCO. (1990). World Declaration on Education for All. Meeting Basic Learning Needs.

Accessed at: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/JOMTIE_E.PDF

Access: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0008/000862/086291por.pdf>

- UNESCO. (2012). Youth Version of the 2012 Global Monitoring Report: Youth and skills: Putting education to Work.

Access to the summary: <http://www.cnedu.pt/content/noticias/antigo/2012/RelatrioMundial-summary.pdf>

Access: <http://www.cnedu.pt/content/noticias/antigo/2012/2012-ppt-apresentao.pdf>

- UNESCO. (2013/4). Teaching and learning: Achieving quality for all.

Accessed at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225654por.pdf>

- UNESCO. (2015). <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2015/>

- OECD. Education at a Glance 2014. OECD Indicators. OECD Publishing.

Access: <http://www.cnedu.pt/content/noticias/internacional/Education-at-a-Glance-2014.pdf>

- OECD. TALIS 2013 Results. An international perspective on teaching and learning. OECD Publishing.

Access: http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/education/talis-2013-results_9789264196261-en#page1

- O'Loughlin, E. & Wegimont, L. (2002). Global Education in Europe to 2015 Strategy, policies, and perspectives. Outcomes and Papers of the Europe-wide Global Education Congress Maastricht, The Netherlands

Access: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/nscentre/Resources/Publications/GE_Maastricht_Nov2002.pdf

- OECD (2015). Education Policy Outlook 2015 Making Reforms Happen. OECD Publishing.

Access: http://www.oecd.org/edu/EPO%202015_Highlights.pdf

DOCUMENTS OF NATIONAL SCOPE

- **Guidelines and structuring orientations**

Assembly of the Republic. **Constitution of the Portuguese Republic** (2005 Revision) - Articles 43; 73 and 74. Access: <http://www.parlamento.pt/Legislacao/Documents/constpt2005.pdf>

- **Normative-legal**



- **Basic Law of the Educational System**

- Law 5/73 of 25 June 1973

Access: <http://dre.pt/pdf1sdip/1973/07/17300/13151321pdf>

- Law 49/2005, of 30 August 2005

Acesso: <http://dre.pt/pdf1s/2005/08/166A00/51225138.pdf>

- **Education policy - Framework**

Decree-Law No. 7/2001 of 18 January (Curricular reorganization of basic education) (**Repealed**). http://legislacao.minedu.pt/np4/np3content/?newsId=4379&fileName=decreto_lei_7_2001.pdf

Revision of the curriculum structure, released by the Ministry of Education and Science on 12/12/2011: http://www.spn.pt/Download/SPN/SM_Doc/Mid_115/Doc_3029/Anexos/revisao_estrutura_curricular_propostamec1.pdf

Order No. 17169/2011, of 12 December. Revokes the document *Currículo Nacional do Ensino Básico - Competências Essenciais* (2001). http://www.gave.minedu.pt/np3content/?newsId=31&fileName=Despacho_n17_1692011_CNEB.pdf

- **Curricular and Disciplinary Guidelines and Orientations Early Childhood Education**

- Curricular Guidelines for Pre-School Education. <http://www.dge.mec.pt/ocepe/>

- The Essential Learning (EA) concerning Basic Education. [Order no. 6944-A/2018, of 19 July](#)

- National Curriculum. [Decree-Law no. 55/2018, of 6 July](#)
[Circular Letter: Transition between the regimes provided for in Decree-Law no. 139/2012, of 5 July, Order no. 5908/2017, of 5 July and Decree-Law no. 55/2018, of 6 July](#)

- **Guidelines for Citizenship Education - Gender Equality**

- Afonso, M. R. (2007). **Educação para a Cidadania: Guião de Educação para a cidadania em contexto escolar. Boas Práticas**. Lisbon: Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development. Access: <http://www.rcc.gov.pt/SiteCollectionDocuments/EducCidadania-DGIDC07.pdf>
- Brederode Santos, M.E. at al. (2011). **Educação para a cidadania. Curricular Proposal for Basic and Secondary Education** Access:



<http://www.dgdc.minedu.pt/educacaocidadania/index.php?s=directorio&pid=71>

- **Education for Citizenship: guidelines:** Access: <http://www.dgdc.minedu.pt/educacaocidadania/>
- **National Strategy for Education for Citizenship:** - Access:http://dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Projetos_Curriculares/Aprendizagens_Essenciais/estrategia_cidadania_original.pdf
- **Profile of School Leavers.** - Access:http://dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Curriculo/Projeto_Autonomia_e_Flexibilidade/perfil_dos_alunos.pdf
- **Development Education Benchmark** - Access:http://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/ECidadania/educacao_desenvolvimento/Documentos/referencial_de_educacao_para_o_desenvolvimento.pdf
- **Opinions and the National Education Council**
- **Opinions and the National Education Council**
 - **State of Education 2012: Decentralization Autonomy.** Access: <http://www.cnedu.pt/pt/publicacoes/estudos-e-relatorios/estado-da-educacao>
 - **Recommendation 1/2012: Education for citizenship.** Access: <http://dre.pt/pdf2sdip/2012/01/017000000/0282102824.pdf>
 - Access:http://www.cnedu.pt/content/edicoes/pareceres_e_recomendacoes/345-13_Pareceres_2012.pdf
 - *Opinion on Primary and Secondary School Curriculum.* Access:https://www.cnedu.pt/content/deliberacoes/pareceres/Parecer_Curriculo_ensinos_basico_secundario.pdf

3. Decentralization and Municipalization of Education as a Path of Cooperation for the Promotion of Gender Equality

The constitution of 1976 enshrines the universality of education and, with it there is the need to understand the role of the State and Municipal Intervention in issues of educational scope, especially in decision-making capacity on school management. Formosinho and Machado (2013) argue that equal rights of access to education, the increase in number of students, schools and teachers have driven a profound change in the educational service provided, increasing, year after year, the responsibilities of the state. The massification of education brought to public school the concern to respond to the expansion and diversification of educational supply which translated into problems of inefficiency of the state in the



management of the public education system (Afonso, 2005), since it takes control over the orientation of educational policies, the administration of the curriculum, the management of schools and resources and the pedagogical organization.

Aspects of universalization and democratization of education already bring serious problems to the system, especially the decrease in the quality of the educational offer, due to the rapid expansion of infrastructures and teaching staff, raising, again, questions about equality in access to education. These problems can put at risk the public education system, discrediting it (Afonso, 2005). The State is thus held responsible for the educational crisis and there was interest in a transfer of management responsibilities to schools, increasing their autonomy, including opening the participation of other educational agents, such as parents, municipalities and local entities.

In fact, the education administration remains strongly centralized and regulatory in the relationship with schools, with concerns such as the timely placement of teachers at the beginning of each academic year in schools (Formosinho & Machado, 2000). The municipalities thus begin to assume a role of social partner, participating in the social issues of education alongside other social institutions such as parents' associations or business associations of the regions, leaving implicit the maintenance of a centralized model.

The principles of school management, since the 25th of April, favors change and supports measures of transfer of decision-making powers to the local level and that came to fruition at the turn of the century. In fact, over 40 years, we witnessed the attempt to transition from a centralizing paradigm of the "Regulatory State" to decentralization processes - "State-evaluator", particularly through the implementation of legislative measures under the municipalization of education process (Barroso, 2013). From here on, in a policy of administrative deconcentration, it will be up to the municipalities to mobilize central services to localities, to meet the needs of the population. It defends the effective decentralization, respecting the territorial insertion of the school project and the existence of a local dimension of education policy, but safeguarding the competencies of the municipalities (Decree-Regulation No. 12/2000, August 29). The municipalities were included in the school dynamics in order to "provide a correct adaptation to the realities, a high sense of participation of the populations, an adequate insertion in the community environment and efficient decision levels" (Article 3, g). They also adopted "participatory structures and processes in the definition of educational policy, in the administration and management of the educational system and in the daily pedagogical experience" (Article 3, l) of Law No. 46/86, of 14 October).

In fact, the State is too small for the size of the educational problem in Portugal and this inadequacy has frequently generated criticism of the functioning of the public sector. It is fundamentally for this reason that there is a need to reconfigure the role of the State with regard to public management in the area of education. The recommendations of the National



Commission for Education point out to encourage the contracting of autonomy between schools and the supervising authority, in order to increase responsibility for processes and educational results, and to strengthen the concentration of pedagogical management in schools. It is increasingly important that the dynamics and involvement of the whole educational community is at the forefront of the activities that are promoted in the context of gender equality. A work in cooperation and coordination between school groups, families, municipalities, local associations and other educational agents. It is urgent to break barriers and follow paths together in a social intervention that belongs to and for all.

The guardianship is currently betting on the revaluation of the local, strengthening the autonomy of schools through processes of assigning more powers, in which municipalities and municipalities will ensure the local coordination of education around a common educational project for the school and the territory. In fact, for this author, local actors are the ones who know the terrain and the educational needs and may, due to this knowledge, identify and solve the most pressing problems, define curricula and make the community responsible for the implementation of training programs and/or intervention projects. However, Barroso (2013) believes that although the decentralization processes require a reconfiguration of the role of the state, phasing out the provision of public education service, it must maintain the ability to ensure the "national cohesion in the equity of educational supply" (p.17), maintaining a policy of disengagement while strengthening the relationship between the guardianship and communities. Pinhal (2014) understands territorialization as the time and space of meeting of a community composed of students, teachers, families, social, economic and cultural interests, mobilized and committed to the construction of an educational project.

4. Main References Issued by The Ministry of Education of Portugal: An Analysis of The Educational Guidelines in The Promotion of Gender Equality

The Council of Europe directs for one of its guidelines the need to "create at school learning contexts centred on the needs and interests of girls and boys in relation to the problems affecting our societies; to provide the students with the means to develop and exercise democratic citizenship" (Council of Europe. Committee of Ministers, 2007), recognising boys and girls as agents of social change. An example of good practice of reference at national level are the Education Guides built by the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG), which offer us a good definition of what is meant by a democratic school. Contemporary society implies "the experience of difference and reciprocity, the awareness of contextualized rights and duties, the acquisition of relational qualities and positive communication and the



rejection of inequalities, prejudices and racism" (Vieira et al., 2015, p.54). Citizenship implies the acceptance of equality of rights and duties for all; the acceptance of diversity respecting cultures, beliefs, religions and the acceptance of difference, rejecting any type of discrimination, racism, sexism, etc.

The Portuguese Education System has been attentive to these changes, responding with an educational reform that has been taking shape in several documents published in recent years - namely the *Profile of students at the end of compulsory education*³ (ME-DGE, 2017), the *Essential Learning*⁴ (ME-DGE, 2018) and the *National Strategy for Citizenship Education*⁵ (ME-DGE, 2017) -, and that was experienced pedagogically through the Autonomy and Curricular Flexibility project in 2017, and extended to all schools by Decree-Law 55/2018, of July 6.

Education for Citizenship (EC) has been gaining importance, in Portugal and in other countries, given the growing role of civil society in identifying and solving issues that affect individuals. These issues may be related to political, social, economic or environmental factors and, in order to be best addressed, they imply the development of skills and attitudes (Ferreira, 2001). Although the path of CE has undergone advances and retreats in terms of its insertion in the school curriculum (Ribeiro *et al.* , 2014), the main objective of CE is conscious participation is the participation of children and young people, as future citizens, in the country's public life, through civil society institutions or defending the principles and values of democracy (Araújo, 2008). The author just quoted argues that for this, it is "necessary a process of learning, acquisition and development of civic skills" and it is this process that she calls citizenship education (Araújo, 2008, p.61).

Currently, it is considered that the school is the privileged context for the development of these competencies, as stated by Bettencourt, Campo and Fragateiro (1999), since it is the appropriate space for the implementation of the principle of equality and for the promotion of participation in public and political life.

It is defended in Portugal the need to develop citizenship training in order to prevent phenomena that may have negative impacts on society, harming the progress of the country. Citizenship, in a broad and general view, contains a set of rights and duties that should be transmitted in the training of children and young people so that they become adults aware of a civic conduct that favours equality and respect in interpersonal relationships, the integration of the difference, respect for human rights.

Thus, a working group consisting of experts in the area of Citizenship and Education was created to outline a National Strategy for Citizenship Education, to be implemented by schools. From this working group on Education for Citizenship

Citizenship (GTEC) is the "Project of Autonomy and Curricular Flexibility" (PAFC), of pedagogical experience, to be developed initially in the school year 2017/2018,



comprehensive to all public and private schools that wanted to join. The proposal of this group is based on three principles: non-abstract conception of citizenship, identification of essential areas throughout schooling and identification of essential skills of citizenship training (skills for a culture of democracy) (Government of Portugal, 2017). The implementation of the curricular component of Citizenship and Development should result from sustained practices and not only from occasional interventions; it should be integrated into the curriculum and daily practices of school life; it should promote inclusion and provide the development of personal and social skills and well-being and individual and collective health; develop partnerships with the community and families; take into account the specificities and priorities of the educational community and rely on monitoring and evaluation to ensure effectiveness and participation of those involved Government of Portugal (2017).

In 2016, with the approval by the Government of the National Strategy for Education and Citizenship, the subject of Citizenship and Development, which includes education for gender equality, became part of the national curriculum and is developed in schools according to the level of education: it will have a transdisciplinary nature in the 1st cycle of basic education, becoming an autonomous subject in the 2nd and 3rd cycles of basic education. However, the areas to be worked on and the competences to be developed throughout the year are left to the discretion of the Teaching Council in the case of Pre-school Education and 1st cycle of basic education and to the Class Council in the case of 2nd and 3rd cycles of basic education. With this decision the inclusion of themes related to gender equality in the school programme seems not to be, effectively and once again, ensured.

4.1 Organization of the Curricular Guidelines for Pre-School Education

Pre-school education, as established in the Framework Law (Law No. 5/97 of 10 February), is intended for children between 3 years and entry into compulsory schooling, being considered as "the first stage of basic education in the process of lifelong education". The Curricular Guidelines for Pre-School Education are based on the global pedagogical objectives defined by that law and are intended to support the construction and management of the curriculum in kindergarten, the responsibility of each educator, in collaboration with the educational team of the educational establishment/school grouping. (DGE).

Although the legislation of the educational system (Framework Law on the Educational System, Framework Law on Pre-School Education) only includes pre-school education from 3 years of age onwards, and does not cover education in kindergarten, it becomes essential, according to the Recommendation of the National Council for Education, to integrate this right of the child in the learning contexts. "Thus, it is important that there is unity in all pedagogy for childhood and that the professional work with children before the entry into





compulsory schooling has common foundations and is guided by the same principles". (OCEPE, 2016).

The area of Personal and Social Development, one of the content areas in the Curriculum Guidelines for Pre-School Education (2016), as shown in figure 1, is based, like the others, on the "recognition of the child as a subject and agent of the educational process, whose unique identity is built in social interaction, influencing and being influenced by the environment around him/her."

It is through social and educational contexts and interactions, interpersonal relationships with the environment that children become aware of their identity and respect for others, in a constant development and promotion of democracy, autonomy as a person, rights and duties towards themselves and others and in the appreciation of communication and natural and social heritage.



Fundamentos e Princípios Educativos

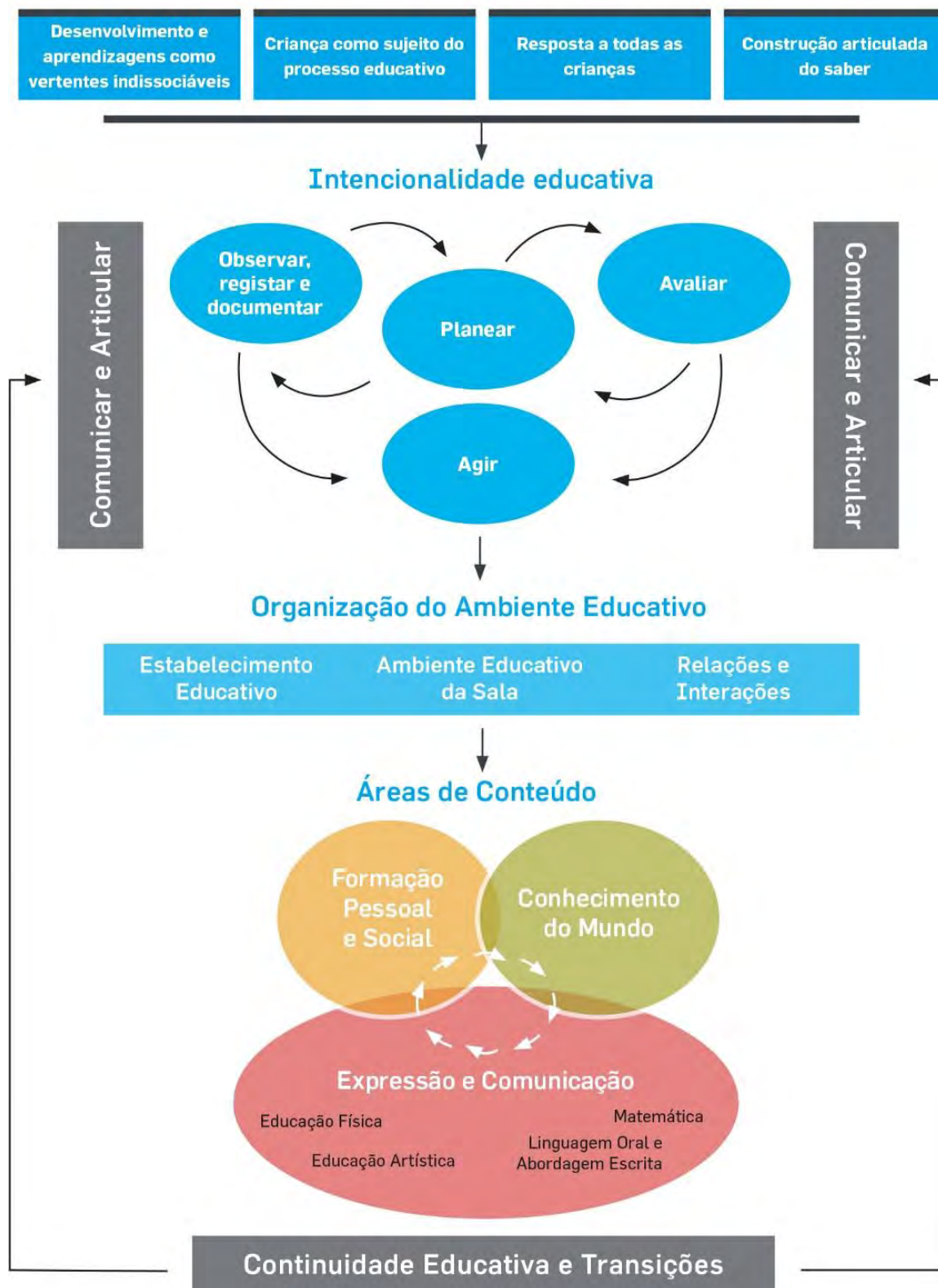


Figure 1. Educational Foundations and Principles (OCEPE, 2016)

4.2 The space of the Gender Equality domain in Curricular Flexibility

The Autonomy and Curricular Flexibility Plan is intended for the beginning years of the cycle (1st, 5th, 7th and 10th grades of schooling) and the first year of training of courses organized in training courses (Despacho n. º 5908/2017, de 5 de julho). This project aims to promote education for citizenship and development during compulsory schooling and offer all students the component of the curriculum Citizenship and Development. In the first cycle, this subject is transdisciplinary; in the 2nd and 3rd cycles will function as an autonomous semester or annual subject, depending on the choice of the educational establishment and in secondary education is worked in collaboration with all subjects.

With the entry into force of the Decree-Law no. 55/2018, of 6 July, the subject of Citizenship and Development becomes transversal to all schools at national level, although some authors state that the Ministry of Education documents do not reflect a standardisation of conceptions or present "clarifying lines of how teachers can promote citizenship education in their pedagogical practice" (Ferreira, 2001).

Education for Gender Equality aims to encourage students to learn about the concept of gender equality. With that, it also seeks to promote women and girls' rights and gender equality in several levels - political, economic, social and cultural -, contributing to the elimination of stereotypes. (Source: DGE)

Today's world and society constantly pose new challenges for teachers and the education system. Society is constantly changing and the education system must keep up with it. However, society does not change overnight, so the education system should not change suddenly either, and it is crucial to involve the various actors of education in the change.

For several years we have seen the adoption of several important educational policies, many of them imported, which were remarkable and had good results in the countries of origin. However, the adoption of these policies did not take into account the characteristics of society or the education system, which certainly are different from country to country, nor its applicability or receptivity by educational agents and parents. These changes in the education system, as they are of crucial importance, should be studied, considered and discussed with educational agents, precisely because of the impact they may have on teacher performance and students' academic performance.

International curriculum policies have been generating various transformations guided by norms of "curriculum binomial" (Roldão & Almeida, 2018) and intend to harmonize a common national order with the curricular autonomy of schools. For Roldão (2018) the flexibility of the



curriculum is the organization of learning in an open way, considering the context, opposing the standardization of a single model. Flexibility, however, will only be possible "within a very clear framework, defined according to the personal and socially necessary learning". The same author believes that managing the curriculum involves establishing priorities, sequences, articulations of the contents to be addressed.

The analysis of the current version of the Basic Law on the Education System (LBSE) emphasizes relevant concepts, such as: development and full use of the students' capabilities; need for a constant updating of knowledge; promotion of school and educational success for all; innovation. The document states that the "curricular organization of school education will take into account the promotion of a balanced harmony (...) between the levels of physical and motor, cognitive, affective, aesthetic, social and moral development of the students" (Article 50, paragraph 1).

In response to the difficulties identified in the educational system and the curricular organization, the first curricular reform is carried out, with the Decree-Law No. 286/89 of 29 of August. This reform aimed to harmonise the basic education curriculum with the LBSE (Costa, Dias & Ventura, 2005). However, and despite the debate on this issue, there were no significant changes with the models of curriculum construction based on technical-scientific rationality and normative legitimacy, nor was abandoned the "ready-to-wear one-size-fits-all" curriculum (Formosinho, 1992, p.13).

According to Pacheco (2000), this administrative reform changed only the programmes and the evaluation. The process of curriculum development is thus postponed by technical issues imposed by the centralization of the curriculum decision of the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, this reform aroused interest and ended up introducing new concepts such as educational centre and territories, teacher-tutor.

From 1996 there is a new time of innovation (Pacheco, 2007), in which curricular changes are introduced, particularly at the level of flexible curriculum management. These changes were discussed and tested between 1997 and 2001 and led to the curricular reorganization of basic and secondary education (Decree-Law No. 6/2001 of January 18, and Decree-Law No. 7/2001 of January 18). This curricular reorganization had as main objective "overcome a traditional view of the curriculum as a set of standards to be met in a supposedly uniform way in all classrooms" (Decree-Law No. 6/2001, Preamble), which implied "design and develop curricular projects of school and class" adapting the "national curriculum to the context of each school" (Article 2, points 3 and 4). The objective of ensuring a basic education for all is understood as the beginning of lifelong education/training, which implies a redoubled attention to situations of exclusion, but also to learning and the ways in which it should be processed. To carry out these changes, the main measures are the reorganisation of the basic education curriculum, reinforcing the articulation between its three cycles, in the curricular



plan, which ends up ensuring a higher quality of learning (Decree-Law no. 6/2001, Preamble). Thus, it was proposed to schools to build projects of flexible management of the curriculum in order to find the right answers for the students and for the daily pedagogical practice, which led to the assumption, by schools, of a greater decision-making capacity regarding the management of several components of the curriculum, but also to a greater accountability for the implementation of their educational offers.

The legal diploma also assumes a new approach in the concept of national curriculum, understanding it as a set of learning and skills that students should develop throughout basic education, taking as reference the curricular designs attached to the Decree-Law (Article 2, point 1). This new approach assumes an articulation between the national curriculum matrix and the school curriculum projects, which imposes to the school a central role in the development of the curriculum, since it ceases to be a set of subjects, to take a more flexible and emancipatory position, coming to be conceived as the set of knowledge acquired by students, its organization, the place and the role they play in the school path. The implementation of this curriculum offers the possibility of choosing different paths to educational success, and from there comes the pedagogical differentiation and diversification of strategies. Abrantes (2001) understands that this management is responsible for "searching for the appropriate ways to each concrete situation so that it is possible to promote certain learning in a really significant way" (p.43), giving the students the possibility to have a less segmented knowledge so that it can be understood and related.

This diversified knowledge contributes to reflection and subsequent intentional action, thus this educational context can be characterized as education for and in action and for knowledge in use. Considering the words of Cachapuz, Paixão and Sá-Chaves (2004), this knowledge is not only "disciplinary knowledge" or "professional qualifications (...) that the scientific process constantly outdates" (p.18), but rather "foundational competencies" that all citizens are expected to acquire throughout their lives, in order to "act in a reflected, conscious, informed and regulated by values, which support the dignity of the human being, present in its individual, personal, social, cultural and civilizational diversity" (p.26). Now, talking about competencies always implies considering the internal structure of the individual (their knowledge, beliefs, cognitive abilities, values and attitudes, emotions and motivations) and the educational and social contexts with which this individual interacts. Therefore, competencies involve multidisciplinary knowledge that depend on basic foundational knowledge. The same authors also refer that the concept "learning to be" depends on "learning to know", "learning to do" and "learning to live together" (p.17). Thus, it is important to design and implement educational processes that promote the collective construction of respect for the choices of boys and girls, of diversity and of cooperation, rethinking the pedagogical activity and imposing on it activities that lead to the development of



competences such as learning to think, to research, to communicate, to reason and to intervene with sensitivity.

Roldão (1999) and Sá Chaves (2007) raise the issue of curriculum flexibility in a macro-structural dimension at the national level, but also at the level of management and development, that is, the macro-structural dimension as a practice of educational and reflective relationship to be able to integrate situational information in the action itself, but also so that the teacher can adapt his action to the formative circumstances. Given that the school population is increasingly heterogeneous, curriculum development should be open, dynamic and modifiable so that improvements can be made over time (Sá-Chaves, 2002).

The curricular flexibility and the teaching-learning process also brings with it a new look and new roles for teachers, who are no longer seen as someone who just executes the decisions made by the central power, to begin to assume themselves as a professional co-builder, manager and conscious and reflective decision maker on curriculum proposals (Sá-Chaves 2002). The heterogeneous and universal school requires that teachers have the ability to be flexible through differentiation processes (Cachapuz *et al.* , 2004) following a paradigm of success and change, without depersonalizing, since diversity without differentiation can lead to inequality.

After the period of flexible curriculum management other initiatives were developed seeking to respond to school and educational results that were not yet satisfactory for the different actors of the education system (e.g. launch of the mathematics plan). Between 2006 and 2012 several educational policy measures were developed, namely the Mathematics action plan and a new cycle of the TEIP program, educational territories of priority intervention, where schools are invited to submit plans for promoting success contextualized locally. Also included in measures that consider the school as a decision center for the promotion of success appear the first autonomy contracts in 2007 where it is returned to each community to find the most appropriate solutions, according to the context and pedagogical identity of each school (Ferreira, 2008).

In 2012 the Decree-Law No. 139/2012 of July 5, 2012 is approved in the Official Gazette, establishing the guiding principles of the organization and management of curricula, the assessment of knowledge and skills to be acquired and developed by students in primary and secondary education. At the same time were being approved curriculum goals. Now, the revision of the curriculum structure that was intended to achieve through changes to curriculum matrices was based primarily on the establishment of concepts based on greater flexibility in the organization of teaching activities. The measures adopted are based on the principle of increased autonomy of schools in curriculum management, as well as greater freedom of choice of training offers. To emphasize and value not only the pedagogical autonomy, but also the professional development and the opportunity of choice and



implementation of methods based on their individual and collaborative experiences. From another perspective, it is intended that citizenship education, as a cross-curricular area, assumes a truly transversal role allowing schools autonomy in its implementation and enhancement in the various areas of the curriculum.

In 2016 a new phased process begins where the degree of autonomy of schools is extended. A pilot project of pedagogical innovation is launched whose main objective focuses on improving dropout and retention rates (Costa & Almeida, 2019). Starting in 2016/2017, the Pilot Project for Pedagogical Innovation (PPIP) was based on three main axes: (a) the existence of high rates of school retention and dropout, (b) the fact that retention does not determine higher quality learning and (c) the costs that retention entails for the Portuguese State. Autonomy does not arise, only by decree, however, it is through legislative determinations that can favor or compromise it (Barroso, 2004). It is in this framework that the PPIP composes a boost to the development of school autonomy, encouraging and fostering decision-making, according to the contexts, through the educational agents who, in turn, introduce changes in different plans (Costa & Almeida, 2019).

In 2017, the Autonomy and Curriculum Flexibility project is launched, which recovers and emphasizes the dimensions of curriculum development underway at the international level since the 1990s. Despite having the designation "Project", it is undoubtedly a process of continuous transformation of the organizational and pedagogical axes of the work of the school and teachers whose main objective is to improve the learning of all students (Roldão, 2018). In its construction, they compose:

- The agreement of a *Profile of Pupils Leaving Compulsory School* approved by Order No. 6478/2017, of 26 July, which expresses the vision, the values and the areas of competence and knowledge to be developed in the citizen on completing this pathway;
- The organization of a referential document of the curriculum of primary and secondary education, which establishes a vision in the essential, based on the proposals of the Teachers' Associations and on scientific advice in the plan of the curriculum - the *Essential Learning*;
- Decree-Law that defines the principles of organization of the curriculum of basic and secondary education, approved by the government;
- National Strategy for Education for Citizenship, articulated with the *Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory School* and international policies in this domain.

The PAFC cannot be seen as "a project designed in a conceptually solid and finished way, waiting to be applied on the ground, but as an opportunity to build a culturally significant, socially inclusive and politically congruent school with the values of democratic societies" (Cosme, 2018, p.44).



The Profile of Students Exiting Compulsory Schooling (PA), approved by Order No. 6478/2017, of 26 July is considered as a common matrix for all schools and educational projects under compulsory schooling at the curricular level, in planning, in pedagogical practices and in the teaching-learning process and assessment of student learning. Being a reference document, the AP contributes to decisions in various areas of curriculum development, particularly in relation to curriculum organization and management and in defining methodologies and pedagogical-didactic approaches to be adopted in teaching practice. This document establishes a reference of what the student, at the end of his schooling, should possess. If we look at the principles, vision, values and skills that students should develop throughout their schooling, we immediately realise that cooperation is integrated into various axes. In Figure 2.1, we can observe the outline of the areas of competence of the profile of students on leaving compulsory education.

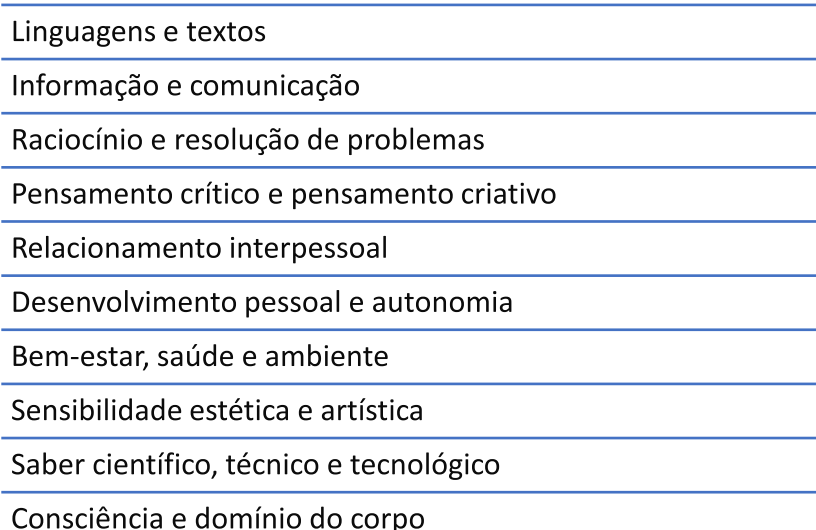


Figure 2 - Diagram of the areas of competence of the profile of students at the end of compulsory education

The child should develop analytical and critical skills, evaluate and select information, formulate hypotheses and make decisions. They should perceive themselves as free, autonomous, responsible and aware of themselves and of the world. They should also be able to cope with change and uncertainty in a rapidly changing world. In relation to the Arts, Humanities and Science and Technology, the student should be aware of their social, cultural, economic and environmental importance and think critically and creatively about them. The student should also have the ability to develop cooperative and communicative work. It is also expected that at the end of their schooling they will be able to continue learning throughout their lives, thus contributing to their personal development and to their capacity for social intervention. Pupils should also know and respect the fundamental principles of



democratic society and the rights, guarantees and freedoms on which it is based. They should also be respectful of human dignity, the exercise of citizenship, the principle of solidarity and cultural diversity.

The principles set out in the document establish a humanist school, inclusive, which guarantees the right of access and effective participation in all educational contexts, seeking to build a just society, based on human dignity and equality and the preservation of the planet, oriented towards the formation of people capable of reflecting and acting socially. The school is also characterized by having a flexible educational action capable of adapting to different contexts, updating knowledge and skills and incorporating the evolution of knowledge.

In relation to values, the Pupils' Profile expects the School to instil in pupils responsibility and integrity, curiosity, demand, innovation, reflection capacity, citizenship and freedom.

The areas of competence to be developed are of a cognitive, metacognitive, social and emotional nature, in several areas: languages and texts, information and communication, reasoning and problem solving, critical and creative thinking, personal development and autonomy, environment, scientific, technical and technological knowledge.

Gender equality presents itself as an important and transversal domain, in the most varied dimensions:

"Humanistic basis - The school empowers young people with knowledge and values to build a more just society, centered on the person, human dignity and action on the world as a common good to be preserved". (Martins, 2017)

"Coherence and flexibility - Ensuring learners' access to learning and participation in their learning process requires coherent and flexible educational action. It is through the flexible management of curriculum and the joint work of teachers and educators on the curriculum that it is possible to explore different themes, bringing reality to the center of the targeted learning. "(Martins, 2017)

"who knows and respects the fundamental principles of democratic society and the rights, guarantees and freedoms on which it is based." (Martins, 2017)

"that values respect for human dignity, the exercise of full citizenship, solidarity with others, cultural diversity and democratic debate." (Martins, 2017)



"that rejects all forms of discrimination and social exclusion." (Martins, 2017)

"Citizenship and participation - Demonstrate respect for human and cultural diversity and act in accordance with the principles of human rights; negotiate conflict resolution for solidarity and ecological sustainability; be interventive, taking the initiative and being entrepreneurial." (Martins, 2017)

"Freedom - Manifesting personal autonomy centered on human rights, democracy, citizenship, equity, mutual respect, free choice, and the common good." (Martins, 2017)

The development of competences, presented in Figure 2, implies "changes in pedagogical and didactic practices in order to adapt the globality of the educational action to the aims of the students' competence profile" (AP). It becomes to reflect, "organize and develop cooperative learning activities, oriented to the integration and exchange of knowledge, the awareness of oneself, of others and of the environment and the realization of projects" (PA). The essential learning for basic education (EA), approved by Order No. 6944-A/2018 of July 19, and for secondary education (Scientific and Humanistic Courses) by Order No. 8476-A/2018 of August 31, contain knowledge, skills and attitudes for each grade and for each school domain. These documents then determine the essential disciplinary knowledge and cognitive processes that students should activate to master that knowledge and the associated know-how (Roldão *et al.*, 2017).

Through the adoption of a new curriculum for primary and secondary education and the definition of the guiding principles of learning assessment, in the Decree-Law no. 55/2018 of 6 July, schools get more autonomy to make decisions in order to help students develop the skills of the Student Profile. This legal normative brought new challenges for educational agents: the school should become a culturally vast and educationally demanding space; each school should operationalize actions according to the characteristics of their students and human and material resources; implement the curricular component of Citizenship and Development, carrying out the National Strategy for Citizenship and Development (DGE/ME, 2017); organize the school work by teams; enable the organization of a specific training path in secondary education and through the exchange of subjects. Article 4 of the Decree-Law no. 55/2018 of 6 July regulates the guiding principles of the new curriculum. In them we can perceive the incentive to improve the quality of teaching and learning through the multilevel approach to the educational needs of students, strengthening the autonomy of schools in relation to curriculum options and the increase of formative assessment and the effectiveness of inclusive education. The new curriculum also determines: the implementation of co-authorship curriculum and shared responsibility in curriculum management, the involvement



of students and parents in curriculum development; the inter and multidisciplinary teaching of the curriculum, through the implementation of projects that bring together learning from different subjects; the transdisciplinarity of learning; education for citizenship and development; the integration of assessment in curriculum management.

The student profile also has implications for changing teaching practices in order to ensure that the areas of competence are explored in all curricular components. Thus, the educational action should fit the aims of the students' profile, associating the contents to everyday situations, implementing the observation and questioning of the surrounding reality, mobilizing work techniques, developing cooperative learning activities, using the criticism of various sources and information and communication technologies, promoting free and responsible intervention of students and valuing the intervention in the community.

The operationalization of the SA should enhance and diversify practices, calling for research and exploration of different problems and issues relevant to students, anchoring this work in collaborative methodologies that value interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. Given the broad object of study that this area offers us with the three axes as a starting point: Science, Technology and Society (CTS), the reference document of the SA guides educational agents to adopt strategies whose students are active agents in the construction of their own knowledge, through their interests and needs, in a constant valorization of prior knowledge. Practical, active and innovative activities should also be integrated.

Thus, curriculum management will contribute to the construction of educational challenges and the organization of learning activities that stimulate processes and construction and discussion of productive solutions.

Article 19 of the same Decree addresses the priorities of curriculum planning, which should focus on the areas of skills of the AP, valuing the arts, sciences, sports, humanities and ICT and the development of research skills for problem solving. The management of this curricular flexibility should be based on the implementation of project work, oriented to students as promoters of their own learning and the implementation of areas of curricular autonomy. The teaching practices to be adopted - article 21 - should favor the curricular articulation in teams according to the specificities of the students, in a preventive action, preventing failure and dropout. To this end, multilevel measures should be implemented to support learning, universal and inclusive.

Learning activities should be carried out in groups for learning and consolidation of specific content, with teacher mediation, focusing on research, selection and processing of information. Students should be involved in relevant issues, encouraging civic intervention, free initiative, autonomy, respect for diversity and responsibility towards the school and community.



These pedagogical practices allow the teacher to focus on the individual work of each student even though knowledge is being built in community, collectively.

As we have observed previously, changes at curriculum level and the pedagogical implementation of these changes continue to demand new approaches, new reflections and new care from teachers in their professional performance.

5. Conclusions

Survey of the No. of School Groupings at national level that have opted for the Gender Equality domain (Source: DGE).

Gender Equality - 2018-2019

Year of Schooling	No. of LAs that opted for the Gender Equality domain in the ENEC
1st Year	332
2nd Year	203
3rd Year	191
4th Year	202
5th Year	339
6th Year	232
Year 7	357
8th Year	185
Year 9	165
Year 10	202
Year 11	96
12th Year	86

- Thinking about opportunities for the child to experience, think, intervene, observe and make decisions;
- Integrate gender equality activities in contexts that respond to their needs and interests. In these contexts they learn, among other things, how to construct gender identity;
- To work in articulation and in a transversal way this theme with pre-school children, because they will be the adults of tomorrow. It remains to leave the idea that pre-school education is central to the construction of gender identity and to obtain an attitude of equality in relation to gender;
- Accredit training actions on diversified themes, both face-to-face and distance learning;



- Hold training workshops and sign protocols with different entities, especially with the CFAEs;
- There is a long way to go in terms of promoting gender equality in Portugal, as regards carrying out specific actions with a view to liaising with various entities;
- Greater involvement of other central and local government entities, such as ministries, interdepartmental teams, municipalities, education and training institutions, etc., in the implementation of activities to promote gender equality;
- Greater monitoring of the processes implemented, relating to gender equality, within educational and training institutions;
- Training of education professionals, more specifically of operational assistants, kindergarten teachers and primary and secondary school teachers;
- Construction of new tools and materials for training in gender equality for learning contexts (pre-school, 1st and 2nd cycle of Basic Education) and training contexts (initial and continuous);
- Dissemination and promotion of quality materials produced under funded projects in order to be useful resources, capable of being used in the training that is given on various gender equality issues, framed within the national strategy of education for citizenship;
- Education and the School as a weapon of integration in the social, in the construction of equality between men and women by young people and male and female children, valuing and their future and the structuring of knowledge;
- Promote and develop actions in the educational context, involving the children's families;
- Promoting gender equality in teacher training and educational contexts as a structuring basis for any other area of citizenship;
- Greater coordination between the management bodies of the School Clusters regarding the design, implementation, development and evaluation of the impact of projects in the educational context;
- Promote spaces for reflection and discussion in schools on the theme of gender equality;
- Implement projects that meet the educational projects, according to the school culture, in order to promote the involvement of the various educational stakeholders.
- Creation of partnerships between Higher Education institutions and school clusters, with a focus on initial teacher training, in articulation with other courses that have an intervention in schools;
- Creation of partnerships between Higher Education institutions and CFAEs in order to promote bridges, spaces and times of work in collaboration with initial



and continuing teacher training;

- Promote the dissemination of materials and good practices on gender equality and combating stereotypes in various educational settings, highlighting other learning environments (e.g. exchanges between national and international schools, projects (Travelling with Books), workshops;
- Promote active listening among teachers, in a close relationship with the community and education policies, responding to the education system.

6. Resources - Best Practices – National

<http://www.cooperativaseies.org/index.php/projectamos-o-que/projetos-em-curso/112-jovens-impulsionador-s>

<https://www.animar-dl.pt/recursos/interculturalidade-diversidade-e-inclusao/>

<http://questaodeigualdade.pt/projeto-crescer-igual-primeiros-anos/>

<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/pt/programas/cultura/projetos/projetos/>

<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/pt/programas/cultura/projetos/projetos/>

<https://www.eeagrants.gov.pt/pt/programas/cultura/projetos/projetos/>

<https://www.cig.gov.pt/2018/10/parceria-da-cig-no-projeto-escolinha-viagem-igualdade/>

<https://www.slideshare.net/PlaneamentoRegionalUrbano/joana-pestana-lages-projeto-bip-2ip-um-gnero-de-escola>

<https://getupandgoalsproject.pt/projeto/>

<https://fgs.org.pt/pt/educacao-para-a-cidadania-ong-e-escolas-juntas-em-projeto-piloto/>

<https://www.cig.gov.pt/area-igualdade-entre-mulheres-e-homens/documentacao/guioes-de-educacao-genero-e-cidadania/>

<https://getupandgoalsproject.pt/cadernos-tematicos/>

<https://ideiascomhistoria.pt/products/a-familia-dos-ursos-na-casa-dos-afetos>

<https://www.planetatangerina.com/pt-pt/loja/todos-fazemos-tudo/>

https://educapes.capes.gov.br/bitstream/capes/431428/1/PRODUTO%20Juliana%20Prados_Claudia%20Andrade.pdf



kinder

<https://www.cidadaniaemportugal.pt/wp-content/uploads/recursos/coolabora/coolkit.pdf>

<https://casholman.com/projects>



KINDER project (GA 101005800) was funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020)

Mapping National Initiatives and Public Policies on Early Childhood Development and Gender Equality: Spanish Case.

Authors: CEPAIM

1. Introduction

Freire (1969) points out that education is something more than transferring stagnant knowledge, it means creating the possibility of building diverse knowledge, educating in freedom and emancipation. It is within this framework of development of critical pedagogy that coeducation and feminism are anchored in educational contexts.

When we talk about education in equality, in Spain the most used concept is coeducation. Now the framework is being broadened: it is not only about educating girls and boys in equality with a gender perspective, but also about educating to the differences, considering the intersectional approach. Diversity in terms of sex, gender, social class, race, religion, functional diversity, sexual option, among others, that should be understood as equalizing rights and not as segregating differences and homogenizing process. School cannot be the only actor in this game, we need a change in the whole society.

Androcentrism and sexism are still invisible. There is no explicit gender discrimination, nevertheless we are confronted with a gender-biased education system, in a school that does not educate girls and boys equally, which does have a negative influence on women's lives.

Gender-based violence prevention is a key factor in coeducation, and in preventing and detecting GBV, educational centres can be key spaces. Schools can play a crucial role in two main aspects:

- 1) The first of these is based on prevention, on education in and for equality, through the different subjects and internal actions of the center, as well as through external actions such as workshops, programs, etc.
- 2) The second has to do with its role in the detection of gender violence and in its positioning and action in this regard.

According to Ruiz Repullo (2016), educational centres have 3 main approaches in detection and intervention in cases of GBV in Spain:

- 1) Schools that detect but deny: we refer to schools that do not see or do not want to see what is happening, either due to lack of training in the problem or because they consider it a private matter and do not want to intervene. These are the fewest, that is, there is more and more awareness and less gender blindness.



- 2) Educational centers that detect and support: these could be defined as those centers where part of the teaching staff is aware of the violent relationship that the girl is suffering, but the position they take is based on encouraging the girl to leave the relationship, not following up and intervening, mainly due to lack of training.
- 3) Educational centers that detect and intervene: these are those in which there is active involvement on the part of the teachers, especially those who are sensitized and who act in favor of ending the situation of violence suffered by the girl, basically by warning or involving the family in this situation and being attentive to the wellbeing of the student. They are usually represented by teachers with whom the students usually have complicity. These are increasingly numerous, although they are not the generality of the centers. In short, both the prevention and detection of gender violence are a fundamental part of the objectives and challenges of a coeducational school.

The concept of coeducation has been changing and broadening its meaning, in the same way that the concept of gender equality. Even if it is a disputed concept, the perspective we embrace on coeducation means taking in account also sexual orientation and gender diversity, as well as other intersectional fronts that can reproduce inequality, such as racialization and class.

According to the study LGBTphobia in the classroom (Cogam 2016), 40% of secondary school students believe that sexual orientation other than heterosexual can be changed through effort; 15% of students believe that LGBT people do not deserve the same rights; 30% feel disgust before two people of the same sex kissing; and, as a logical consequence of all this, 80% of LGBT students have not yet come out of the closet in these stages. If we take into consideration the professors in secondary education, Romero and Gallardo (2019) conducted a study aimed at knowing the degree of prejudice and social distance that secondary school teachers show towards gay and lesbian people and also to evaluate the training or - lack of it - in relation to this topic. Through a quantitative study and using a questionnaire, data shows that there is still a part of the teaching staff with a high burden of prejudice towards gays and lesbians, as well as social distance. The study concludes that sexual diversity should be included in the initial training of teachers, as well as in postgraduate training, as a relevant and necessary topic that may favour subsequent application in the classroom and avoid harassment behavior among students by the sexual option.

If we analyze the curriculum of the different educational stages, or the hidden curriculum in each of them, we will detect that the LGBTI reality, with some exceptions, is invisible, i.e., students are not shown historical or current references of similar identities, and when they begin to hear about their sexual orientation or gender identity it is in the form of insult and stigma (COGAM, 2016).



Another issue to be taken into account when analysing the Spanish educational system applying an intersectional perspective is segregation: the school segregation index is 0.31¹. This means that, in order to eliminate school segregation in Spain, 31% of the most vulnerable students would need to be transferred to other schools. It is the sixth most segregated European country (above the EU average). In the last ten years, the segregation index in Spain has increased by 13.4%. The Community of Madrid is the Spanish region with the highest school segregation (0.36) and leads the ranking also at European level (only behind Hungary). It is the region that has grown the most in the last 10 years (35.8%, more than double the average in Spain) (Martinez, Ferrer, 2018, p. 6).

In segregated schools, the concentration of children from low socio-economic backgrounds (32.8% of the total in these schools) is combined with a greater presence of students with language support needs and special educational needs. The percentage of children with language support needs in these centres is 32.8%, and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is 9.7%. This means that, on average, the level of complexity and the need for additional resources in these centres is much higher than in other centres with lower levels of concentration.

than in other schools with lower levels of concentration. This characteristic is combined with the low availability of resources and the departure of more qualified teachers to other types of schools with a lower level of complexity (only 5.8% of teachers in schools with high concentration have postgraduate studies, compared to 36.2% in the case of schools with low concentration) (Ibid. pág. 22-23).

The report “Perception of possible victims of discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin” (RED2RED Consultants 2020) highlight that discrimination on the ground of ethnical reasons in education rose sharply from 13% in 2013 to 20% in 2020. The groups that feel most affected by this type of situation are the Roma, Andean, East Asian and non-Mediterranean African populations. The rate of perceived discrimination in education has increased in all groups analysed. Those with the highest increase are the East Asian group (from 5% to 30%) and the non-Mediterranean African population (from 9% to 23%). Discrimination in the field of education typically takes the form of being made fun of, insults and harassment by other students and exclusion from games and activities (pp. 102-109).

¹ In the report (Martinez, Ferrer, 2018) the Gorard or G Index is used. The index shows the difference between the weight of a minority group (in this case the most vulnerable students) and the total members of the group. The index shows the proportion of children who would need to be transferred to other schools in order to eliminate the school segregation of the territory. For its calculation, socio-economically disadvantaged students are considered to be those who are in the 25% with the lowest values (Q1) in the ISEC index, following the PISA definition.



2. Analysis of public policy frameworks for Education, Gender Equality and Childhood

In Spain, the state is responsible for education and for offering all pupils free compulsory education from 4 to 16 years of age. The stage from 4 to 6 is not compulsory, while education is compulsory from 6 to 16 years of age. The Ministry of Education and Professional Training is responsible for central administration, namely the national government defines overall framework policies, and the autonomous communities handle most day-to-day policy-making and administer the great majority of funding.

Schools can be classified as public schools, private schools and publicly-funded private schools. Public schools are those managed by a public administration. Private schools are those owned and managed by a private person or legal entity. Publicly-funded private schools are private schools which are under the system of legally-established agreements. The provision of the public education service is carried out in public and publicly-funded private schools. Schools have pedagogic, organisational and management autonomy within the current legislation. They have the autonomy to draw up, approve and execute an education project and a management project, as well as their organisational and running procedures.

2.1 Pre-primary education (0–6 years)

It is organised into two cycles of three years each. The first cycle (0–3 years) is voluntary for families and aims to give educational assistance and attention to early childhood education.

The second cycle (3–6 years) is voluntary, free and constitutes the first level of school education. Even though it is voluntary, educational authorities are obliged to offer enough places for all children at this level. If there are not enough public places, they must reach agreements with private schools to offer them.

The teacher specialized in Early Childhood Education (second cycle, 3-6 years) must have the Diploma in Teaching approved by the Ministry of Education or the Autonomous Communities. To educate children in non-formal contexts from 0 to 6 years of age (toy libraries, farm-schools, etc.) and in formal contexts during the first cycle (nursery schools, children's homes, shelters, etc.), it is necessary to have a Higher Technical Degree in Early Childhood Education or a Teacher's Degree in Early Childhood Education.

According to the Ministry of Education and Professional training, in the school year 2019-20, there are 1,254,426 children 3-6 years attending schools, 48.5% are girls and 51.5% are



boys².

Concerning the ownership and management of schools, 67.6% are public, 28.6% are publicly funded private schools, and 3.8% are private.

2.2 Compulsory education (6-16 years)

Basic, compulsory free education comprises primary education and compulsory secondary education, for students aged 6 to 16 years. It is ten years education and is divided into two educational levels:

- Primary education (6–12 years) comprises six academic years.
- Compulsory secondary education (12–16 years) comprises four academic years organised into two cycles. The first comprises three academic years and the second, one academic year. Upon passing these two cycles, the pupils receive the Compulsory Secondary Education (CSE) Certificate.

Children attending primary school in Spain are 2,905,640, of these, girls are 48.4% and boys 51.6% (ibid.). Concerning the ownership and management of schools, 67.7% are public, 28.4% are publicly-funded private schools, and 3.9% are private.

The publicly funded private schools are in the hands of the Catholic Church and the model they propose fit traditional gender models, without dismantling prejudices and stereotypes of gender roles. One out of every four students in compulsory school in Spain is attending a private school supported by public funds.

The legislative perspective in gender and equality is indisputable: gender equality is a core element, at least at discursive level, in all legislative initiatives. Nevertheless, it's application, the instruments and funding are not always proper.

The **Organic Law 3/2007 for the effective equality of women and men** does not mention co-education, but it deals with education and equality in 3 articles. More specifically, art. 23, "Education for the equality of women and men" states that "The educational system shall include among its aims education in respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and in equality of rights and opportunities between women and men. Likewise, the education system shall include, within its principles of quality, the elimination of obstacles to effective equality between women and men and the promotion of full equality between women and men".

Article 24, "Gender mainstreaming in education policy", is aimed at guaranteeing the active integration of the principle of equal treatment in educational objectives and actions,

² [Datos y cifras. Curso escolar 2020/2021 \(educacionyfp.gob.es\)](https://datos.ycifras.educacionyfp.gob.es).



preventing inequalities between women and men due to sexist behaviour or associated social stereotypes. For achieving this objective, the article specifies some actions to be promoted by school administrations:

- a) Special attention in the curricula and at all educational stages to the principle of equality between women and men.
- b) The elimination and rejection of sexist behaviour and content and stereotypes involving discrimination between women and men, with special consideration for this in textbooks and educational materials.
- c) The integration of the study and application of the principle of equality in courses and programmes for the initial and ongoing training of teachers.
- d) The promotion of a balanced presence of women and men in the control and governing bodies of educational centres.
- e) Cooperation with the rest of the educational administrations for the development of projects and programmes aimed at fostering knowledge and dissemination, among the members of the educational community, of the principles of coeducation and effective equality between women and men.
- f) The establishment of educational measures aimed at the recognition and teaching of the role of women in history.

Article 25 deals with “equality in higher education”, stating that: “(...) the Public Administrations will promote: a) The inclusion in the curricula, where appropriate, of teachings on equality between women and men. b) The creation of specific postgraduate courses. c) The realization of specialized studies and research on the subject”.

Concerning education, different laws have been passed since 1980 (after Franco’s dictatorship). The LOGSE (Ley Orgánica General del Sistema Educativo, 1990) is the landmark, since it is the law that establishes the principles aimed at building a coeducational system, specifying that “from the coeducational system of education the real equality of women and men shall be enhanced, in all its dimensions: curricular, school and others” (art. 5.2). The LOGSE was introduced by a socialist government, replacing the previous general law on education (1970), during Franco’s dictatorship. It was the first democratic, egalitarian educational law in Spain. Other 3 laws on education were passed in the last 15 years: LOE (LEY ORGÁNICA 2/2006 de Educación) and LOMCE-(Ley Orgánica 8/2013 para la mejora de la calidad educativa) have been very deficient in coeducational matters, approaching this issue from a mere declaration of intentions. In 2020 the Organic law 3/2020 LOMLOE (Ley Orgánica 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación), also known as Celaa Law under the name of the minister that promoted it.



On gender equality the Celaá Law emphasizes the promotion of equality between men and women, being one of the transversal elements in all areas of knowledge. It adopts a gender equality approach through coeducation and promotes at all educational stages the learning of effective equality between women and men, the prevention of gender violence and respect for affective-sexual diversity, introducing in secondary education the educational and vocational guidance of students with an inclusive and non-sexist perspective. Educational centres must necessarily include and justify in their educational project the measures they develop to favour and train in equality at all educational stages, including education for the elimination of gender violence, respect for identities, cultures, sexualities and their diversity, and active participation to make equality a reality. Curricula and textbooks and other educational materials will have to promote the equal value of women and men and do not contain sexist or discriminatory stereotypes. Likewise, this content will be included in initial teacher training programmes.

The Autonomous Communities will have to promote the presence of women in the educational branches with a lower feminine presence and that of men in those with a low number of them. Schools that segregate by sex, around 100 centers in Spain, 67 of them receiving public funds³, will not be able to be funded.

Concerning children education from 3 to 6, the minimum curriculum is established by the Royal Decree 1630 of 2006 (Real Decreto 1630/2006, de 29 de diciembre, por el que se establecen las enseñanzas mínimas del segundo ciclo de Educación infantil). Among different área of knowledge, we can find “Self-knowledge and personal autonomy of her/himself” that states that “The presence of different personal traits, whether due to gender, social or cultural origin, should be used by teachers to cater for diversity, fostering an atmosphere of relationships presided over by respect and acceptance of differences. Attention will also be paid to the development of affectivity as an essential dimension of a child's personality, promoting the recognition, expression and progressive control of emotions and feelings”.

In August 2021, while writing this report, the Government sent to the Autonomous Communities a draft of the new Primary Education curriculum that focuses on three cycles of two academic years each (from 6 to 12 years old) and the modifications introduced in the curriculum, organization and objectives will be implemented for the first, third and fifth grades in the 2022-2023 school year, and for the second, fourth and sixth grades in the 2023-2024 school year. A couple of elements generated debate in the public arena: the socioemotional approach and the gender perspective in Mathematics. The draft refers to guaranteeing educational inclusion and the prevention of learning difficulties, combating negative attitudes towards mathematics, eradicating gender-related preconceived ideas and,

³ For more information, see: https://www.eldiario.es/politica/centenar-colegios-educan-separado-espana_1_2178516.html



in short, ensuring that students "enjoy" learning mathematics since, especially girls, show disaffection to the subject. The draft curriculum focuses on preventing the child's learning difficulties during primary school, and all areas will promote gender equality, emotional education and student autonomy.

Among other contents, the Organic Law 8/2021, of 4 June, on the **comprehensive protection of children and adolescents against violence** [Ley Orgánica 8/2021, de 4 de junio, de protección integral a la infancia y la adolescencia frente a la violencia] regulates the specialised initial and in-service training of professionals who have regular contact with minors. Among the general criteria applied in the frame of the superior interest of the child, the law recognizes the "Promotion of equal treatment of boys and girls through co-education and the promotion of equitable education and the deconstruction of gender roles and stereotypes" (art. 4).

Chapter IV develops various measures for the prevention and early detection of violence in schools. Art. 30 highlight that children and adolescents at all educational stages and regardless of the ownership of the centre, will receive, in a comprehensive manner, an education that includes their participation, respect for others, their dignity and their rights, gender equality, family diversity, the acquisition of skills for healthy lifestyle choices, including food and nutrition education, and **affective and sexual education**, adapted to their level of maturity and, where appropriate, disability, aimed at learning to prevent and avoid all forms of violence and discrimination, in order to help them recognise and react to it.

Article 34 regulates the actions plans against abuse and mistreatment, bullying, cyberbullying, **sexual harassment, gender-based violence**, domestic violence, suicide and self-harm, as well as any other manifestation of violence. The educational administrations are responsible of their drafting and the actions plans should provide for specific action where the bullying is motivated by disability, severe neurodevelopmental problems, mental health problems, age, racist or homophobic prejudice, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. The law creates the "coordinator of wellbeing and protection" (art. 35) that will be appointed in each educational centre where there are minors.

3. Analysis of Public-School Plans at National/regional/City Level

3.1 National plans

At the national level, in Spain there are no plans as such on education since such initiatives are based at regional level, nevertheless the draft of the **Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities 2019 - 2022**, that has not yet been approved, includes as a strategic objective



to promote equal opportunities between women and men through the education system and in research, and places special emphasis on the need for teacher training.

We have been analyzing the most recent national plan on education, namely the **National Plan to Reduce Early School Leaving and Spain 2050. Rationale and proposals for a long-term national strategy.**

-National Plan to Reduce Early School Leaving 2014 - 2020⁴ (Plan para la Reducción del Abandono Educativo Temprano).

The plan does not entail the gender perspective, even if there are gender differences in the phenomenon: In the year 2020, the early drop-out rate from education and training in Spain is 20.2% for men and 11.6% for women. Men have always been more likely to drop out of education and training early (Indicadores de educación de la Estrategia Europa 2020. Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional). The European Council conclusions on reducing early school leaving and promoting success in school (2015/C 417/05) states: “Early school leaving tends to result from a range of frequently interconnected personal, social, economic, cultural, educational, gender-related and family-related factors, and is linked to situations of cumulative disadvantage which often have their origin in early childhood”⁵.

The national plan “**España 2050. Fundamentos y propuestas para una estrategia Nacional de largo plazo**”⁶ [Spain 2050. Rationale and proposals for a long-term national strategy], devotes chapter 2 to education. although using a gender inclusive language, does not entail gender perspective in its diagnosis and in the proposed measures, with an exception. When dealing with the 2nd milestone: Moving towards greater professionalisation of the teaching profession, one of the proposed measures is to “Encourage male presence in the teaching career”. In this milestone, “move towards gender equity in our society” is a goal, and to reach it is considered necessary “to promote the presence of men in the early stages of the education sector. Currently, there is a clear majority of women, especially in the pre-school (98%) and primary (81%) stages, which is in contrast with the evolution of society and could be contributing to perpetuate gender stereotypes such as the one that associates education and care exclusively with women” (p. 117).

When referring to inequalities (of opportunity and results) suffered by students, the documents places its origin in the differences between centres, territories, capacities and the socio-economic circumstances of their families, but does not take into account gender and other structural interlocking categories that build a geography of dominance/oppression in

⁴ <https://sede.educacion.gob.es/publivena/plan-para-reduccion-del-abandono-educativo-temprano/educacion-abandono-escolar/20677>

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52015XG1215%2803%29>

⁶ https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/presidente/actividades/Documents/2021/200521-Estrategia_Espana_2050.pdf



our societies. It seems that a class- oriented approach is adopted, but no other inequalities contribute to building the whole picture.

3.2 Autonomous Community Framework

As we already pointed out, the Autonomous Communities play a big role in the legislation and implementation of educational policies. There are Strategic Plans for Gender Equality in Education or coeducation, or regional plans/programmes that contains measures on education with gender equality perspective in 10 autonomous communities: Andalusia, the Basque Country, the Canary Islands, Navarre, Valencia, Balearic Islands, Cataluña, Extremadura, Galicia and Castilla la Mancha.

Concerning other intersecting inequalities, like gender identity and sexual options, there are solid juridical bases in many regions. Apart from the coeducational plans approved and implemented in the different Autonomous Communities, there are other legal instruments that can have educational importance and entail measures in this field.

- Regions with legislative initiative on Trans rights:
 - o País Vasco

- Regions with legislative initiative on LGBTI rights:
 - o Cataluña
 - o Extremadura
 - o Galicia
 - o Murcia

- Regions with legislative initiative on LGBTI and Trans rights:
 - o Andalucía
 - o Aragón
 - o Baleares
 - o Comunidad Valenciana
 - o Navarra
 - o Madrid

- Regions with no legislative initiatives on LGTBI and Trans rights:
 - o Asturias
 - o Cantabria
 - o Ceuta
 - o La Rioja
 - o Castilla y León
 - o Castilla La Mancha
 - o Melilla



The case of the Autonomous Community of Valencia, that will be one of the regions in which we will implement the Kinder project, is very interesting for the objectives of the Kinder project since it has normative initiatives that merge the gender-equality and the diversity perspective:

- A coeducation plan;
- Law 8/2017, of 7 April, on the recognition of the right to gender identity and gender expression in the Valencian Community;
- Law 23/2018, of 29 November, of the Generalitat Valenciana, on equality of LGTBI persons;
- Actions plan for the educational centres in case of gender-based violence;
- Action plan for the educational centres in case of child abuse (with a specific part on child sexual abuse);
- Action plan for the educational centres in case of bullying (with a specific part on LGTBI bullying).

Andalusia

Andalusia is implementing its second Strategic Plan for Equality in Education⁷ (II Plan Estratégico de Igualdad de Género en Educación 2016-2021 - BOJA nº de 41 de 02/03/2016).

The main directives are: mainstreaming, visibility (of women), inclusion, equity.

Composed by 4 lines of intervention, being the first one the Implementation of coeducational Center Plans through a school organization and curriculum without gender bias.

Measures of this first line:

- Integration and mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the Center Plan and in its initiatives.
- Elimination of cultural prejudices and discriminatory sexist stereotypes in textbooks and curricular materials.
- Recognition, promotion and exchange of good coeducational practices.

The second line focuses on Awareness, training and involvement in gender equality, coeducation and prevention of gender violence.

Measures:

- To increase the visibility of gender inequality in the educational community, its evolution in the center, as well as to design interventions to correct them.
- Promote and encourage inclusive and equitable school practice, through the use of non-sexist language in their visual, oral, written and digital environments.

⁷ <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/igualdad/plan-igualdad>



- Promote actions to raise awareness and training in equality, coeducation and prevention of gender violence for the educational community.

The third line is devoted to promoting actions to raise awareness and prevent gender-based violence in order to contribute to its eradication, ensuring adequate intervention in the event of possible cases of gender-based violence in the educational environment.

Actions:

- Raising awareness, visibility and prevention of gender violence.
- Promote early detection and intervention against gender violence in the educational environment.

Line four is aimed at promoting the integration of the gender perspective in the operation of the educational administration, its affiliated agencies and the educational centers that depend on it.

Measures:

- Promote the inclusion of the gender perspective in the organizational structures of the Educational Administration.
- To guarantee the systematic incorporation of the gender perspective in the communication procedures of the educational administration.
- Promote and encourage the self-evaluation of educational centers and the evaluation of the educational administration and its attached agencies.

Concerning gender identity, the Department of Education, Culture and Sport of the Regional Government of Andalusia, through the Directorate General for Participation and Equity, presented in June 2014 the Protocol for action on gender identity in the Andalusian education system⁸, which became a regulation when it was published in the BOJA (Official Gazette of the Regional Government of Andalusia) on 21 May 2015. The protocol aimed at developing the mandate of Law 2/2014, of 8 July, comprehensive for non-discrimination on grounds of gender identity and recognition of the rights of transgender people in Andalusia. The protocol is detailed and of a comprehensive nature and has a broad scope to cover a diverse range of situations on how to proceed when a student (through his or her family or guardians if he or she is a minor) requests educational attention according to a gender identity different from the one assigned at birth. This protocol does not offer closed answers, but rather general principles of action that must be adapted to the singularities of each case. It establishes a communication and identification procedure, the organisational and educational measures to be adopted by schools, actions with the educational community (students, families and

⁸ <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/delegate/content/0c4f4c50-b038-48c0-9a80-de10bf5ad75a>



teachers) and a special section to prevent, detect or intervene in possible cases of school bullying due to transphobia.

Castilla La Mancha

The region of Castilla la Mancha does not have a regional plan on coeducation/gender equality/diversity. Nevertheless, the second Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Castilla-La Mancha (2019-24) serves as an instrument for the Public Administrations of the region to build effective equality of women and men and to eliminate discrimination based on sex. The plan is developed around eight strategic areas, being area 5, "Education for coexistence in equality", aimed at promoting "co-educational model, free of sexist stereotypes and violent attitudes, in the educational community".

The Region approved in 2017 a protocol of action for minors on gender identity and expression⁹. The purpose of this protocol is to establish intervention guidelines for the appropriate care of minors who do not conform with their assigned gender identity, guaranteeing the free development of their personality and non-discrimination for reasons of gender identity, as well as facilitating processes of inclusion, protection, awareness, accompaniment and advice for minors, their families and all personnel that work with trans minors. Likewise, the purpose of this protocol is to establish actions to prevent, detect and avoid situations of transphobia, exclusion, bullying or gender-based violence against minors, including institutional coordination to identify their needs and adopt, if necessary, the appropriate educational, health and social measures.

At school level, the centre's Equality Plan is a programmatic, flexible, practical document, adapted to the context of the schools. It is approved by the School Council and the School Board, accessible and available to all members of the educational community.

The curriculum model proposed in Castilla La Mancha (2017) for the primary and compulsory secondary stages, on an experimental basis, designs and implements a subject dedicated to education for equality, tolerance and diversity which, although it does not expressly mention coeducation in the text, is clearly aimed at promoting effective equality between women and men in our society, as well as preventing gender-based violence, through educational intervention.

<https://institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/igualdad/programas/creciendo-en-igualdad>

<https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2010/BOE-A-2010-15624-consolidado.pdf>

⁹

[https://institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/sites/institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/files/documentos/paginas/archivos/protocolo menores trans enero 2017.pdf](https://institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/sites/institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/files/documentos/paginas/archivos/protocolo%20menores%20trans%20enero%202017.pdf)



Growing in equality programme

The aim of this programme is to work on coeducation in those educational centres in small municipalities where it is more difficult for the professionals of the women's centres to carry out actions in the field of education for equality, as well as the prevention of violence against women through education.

The following objectives are worked on:

- Awareness of gender equality and prevention of violence against women starting in secondary education.
- Knowledge of the existence of "masculine" and "feminine" models in the construction of personal identity.
- Recognition of the qualities and behaviours assigned to each of them.
- Identification of positive values for the development of people outside stereotypes.
- Visualisation of the differences in the treatment of male and female characters in stories and transforming them.
- Reflection on the roles played by both genders.
- Knowledge of the values, knowledge and beneficial practices of the female model.

Moreover, a Protocol for action addressed to minors on gender identity and gender expression¹⁰ has been defined in 2017. The purpose of the protocol is to provide quality care for trans children in Castilla-La Mancha, through the implementation of coordination strategies between the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Department of Health and the Womens' Institute itself, as the body in charge of ensuring the application of the principle of mainstreaming in the region, in order to determine joint actions in their respective areas.

The purpose of this action protocol is to establish guidance and intervention guidelines for the appropriate care of minors who do not conform to their assigned gender identity, recognising their right to sexual identity within the scope of the institutions involved and guaranteeing the free development of their personality and non-discrimination for reasons of gender identity, as well as facilitating processes of inclusion, protection, awareness, accompaniment and advice for minors, their families and all personnel with whom trans minors work. Likewise, the purpose of this protocol is to establish actions to prevent, detect and avoid situations of transphobia, exclusion, bullying or gender-based violence against minors whose sexual and/or gender identity does not coincide with the sex assigned at birth,

¹⁰

https://institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/sites/institutomujer.castillalamancha.es/files/documentos/paginas/archivos/protocolo_menores_trans_enero_2017.pdf



including institutional coordination to identify their needs and adopt, if necessary, the appropriate educational, health and social measures.

Basque Country

Titled “II Coeducation Plan for the Basque Education System, on the road to equality and good treatment (2019-2023)”¹¹ and issued by the Basque Government's Department of Education, the plan offers the Basque Education System, and more specifically the Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education stages, the opportunity to continue working towards a coeducational school. This plan provides some conceptual keys to the steps needed to move forward on the road to equality, but it will also offer the materials and tools needed to make it a reality.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1. To provide the Department of Education and the Education System with training, structures and people to promote the co-educational school model in a coordinated and comprehensive manner at the Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education stages.

Specific Objective 1.1. To offer training itineraries to guarantee that the entire educational community and the different services of the Department of Education have qualifications in coeducation.

Specific Objective 1.2. To guarantee structures for promoting and coordinating the implementation of coeducation and equality measures in the educational system. equality measures in the education system.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2. To encourage schools to incorporate a gender perspective in their culture, policies and practices.

Specific Objective 2.1. Develop improvement proposals for gender mainstreaming in the curriculum in order to comply with the mandates of Law 4/2005 on Gender Equality.

Specific Objective 2.2. To incorporate the gender perspective as a strategic element in all institutional and organisational documents of the centre.

Specific Objective 2.3 To promote the development of co-educational projects.

Specific Objective 2.4 To promote coordination and collaboration between the different agents, institutions and schools.

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https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/plan_departamental/40_plandep_xileg/es_def/Plan%20coeducaci%C3%B3n%20sist.%20educativo.pdf



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3. To establish mechanisms for the prevention, early detection and effective response to violence against women.

Specific Objective 3.1. To prevent and raise awareness in the educational community for the early detection of violence against women.

Specific Objective 3.2. Respond quickly and effectively to situations of violence against women.

Navarra

The Coeducation Plan 2017-2021 for the Educational Centres and Communities of Navarre¹² sets the basis for the SKOLAE programme, that will be described below.

The plan has been developed with the collaboration of different experts, like teachers from the SKOLAE pilot schools, professionals, businesswomen, university teachers and experts in education, co-education, equality, sexology, sexual diversity, leadership and empowerment, feminists from trade unions and activists for the empowerment of women and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The Navarre coeducation plan aims to integrate equality in the education system by proposing a coeducational itinerary for all stages (from 0 to 18 years of age).

The **SKOLAE programme** has among its principles to educate in the construction of one's own life project from the early stages of life. This means an education in feminism or feminist education, that is learning to build life projects in freedom and equality.

The main learning, competencies and cross-cutting contents proposed are:

- to form a critical conscience in the face of inequalities, this means identifying and analyzing existing gender inequalities and take responsibility for their transformation;
- to favour autonomy, personal independence and employment, where care work and employment are emphasized as the basis for this autonomy,
- guiding students to the construction of a full life project, overcoming gender stereotypes and any other limiting conditioning factors;
- empowerment, leadership and social participation as essential elements in recognizing one's own capacity for decision making and motivating collective work;
- highlight sexual education and fair treatment, including the recognition, acceptance and respect for diversities, bodies, identities and affective bonds;

¹² <https://www.educacion.navarra.es/documents/27590/1325202/Plan+de+Coeducaci%C3%B3n+2017-2021+Web5.pdf/6a6ef96d-b12f-0873-cfa8-de7862183455>



The aim is to promote gender equality and feminism through a systemic action in which all educational dimensions and processes (teachers, contents, languages, spaces, social relations, families, community) have a place and adopt a commitment to transforming power structures. The co-educational school also aims at integrating cross-cutting content throughout all school stages:

- Eliminate all violence against women and girls.
- To make women and their contributions visible.
- Learning to respect identities, cultures, sexualities and their diversity.
- Learn new egalitarian masculinities and empowered femininities.
- Participate in the environment by making equality a reality.

The program is being implemented in 221 schools in Navarre, but it has been recently under attack. The Skolae coeducation plan will continue to be extended from September in public and funded centers in Navarre. The program has the protection of the Foral Law of Equality, approved in 2019, and will also have the support of the Foral Decree of Coeducation, which is in the process of being approved and will be in force next 2021-22. This has been assured by the Department of Education after the Supreme Court rejected the appeal filed by the Regional Government against the resolution of the TSJN that annulled Skolae due to a procedural error.

Valencia

The Coeducation master plan 2018-22¹³ of the Valencian Autonomous Community has 7 main objectives:

1 Initial training for professors

To favour the integration of transversal co-educational criteria in initial teacher training, both in Teacher Training Degrees and in Secondary Education Masters, through the promotion of agreements and initiatives with universities.

2 In-service teacher training

Guarantee specific training in co-education for teachers at all stages of education, covering academic, extracurricular and socialisation activities for students.

3 The school curriculum

Revise the current school curriculum to transform it into a co-educational curriculum.

4 Curricular materials

¹³ <https://ceice.gva.es/documents/161634256/165603089/Plan+Director+de+Coeducaci%C3%B3n/a53bc1f6-e22b-4210-89aa-5e34230c4e08>



Promote the adaptation of curricular materials to co-educational criteria.

5 Educational Centres

Promote the values of the culture of Equal Opportunities for women and men in the decision-making bodies of the educational centres.

6 Democratic values and Human Rights

To involve the educational community in the defence and practice of democratic values and Human Rights, understanding that gender discrimination is a violation of human rights.

7 Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming to maintain active lines of collaboration with the rest of the public administrations, social agents and the media.

In fall 2020 a pilot programme called "Coeducacentres" started in 15 schools to work on "effective equality". 'Coeducacentres' implements several pillars and actions of the regional Coeducation Master Plan and focuses, in particular, on the ongoing training of teachers and on the role of educational centres on coeducation. Its mission is to promote the values of the culture of peace and equal opportunities between women and men and to transfer the gender perspective to the contents, language, spaces and teaching materials¹⁴.

General objectives

- Creating a culture of each specific school based on dialogue and peace through organizational actions and democratic mechanisms of representation and decision making, adapted to each educational level.
- Giving theoretical and practical instruments to build an organizational and democratic structure based on peace culture.
- Improve peaceful coexistence, enhancing dialogue and peace culture in school-based project characterized by the participation of the whole educational community with a gender perspective.
- Creating a network for the dissemination of egalitarian values among schools.
- Learning to detect non-egalitarian attitudes in different educational level.

Specific objectives:

- Reinforce in each school the tasks of the Coordination for equality and peaceful coexistence (CIC).

¹⁴ See: <https://www.europapress.es/comunitat-valenciana/noticia-educacion-desarrolla-programa-coeducacentres-15-colegios-institutos-trabajar-igualdad-efectiva-20201006101620.htm>



- Comprehend the problems in their complexity and the need for a collective way of solving them through recreational, cultural and communitarian activities.
- Enhance the awareness of the students on the importance of dialogue and respect, train them of assertiveness and empathy, working on relational competencies and involving families and professors.
- Raise awareness of professors and families on gender-based violence as social and public-health problem in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. Raise awareness on care work and co-responsibility.

In the website of the Regional Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport of the Valencian Community, a section is dedicated to materials for equality and peaceful coexistence¹⁵. The materials for equality are divided into:

- Sexual education. (<https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/guia-educacio-sexual>).
- Guide for the prevention of sexual abuse (<https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/guia-per-a-la-prevencio-de-l-abus-sexual>).
- Guide for egalitarian language use (<https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/guia-d-us-del-l-lenguage-igualitari>).
- Materials for the history of the Romani people <https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/reico-poble-gitano/>.
- Guide for co-educational playgrounds <https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/guia-de-patis-coeducatius>.
- Guide for egalitarian masculinities <https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/guia-de-masculinitats-igualitaries>.

Balearic Islands

The coeducation Plan of the Balearic Islands 2019-2022¹⁶ presents the following objectives:

1. Raise awareness, train and involve the educational community in gender equality and coeducation.
 - 1.1. Offer training and resources to ensure that teachers, families and school management have skills in coeducation, affective-sexual diversity and gender-based violence.

¹⁵ <https://ceice.gva.es/va/web/inclusioeducativa/reico.-repositori-de-recursos-web-per-a-la-igualtat-i-la-convivencia>.

¹⁶ http://www.caib.es/sites/convivexit/ca/igualtat_i_dona/



- 1.2. Raise awareness throughout the educational community about coeducation, affective-sexual diversity and gender violence.
- 1.3. Encourage the co-responsibility of the educational community in dealing with coeducation, gender-based violence and gender-based affective diversity.
2. Incorporate the gender perspective in education.
 - 2.1. Develop the curriculum from a gender perspective and incorporate it as a strategic element in all planning documents.
 - 2.2. Organise, manage and encourage educational centres to make a real promotion of equality.
 - 2.3. Apply the gender perspective to tutoring and academic and professional guidance.
3. Incorporate favourable measures to ensure that schools integrate coeducational models.
 - 3.1. Analyse and correct teaching materials in order to eliminate discriminatory prejudices and stereotypes.
 - 3.2. Promote and encourage inclusive and equitable school practice through the use of non-sexist and inclusive language in its visual, oral, written and digital expressions.
 - 3.3. Organise school spaces according to criteria of equality that favour coexistence.
4. Offer comprehensive, gender-sensitive, affective-sexual education that takes into account sexual diversity, different gender identities and family diversity and promotes the establishment of positive, healthy and equal relationships.
 - 4.1. Incorporate the affective-sexual education programme "Amb tots els sentits" (With all our senses) into the school's educational project and the general annual programme.
5. Intervene in the educational sphere to prevent, detect and act against gender-based and LGBTI-phobic violence.
 - 5.1. Develop specific plans, guidelines and protocols to foster conflict resolution and to prevent, detect and act against gender-based and LGBTI-phobic violence.

Cataluña

The Autonomous Community of Cataluña does not have a regional Plan on education, nevertheless the Administration approved the Strategic Plan for Gender Equality Policies of the of the Government of Catalonia 2019-2022 (Plan estratégico de políticas de igualdad de



género del Gobierno de la Generalidad de Cataluña 2019-2022)¹⁷. The first line of political intervention is dedicated to “Coeducation And Promotion Of Egalitarian Values And Models”.

Its main objective is to educate society as a whole (all ages), to achieve effective equality between men and women:

- Educate from all institutions, not just schools, for real equality of rights and opportunities, placing equal value on the experience, skills and social and cultural contribution of women and men.
- Eliminate, through education, cultural gender stereotypes that lead to unequal valuations of women and men.
- to unequal valuations of the roles of men and women in all areas of their lives.
- Educate in the use of respectful and inclusive language.
- Contemplate affective and sexual education as a fundamental part of effective equality between men and women.
- Establish coeducation as a form of effective prevention for the eradication of gender violence.

The Strategic objectives are:

1. Guarantee gender equality in the educational sphere, developing and updating gender policies in the educational community.
2. Educate in gender equality in other strategic areas of society.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, the Department of Education launched the COEDUCA'T Program¹⁸, to help schools strengthen and make visible the gender perspective, co-education and affective-sexual education.

The aim is to move towards a model of inclusive education system, which incorporates gender equality and co-education to contribute to the betterment of society, where there is no room for discrimination on the grounds of gender, and which provides tools to develop respectful emotional and sexual relationships, in order to prevent sexist violence.

The final objective of the program is that, after three phases, the 2021-2022 academic year, all schools in Catalonia explicitly incorporate, in their Center Educational Project, basic aspects of co-education, gender perspective and sexuality.

¹⁷ https://dones.gencat.cat/web/.content/02_institut/10-pla_interdepartamental/Pla_Estrategic_2019_2022.pdf

¹⁸ <https://educacio.gencat.cat/ca/arees-actuacio/centres-serveis-educatius/altres-programes-educatius/educacio-infantil-primaria-secundaria-batxillerat/coeducat/>



Canary Islands

The Plan for Equality and Prevention of Gender Violence, developed by the Department of Education and Universities and based on the Canary Islands Government's Strategy for the Equality of Women and Men 2013-2020, has six strategic priorities designed around a global goal that enshrines the principle of "Equality as a backbone value of the education system that contributes to the construction of an egalitarian and inclusive society, free of gender roles and stereotypes".

The strategic priorities are:

1. Promotion and inclusion of the gender perspective in the educational administration.
2. Prevention and intervention in the case of gender-based violence and violence of sexist origin.
3. The transformation of mixed schools into a co-educational school model.
4. Affective-Sexual Education
5. Visibility and recognition of women's contribution to culture and society.
6. Promoting the coordination of administrative bodies, guaranteeing the promotion of gender equality and parity in representation.

Protocol for the support of trans* students and attention to gender diversity in Canary Islands schools

Many regions have protocols on gender identity and diversity, nevertheless we decided to present this one since it is very carefully designed.

The purpose of the protocol published in 2017 is to provide educational centres with an instrument that facilitates the implementation of measures and actions to support trans* pupils.

For this accompaniment, it is recognized as essential to create safe and caring spaces that focus on the needs of the trans* students. The perspective is supported by highlighting that gender identity or expression will never be conditioned by medical treatment or prior medical or psychological diagnosis.

The objective of the protocol are:

- Recognise, in the educational context of the Autonomous Community of the Canary Islands, the right to gender identity of pupils, with respect for their personal dignity, moral integrity and free development of their personality, all of which implies treatment in accordance with their gender identity, without such recognition and respect being conditional on any type of medical treatment or the provision of prior medical or psychological diagnosis.



- Guarantee the full school inclusion of students whose gender identity does not coincide with their registered sex or who express their gender in a way that does not respond to the most common social expectations.
- Establish actions to prevent and detect situations of transphobia towards trans* and gender-variant students, as well as bullying in its various manifestations.
- Guarantee the confidentiality and privacy of student data so that their status as trans* or gender variant students is not disclosed without the consent of the students themselves or their legal representatives.
- Strengthen the autonomy of trans* students and their decision-making capacity as one of the guiding principles of this protocol.
- To promote awareness-raising and training in gender diversity for the families of schools with trans* and gender-variant students.
- To train the entire educational community, in coordination with LGBTIQ+ associations, in sexual diversity and gender identity.

Educate for Equality Programme

The Educate for Equality Programme aims to encourage the entire educational community to work and interact from a co-educational perspective in order to overcome sexist stereotypes, promote egalitarian relationships and prevent gender-based violence. It also aims to be a tool that supports those who, on a daily basis, carry out teaching work and try to incorporate this perspective into their educational work. The promotion of measures aimed at fostering the comprehensive development of students in equality is one of the strategic lines of action, of a priority and mainstreaming nature, of the Department of Education and Universities, in accordance with the proposals of the Action Plan for Effective Equality between women and men (art. 7, Law 1/2010, of 26 February, Canarian Law on Equality between women and men).

Objectives:

- Raise awareness, involve and train educational communities in gender equality and coeducation.
- To develop and disseminate co-educational materials, plans, protocols and guidelines that facilitate the work of teachers in the construction of equality in all areas of their teaching practice.
- Promote awareness and develop actions on the prevention of gender-based violence and violence of sexist origin.
- To make visible the knowledge of women and the co-educational experiences implemented in educational centres.
- Promote measures to foster diversity and affective-sexual education.



- Coordinate and establish measures with other institutions to promote equality and the gender perspective.

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Galicia

The I Action Plan for Equality in the educational centers of Galicia 2016-2020¹⁹ entails 6 main priorities:

1. Deepen into the coeducational model and introduce a gender perspective in its dynamics, having as outstanding objectives ensure the integration of gender mainstreaming and principle of equal opportunities in the organizational documentation of the schools, highlighting good practices and intensifying the training of professors on gender and sexual-affective diversity.

2. Promote educational practices free of gender stereotypes, encouraging students to develop their own vital project without conditioning, starting from freedom and diversity.

One of the most prominent goals is the creation of a free subject in the field of equality, which allows work towards a coeducational strategy in the centers.

3. Integrating the gender perspective in the work towards school success through training, through the Mothers' and Fathers' Schools, providing diverse professional and life models that break down gender roles and favour an open, plural and positive perspective.

4. Addressing education from diversity for healthy and respectful emotional and sexual relationships, in order to achieve a harmonious coexistence that integrates gender, sexual and affective diversity, establishing areas of socialization that promote knowledge and coexistence in the educational community.

5. Work on the abuse of power and systemic violence in personal relationships, in order to make visible the mechanisms that underpin gender violence, and promote positive and peaceful relationships for all members of the community, providing guidelines for adaptation and inclusion in the coexistence plan of the center, to prevent and detect behaviors that are integrated into the gradient of gender violence and conducting awareness, information, training and intervention activities for the entire educational community.

6. Addressing early detection and effective and systemic response to gender-based violence and other forms of abuse, discrimination and related violence, with special attention to the prevention and compensation of situations of multiple discrimination.

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http://www.edu.xunta.gal/portal/sites/web/files/i_plan_de_actuacions_para_a_igualdade_nos_centros_educativos_de_galicia_2016_2020.pdf



Extremadura

The Plan for Gender Equality in Education in Extremadura (2020-2024) has the main objective of developing specific actions to promote equality in education, prevention of gender violence and coeducation, in compliance with the laws in force in Extremadura in the field of education and equality. The first priority action is the creation of the REGIONAL COMMISSION FOR EQUALITY IN EDUCATION. The Plan develops 6 strategic lines:

- Involvement of the educational community in coeducation

Measures:

- 1.1. Training and participation programme for families.
- 1.2. Community experiences of equality.
- 1.3. Protocols on gender violence.
- 1.4. Celebrations and school spaces.

- Teacher training on gender equality

Actions:

- 2.1. Analysis for the training of teachers in equality.
- 2.2. Meeting places and good practice.
- 2.3. Specialised advice from the Centres for professors' training.
- 2.4. Learning pathways and other actions.

- Progressive implementation of equality in the curriculum

Actions:

- Integration of the plan into school projects.
- Revision of the curriculum in an egalitarian sense.

- Reduction of students segregation

Measures:

- 4.1. Educational guidance against segregation.
- 4.2. Forums for student-teacher debate.
- 4.3. Equal promotion of personal autonomy.
- 4.4. Dissemination of positive references (people who can be a reference for students).

- Improving gender balance in education

Measures:



- 5.1. Gender perspective in educational structures.
- 5.2. Non-sexist language in the educational administration.
- 5.3. Other actions to facilitate gender perspective.
- Organización, seguimiento y evaluación del plan
 - Measures:
 - 6.1 Constitution of the Commission for Equality between women and men in Education, following agreement with the organisations and agents involved in the Plan.
 - 6.2 Regulation of the functions that can be exercised in terms of effective equality by the different responsibilities and jobs within an educational centre.
 - 6.3 Periodic collection and analysis of data disaggregated by sex in relation to pupils, teaching staff and families in schools.
 - 6.4 Development of a system of tools and indicators for the continuous evaluation of the Plan and its self-evaluation in schools.

3.3 School level

Schools have different instruments to set the basis and guide their educational project. The main instruments that can entail a coeducational and/or interseccional perspective are:

- The Annual General Programming (PGA) or Annual Center Plan (PAC).
- The Coexistence Plan (Plan de convivencia).
- The Equality Plan (Plan de igualdad).

Great differences have to be found at school level:

- Gender equative contents and instruments depend on each school. The general educational perspective can be found in the “General annual programming”, a document defined by the school board with the participation of the parent’s association.
- Although stated by law, coeducation depends to a large extent on the school principles’ and/or specific professors.
- Third sector organizations play a crucial role in proposing and implementing innovative projects at any stage.

The **School Coexistence Plan** is a school document that establishes and regulates all the aspects related to peaceful coexistence carried out by all the agents involved in the educational process: teachers, administration and services personnel, students and families (educational community). This Plan must be incorporated into the Annual General Programming (PGA) or Annual Center Plan (PAC). School peaceful coexistence is one of the



fundamental aspects within the principles of education, as it will be the main driving force in the process of pupils' socialisation. It is necessary to regulate this issue in order to promote its improvement and correct development with the aim of achieving a coexistence project based on values such as empathy, affection, respect, equality and tolerance.

Main elements of the School Coexistence Plan:

- The analysis of the school's coexistence situation: this should be based on a prior diagnosis in which all aspects related to the school's day-to-day life are examined.
- The specific objectives of the coexistence plan, i.e., once the analysis has been carried out, assess the aspects to be improved and set goals to be achieved. At the same time, the actions, measures or programmes to be carried out to improve coexistence should be added.
- The rules of coexistence: here the rules that regulate coexistence should be established, as well as the actions that are considered to be contrary to coexistence and how to act to prevent them, also establishing the relevant sanctions for those who do not comply with them.
- Methods of coordination with other members of the educational community, establishing the tools to be used to foster relations between all the members who participate in the teaching process at the centre or how to collaborate with other schools or institutions.

The Coexistence Plan itself establishes the creation of protocols related to actions derived from possible bullying, actions that harm other members of the school or even non-compliance with the established rules, setting out in its guidelines which actions are considered harmful and the protocol to be followed in case the event occurs.

The Coexistence Plan also serves to work on mainstreaming aspects related to educational content, such as self-concept, self-esteem, equality, welcome and respect. Its ultimate aim is to ensure that teachers, students, families and, above all, the centre as a whole, carry out a correct educational and socialising task.

The **equality plan in educational centres** has multiple goals and they are aimed at the entire educational community, from the teaching staff and management to the students and their families, since it is from the educational base where the social change necessary to achieve effective equality between women and men can begin.

Thus, the main objectives of these equality plans are:

- Raising awareness, involving and training the educational community in gender equality and coeducation (the latter being understood as an educational method



based on the principle of equality between the sexes and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex).

- The development and dissemination of co-educational materials, plans and protocols to facilitate the work of teachers in the construction of equality in all areas of education.
- Raise awareness and develop actions for the prevention of gender-based violence and violence of sexist origin.
- Raise the profile of women's knowledge and co-educational experiences in educational centres.
- To promote measures aimed at fostering diversity and affective-sexual education.

The Equality Plan for the school should also include a number of general and specific principles:

- **Prevention:** The actions proposed and carried out in the educational centre must guarantee the improvement of school coexistence and attention to diversity in all its manifestations, in order, through this, not only to strengthen and promote the concept of equality in the educational community, but also to be able to identify situations of risk and respond to them.
- **Gender parity and proportionality:** There must be a balanced participation of people of different sexes in decision-making processes.
- **Inclusiveness and visibility:** There must be a commitment from the entire educational community to promote equality, respect and visibility of sexual, gender, bodily, family, cultural and functional diversity.
- **Co-responsibility:** The elaboration of the Plan and the execution of its actions must be based on the principle of shared responsibility among all members of the educational community.
- **Mainstreaming:** The gender perspective must be incorporated into the design and development of all the activities of the educational centre.
- **Intersectionality:** Observing all dimensions of a person's identity and their respective systems of oppression, domination and discrimination.

Phases for the development and implementation of the centre's equality plan

1.- Diagnosis



1.1.- Compilation of information on the initial situation at the centre in relation to Equality Education

2.- Design and implementation of the plan

- 2.1.- Determination of the guiding principles.
- 2.2.- Definition of general and specific objectives.
- 2.3.- Identification and design of actions to be carried out.
- 2.4.- Participation of teachers, students and families.
- 2.5.- Determination of the evaluation system to monitor the implementation of the plan.
- 2.6.- Execution of the plan: implementation of the actions designed.

3.- Evaluation and monitoring of the plan

- 3.1.- Application of the evaluation and monitoring system.
- 3.2.- Feedback and possible modifications and improvements to the plan initially designed.

4. Good practices put in place by schools and kindergartens regarding the promotion of gender equality and questioning gender stereotypes

The Department of education of the Basque Country started in 2013-14 an annual tender for coeducational projects to be implemented by primary and secondary schools of the Basque territory. The call for tender 2021²⁰ selected 50 public schools among those providing Primary and Secondary Education to design an action project in the field of coeducation and the prevention and early detection of violence against women, covering the school years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, which will enable them to address coeducation and the prevention and early detection of violence against women in a global, systematic and integrated manner in their educational centre.

The selected schools will be allocated with the time credit corresponding to half a teacher's working day. This time will be used in the first of the 2 years of the project. The centre must commit and enable the person responsible for the project to have time during the remaining

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https://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/inn_coeducacion_proy_actuacion/es_def/adjuntos/HZKD_Coeducacion_publica_2021_c.pdf



academic year to carry out his/her coordination, planning and attendance at a diversity training programme. This hourly credit represents an approximate cost to the Basque Administration of 1.212.500,00€.

Nahiko programme - Basque Country

The Nahiko programme²¹ started in 2003 has been used and evaluated by more than 90 schools and more than 4,000 pupils. Promoted by Emakunde (Women Institute), the Basque Institute of Women, the training programme aims to improve coexistence and relations between pupils, to educate for equality and human rights and to prevent violence against women.

To this purpose, the programme offers materials that allow the development of new models of coexistence, with the following characteristics:

- Development and full autonomy of each girl and boy.
- Responsibility in all areas of life.
- Construction of non-violent relationships between people.
- Analysis and reflection of reality and relationships from a gender perspective.
- New masculinities without violence.

The training programme consists of teaching units for professors, pupils and families.

The teacher's guide contains:

- The main theme of the unit.
- The objectives and contents of the unit.
- The description, objectives and contents of the materials, as well as the rules for for the use of the games.

The pupils materials:

- These are materials and dynamics for group work in the classroom. They allow observe, analyse, debate.
- They use simple, generally well-known dynamics: family cards, dominoes, bingo, goose, Parcheesi, true or false.
- Their aim: to turn the daily life of the pupils.

The aim is to turn the daily life of the pupils into a subject to work on: to experience, remember, reflect and analyse situations, feelings, relationships...

The notebooks:

- Students' notebook: to work in the classroom after playing and working in groups.

²¹ <https://www.emakunde.euskadi.eus/nahiko/-/informacion/nahiko/>



It allows them to summarise and internalise what they have learnt, fix what they have learnt and draw conclusions.

- - Family notebook: to disseminate among families what has been learnt at school. To take home and work at home. It allows to raise awareness, reflect, share and debate with families.

Playgrounds

In recent years, the playgrounds have been the centre of various projects.

The Ministry of Education defines the playground as an important space in the teaching-learning process. It is not only a space to enjoy and play, but also to learn, because it is here that children behave (more) freely than in the classrooms and they can establish their own rules. Moreover, the use of playgrounds can help to see the internalized settings in terms of gendered use of space and games. These can lead to a differential development of skills in boys and girls, reinforcing behaviours and practices that, time after time, turn into stereotypes.

In Spain, the majority of school playgrounds present a distribution of space and its use characterized by androcentrism and organized around football as core activity. This means that they are designed around an archetype of child: male, prone to active game and with a preference for ball games.

Projects and materials on playgrounds: some examples

- Manual on coeducational playgrounds:
https://ceice.gva.es/documents/169149987/172590358/Guia_de_patis_coeducatius.pdf written by Sandra Molines Borrás for the Generalitat Valenciana, Conselleria d'Educació, Cultura i Esport.
 - The school we want [El cole que queremos] project (2020-21), fundación Cepaim:
<https://cepaim.org/?s=molina+de+aragon+el+cole+que+queremos>
 - Inclusive playground, different projects starting from 2014, Col·lectiu Punt Sis:
<http://www.punt6.org/es/proyectos-de-punt-6/proyectos-arquitectura-y-planificacion-urbana/>
- Manual by the Col·lectiu Punt6 i coeducació (2020). Patios coeducativos. Guía para la transformación feminista de los espacios educativos.
https://issuu.com/patioscoeducativos/docs/libropatioscoeducativos_09-04-2020_cast



- Inclusive playground [Patios inclusivos] project (2017), Pandora Mirabilia
<https://www.pandoramirabilia.net/project/red-de-patios-inclusivos-y-sostenibles/>

The school we want

Fundación cepaim project in Aragónese school

The pre-school and primary school centre “Virgen de la Hoz” in Molina de Aragón hosts the project “The school we want”, implemented by the Fundación Cepaim and co-financed by Fundación “la Caixa”. In this project, the Cepaim team and the educational community work together to improve coexistence in the classrooms and the school's own infrastructures. In total, more than 400 people will participate at different levels. More specifically, the first objective is to foster coexistence in the school from the perspective of equality, interculturality and the management of diversity and the promotion of citizen participation through the educational community, with special emphasis on families and teachers. The second objective is to promote social inclusion through direct social intervention with students. The third objective is the promotion of socio-educational actions aimed at the local population and different groups outside the educational community (young people, the elderly, etc.) to raise awareness of the need to build a school and a town rich in cultural diversity and positive relationships. The last objective is to improve the community spaces of the school, especially the playground and the school library.

The first step has been the participatory diagnosis to find out the needs and what the educational community itself wants to do within the school. Through an interactive theatrical proposal and in collaboration with the school's teaching staff, different proposals for improvement of the pre-school and Primary school playground have been collected.

Implementation of the Skolae Programme in the centre “Hegoalde Ikastola” (Pamplona, Navarre)

The Hegoalde Ikastola was one of the Navarre Schools that took part in the pilot phase of the Skolae Programma (see above for a description) 2017-2018.

Phases:

- Training for educational professionals before the pilot phase
- Diagnosis
- Improvement plan
- Implementation of the SKOLAE programme.

Training for educational professionals before the pilot phase.



In September 2017, the entire teaching staff of the centre began the training with activities such as the Presentation Days of the Coeducation Plan and initial in-school training followed by extensive online training. This training, among other outputs, brought about a change in the way the teaching staff looked at things, questioning their way of understanding and educating in equality, being aware of how much they had to unlearn (Inés López González, Primary Education Teacher. Pedagogue. Director of the Hegoalde Ikastola centre).

Diagnosis

The Skolae steering team, composed by the director and a representative from each cycle, received specific training and elaborated the diagnosis of the centre. To this end, the following was analysed:

- Language used in school documents, in documents addressed to families, meetings.
- Images: are they egalitarian, do they make women visible, do they reproduce gender stereotypes?
- School projects
- Events
- Common spaces: distribution, decoration...
- Textbooks and curricular materials
- School library
- Extracurricular activities offered by the APYMA

Improvement plan

Based on the diagnosis, the improvement plan included the following measures:

- To achieve the widespread use of inclusive language:
 - A list of inclusive words was distributed to the teaching staff, APYMA (parents' association), administrative staff, caretakers and canteen staff.
 - Changes were made to documents addressed to families.
 - School calendar was modified.
- Data segregated by gender were produced: enrolment, academic results, attendees at meetings.
- Revision of textbooks and materials by analysing sexist language or images with the students: some were withdrawn and others not.
- Replacement or removal of images in the classrooms, corridors, common places such as the library, dining room.



- We introduced new anniversaries in the calendar drawn up jointly with the APYMA, the school diary and in the classroom programmes (30th January, 11th February, 11th October).
- The participation in the SKOLAE programme was made visible both in the centre itself and through the WEB.

Implementation of the SKOLAE programme

From December onwards, once the initial training had been completed, the teachers began to put into practice the worksheets proposed by the Skolae programme for the Infant and Primary Education stages. Each worksheet corresponds to an activity and details the learning area and content to be worked on, gives a brief description and justification of the activity and presents the specific proposals to be developed in the classroom. Various types of didactic materials are also offered, as well as bibliography and links to deepen the methodology of the activity and to reinforce the theoretical positioning that underpins it. For each of them, a reflection and evaluation of the implementation of the activity was carried out.

Integration in the curriculum of pre-school and primary education: two examples

One of the pedagogical areas in the Skolae programme is called: Sexuality, coexistence and violence prevention. In pre-school centres, this area has been worked as follows:

From de personal point of view:

- Constructing my identity: The human sexual fact. Sexual identity. Diversity.
- Our origin: Children's interests and curiosities about the origin of people such as: fertilisation, the place where the foetus develops, care of the pregnant woman and her baby.
- Our bodies grow. Individual physical differences. Care of the body. The body as a source of sensations, communication and pleasure, the role of the senses. Criteria that facilitate our personal care.

From de relational point of view:

- Educating in the management and expression of emotions as a pillar for the prevention of gender-based violence.
- Affective bonds.
- Family diversity.

From the contextual point of view:

- Analyse the characteristics of loving someone in their different manifestations: friendship, family, partner, etc.



- To identify emotions. To facilitate the understanding of the usefulness of emotions. To provide the necessary tools for managing them.
- Sexual identity, gender identity.

In primary schools, “Sexuality, coexistence and violence prevention” has been worked as follow:

From the personal point of view:

- Our body: Individual physical differences. Care of the body. The body as a source of sensations, communication and pleasure. Criteria that facilitate our personal care. Physiological changes in pre-puberty and puberty. Physiology of human sexual response. Body changes in response to sexual stimuli.

From the relational point of view:

- Work on the different emotions from a gender perspective through the text "The Emotionarium"²².
- To delve into the limits of our bodies and how invading them is a form of aggression.
- Sexual identity. Diversity.
- To encourage recognition of what attracts us. Providing tools and strengthening skills for emotional management in intimate relationships. Negotiation skills.
- Reproductive dimension of sexuality.

From the contextual point of view:

- To become aware of the different gender inequalities that take place at their ages in order to put a stop to them.
- Ethics and good treatment in affective relationships.
- Diversity as a richness.
- Reflection and critical analysis of the prevailing models of beauty in Western society and other cultures.

²² Núñez Pereira C., Valcárcel R.R. (2018). Emocionario. Dime lo que sientes. Buenos Aires: V&R.



5. Materials on Gender Equality, Children, Stereotypes, gender inclusive methodologies, last 5 years

Manuals of coeducation

Sánchez Sáinz M., Penna Tosso M., de la Rosa Rodríguez B. (2015), CCOO Enseñanza. Somos como somos. 12 inclusiones, 12 transformaciones. [https://eprints.ucm.es/id/eprint/39014/2/2060425-Somos como somos 12 inclusiones, 12 transformaciones.pdf](https://eprints.ucm.es/id/eprint/39014/2/2060425-Somos%20como%20somos%2012%20inclusiones,%2012%20transformaciones.pdf)

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Rochi (Mercedes Sánchez Sáinz), Polvorilla (Melani Penna Tosso), Bol (Belén de la Rosa Rodríguez) (2020). El mundo raro de Mermel. Propuestas didácticas para abordar las diversidades en Infantil y Primaria. Canarias: Federación de Enseñanza de CCOO. [https://www3.gobiernodecanarias.org/medusa/ecoescuela/educarparalaigualdad/files/2020/05/el mundo raro de mermel -materiales-de-aula.pdf](https://www3.gobiernodecanarias.org/medusa/ecoescuela/educarparalaigualdad/files/2020/05/el_mundo_raro_de_mermel_-_materiales-de-aula.pdf)

Chrysallis. Asociación de Familias de Menores Trans* (2021). GUÍA PARA DOCENTES. Educación en Diversidad e Igualdad. <https://chrysallis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/GUIA-PARA-DOCENTES.-Educacion-en-Diversidad-e-Igualdad.pdf>

Pazmiño J.A., Tostado Calvo S. para la Fundación Triángulo (2013). Guía para docentes: herramientas para la educación con enfoque de diversidad afectivo sexual. Madrid: Fundación Triángulo. https://issuu.com/triangulo/docs/guia_para_docentes_diversidad_afect

María Luisa Rebolledo Deschamps y Gemma Garrón Pérez (2017). Tanto Monta... ¿monta tanto?...Siempre Isabel, a veces Fernando. MANUAL DIDÁCTICO SOBRE CONCILIACIÓN Y CORRESPONSABILIDAD PARA SEGUNDO Y TERCER CICLO DE EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA <https://agora-online.es/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Manual-didactico-sobre-conciliacion-y-corresponsabilidad-2-y-3-ciclo-Educacion-Primaria-1.pdf>



Books and stories for children with coeducational and diversity perspective

Entreculturas (2020) “Un mundo de cuento” https://www.coeducacion.es/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Un-mundo-de-cuento_Entreculturas.pdf

Penna Tosso M., Sánchez Sáinz M., de la Rosa Rodríguez B. (2020). El mundo raro de Mermel. Cuentos para abordar las diversidades en infantil y primaria. Educar para la igualdad. Gobierno de Canarias.

[https://www3.gobiernodecanarias.org/medusa/ecoescuela/educarparalaigualdad/files/2020/05/el mundo raro de mermel canarias baja web doblepagina.pdf](https://www3.gobiernodecanarias.org/medusa/ecoescuela/educarparalaigualdad/files/2020/05/el_mundo_raro_de_mermel_canarias_baja_web_doblepagina.pdf)

Rebolledo Deschamps M., con la colaboración del Equipo Ágora (2009). Siete rompecuentos para siete noches. Guía didáctica para una Educación No Sexista dirigida a madres y padres. Dirección General de la Mujer. Vicepresidencia. Gobierno de Cantabria.

<https://web.ua.es/es/unidad-igualdad/secundando-la-igualdad/documentos/actua/educacion-infantil/siete-rompecuentos.pdf>

AA.VV. (2011). Colorina Colorada ¡Ya no quiero ser un hada! 1er Concurso de Cuentos Infantiles Feministas realizado por Feministas Tramando y Cocorococq Ediciones, con el apoyo de Fondo Alquimia de Chile. <https://www.pikaramagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/colorinacolorada.pdf>

Monasterio C., Pandora Mirabilia (2021). Audiocuento: La vida privada de los superhéroes (Héroes en zapatillas). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KftYKi7n-1U&t=35s>

Judel B., Olcina N., Aguilar N., García Mora C. (2016). Convivir, conciliar. 3 cuentos coeducativos. Melilla: Escuela de Arte Miguel Marmolejo

<https://www.upeformacion.es/media/adjuntos/conciliar-convivir.pdf>

López N. (2009). La Cenicienta que no quería comer perdices. Planeta

<https://www.mujeresenred.net/IMG/pdf/lacenicientaquenoqueriacomerperdices.pdf>

Barbé A., Carro S. (2016). Cola de sirena. Bellaterra [https://issuu.com/ed-bellaterra.com/docs/cola de sirena baja](https://issuu.com/ed-bellaterra.com/docs/cola_de_sirena_baja)

García N., EMAIZE Centro Sexológico (2016). Yo soy mía. Bellaterra [https://issuu.com/ed-bellaterra.com/docs/yo soy mia baja](https://issuu.com/ed-bellaterra.com/docs/yo_soy_mia_baja)

Other resources

From sexism to femvertising. Strategies for the use of advertising in the classroom.

Children vs. fashion: <https://yolandadominguez.com/portfolio/ninos-vs-moda/>

Yolanda Dominguez. 2015.



Boys and girls decode the images and expose the implicit violence and inequality in the treatment of men and women, offering to help them: "they are hungry", "they feel lonely" and "they could die", or projecting their desires onto the men's roles: "they are happy", "I want to go to university too", "I am the boss".

We include in this section recent congresses on coeducation in Spain, since it is a very present and vibrant approach in the teaching and academic community and there are a lot of initiatives around it-. Among others:

- 5th – 6th March 2020- I Andalusian coeducation congress “Education and feminism”, organized by the Department of Equality, Social Policies and Work-Life Balance of the Autonomous Community, through the Andalusian Institute for Women.
- 9th-11th March 2020 – I International congress of coeducation and feminist pedagogy - Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of the Autonomous University of Madrid. Organized by professors of the faculty.
- 24th-25th October 2020 – III International congress of coeducation organized by CLAVICO (Asociación Claustro Virtual de Coeducación) in Leganés (Madrid), co-founded by the local Institute for Women.
- 3rd-5th November 2020 – organized by the NGOs Calcuta Ondoan and Ikertze and co-financed by various institutions of the Basque Country.
- 7th-9th July 2021 - I International congress of gender and education organized by two female professors of the University of Valladolid, co financed by the local Institute for Women.
- 24th -25th October 2021 - II Andalusian coeducation congress with the title 'From feminism in the classroom to social transformation', organized by the Department of Equality, Social Policies and Work-Life Balance of the Autonomous Community, through the Andalusian Institute for Women.
- 16th-17th October 2021 – IV International congress of coeducation organized by CLAVICO (Asociación Claustro Virtual de Coeducación) in Leganés (Madrid), co-founded by the local Institute for Women.



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Data analysis and needs assessment on the initiatives and public policies on early childhood development and gender equality - Spain

Author: Cepaim Foundation

1. Introduction and methodology

In this report, we are going to analyse the initiatives and public policies on early childhood development and gender equality. As examined in the report “Mapping National initiatives and public policies on early childhood development and gender equality”, Spain has a solid legislation on gender equality and diversity in early education. Nevertheless, the solid legislative initiatives do not necessarily imply that:

- Laws/norms are correctly implemented;
- Formal equality turns automatically to substantive equality.
- Laws/norms are undisputed.

We are going to discuss to two first points in this report. Concerning the last point, gender equality and diversity principles and initiatives are under attack, in Spain and in Europe, with anti-gender movements that take different forms. In Spain, one of them is the so-called “parental pin”, supported by the far-right party Vox. It consists of the possibility for students’ parents or legal guardians to deny a student's attendance at supplementary activities outside the formal curriculum. It is seen as an extension of the right of parents to govern the moral and religious education of their children. Thus, in Spain, it has been proposed to veto activities related to issues of gender identity, feminism or sexual diversity.

In the region of Murcia, for example, the parental veto was introduced in 2019. Its introduction was promoted by the far-right political party VOX since 2018 when it presented it in multiple electoral programmes and turns to be important in order to form governments at the regional level. In Murcia, the measure was implemented by the Popular Party government in September 2019 as part of a budget agreement with VOX. However, this regulation was suspended in February last year, when the Ministry of Education appealed to the Murcia High Court of Justice. In July, the court itself filed the case, having been left without object, because with the end of the course the regulation of the Ministry declined.

1.1 Methodology

In order to analyse the different initiatives on coeducation, equality, diversity and intersectionality in early education we used qualitative data, gathered as follows:



- 1) Desk research on the coeducation, equality, diversity and intersectionality in early education in Spain.
- 3) Review and analysis of educational materials and initiatives from a gender and intersectional perspective.
- 4) Individual interviews with experts in education/policy makers/trainers in the field of education.

Name	Field of expertise/work	Int. code
Marina Crespo Garrido	Teacher in primary school and developer of the “Salmon method” to introduce coeducation in physical education classes.	11
Andrés Molina Herrero	Former teacher in pre-primary school and expert in masculinities, gender and innovative pedagogical methods.	12
Carmen Ruiz Repullo	Professor of Sociology, University of Jaén, expert in gender-based violence and coeducation.	13
M ^a Carmen Morillas Vallejo	President of the FAPA (Federation of students’ parents of the region of Madrid)	14
Melani Penna Tosso	Professor, faculty of education. University Complutense. Coordinator of the Sexual Diversity and Gender Identity Office	15
Rosa Sanchis	Adviser to the Department of Education, Valencian Community	16
Soraya Gonzalez Guerrero	Developer of projects on inclusive playgrounds, cooperative Pandora Mirabilia	17
María Barba Guillén	Responsible for the project “the school we want”, Molina de Aragón, Fundación Cepaim	18
Marta Tercero Villalta	Implementing staff for the project “the school we want”, Molina de Aragón, Fundación Cepaim	19

- 5) Meeting with regional policy makers and training director of the Department of Education, Universities, Science (Region of Madrid).

Name	Organization
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David Cervera Olivares	Deputy Director General for Innovation and Training Programmes. Directorate General for Bilingualism and Quality of Teaching. Department of Education, Universities and Science
Eva M ^a Fernandez Cabanillas	Director of CRIF – Centro regional de innovación y formación Las Acacias
Ángel Carrasco Cabrero	Regional coordination - Cepaim Foundation
Bakea Alonso	Coordinator of the Kinder project - Cepaim Foundation
Valentina Longo	Researcher in the Kinder project - Cepaim Foundation

2. Obstacles, constraints, and limitations of public policies, programs and initiatives on coeducation

In early childhood education, concern about gender issues has focused until recent years mainly on the differences between male and female socialisation of pupils (especially in the case of girls). The most frequently addressed issues have been sexism in children's stories and boys' and girls' games. Although there has been the same tendency as in the rest of the educational stages: the loss of interest in the subject of the eighties and nineties since it was considered an overcome issue, the irregular implementation of co-education in the country (in some regions it is more widespread, in others weak), scarcity of male professors, lack of methods and materials (Abril y Romero 2008).

Nevertheless, according to the experts we could interview, in recent years there has been a new interest on the issue, characterized by an intense normative production, a – at least partial – reconceptualization of the concept of coeducation. Such reconceptualization led to the adoption of an intersectional lens to move towards inclusive education that allows to identify the interaction of multiple factors that lead to discriminatory processes in schools towards different student groups. Especially in the case in gender identity and sexual orientation, there are several initiatives both at normative level (regional level) and projects implementation.

Being a lively and changing concept, we can differentiate among four main positions on coeducation of the interviewed experts:

- 1) The concept is not used at all for its connection to equality and diversity intended is structural inequality that have to be tackled. In such cases, other concepts are used, such as “peaceful coexistence”. This is the case, for example, of the



Community of Madrid that does not have a coeducational plan and, as responsible for the in-service training for professors, does not offer courses.

2) The concept is not used because it is considered too narrow, since it still focuses only in boys and girls in a binary construction that leaves outside other intersecting inequalities.

3) The concept is used and considers gender equality, focusing especially on gendered norms, roles and stereotypes but also other inequalities, like those based on gender identity and sexual option.

4) The concept is used and explained from an intersectional approach.

This last definition can be summarised by one of the expert we could interview:

Coeducation is a pedagogy that has to permeate the curriculum, it has to ensure that the content, the form, the methodology, have incorporated the inequalities between boys and girls, but also LGBT, interculturalism, ecology. The school is the ideal space to question what is outside, a space for social transformation. (I3)

Despite the different meanings and with the exception of the first position, the obstacles and constraints named by the interviewees and reported in the literature go on the same direction and can be summarised as follows:

- Teachers' training in gender+ perspective
- Legislative measures don't automatically assure implementation
- Temporality of contracts for teachers
- Bureaucratization and fragmentation in schools
- Role of the management team

Teachers' training in gender perspective

Training, both initial and in-service, is the most quoted field that need to be taken in consideration when talking about difficulties in building a coeducational school.

Starting from initial training, Ballarín (2014) reviews the titles of the courses in the Degree of Teacher in Early Childhood Education to detect references to equality or coeducation. Several relevant conclusions were drawn from this study: in 13 out of 42 public Universities there was a subject that, by its title, could be considered to address issues related to women, equality or gender. Of these 13 subjects, only at the University of A Coruña is there a compulsory subject, and in 4 other universities, the subjects are of a basic nature (Autónoma de Madrid, Extremadura, Valladolid and Navarra). In the remaining 8, the subjects are optional. In other more local studies carried out in universities such as Seville, Castilla La Mancha, or Valencia,



the lack of preparation that future and future education professionals obtain with respect to issues related to coeducation and equal opportunities is revealed" (Bejarano et al, 2019, p. 42).

Initial training on gender+ is weak:

- It is not very widespread in universities.
- It is often taught as optional and not as compulsory subject.
- It depends on the strong will of some professors.

In short, the gender and intersectional perspective is still not mainstreamed in the initial training of future professors: the efforts of many feminist university professors have been frustrated in their desire to introduce it in the curricula firstly, because of the weak consideration in both the regulations and their university application, which have made it possible to make optional what should be a training obligation. Secondly, because these subjects have been allowed to be taught by professors without specific training, who can trivialise and render insubstantial the knowledge accumulated since the feminist movement (Ballarín 2017).

In-service training According to the results of a research conducted with almost 500 professors and managers of schools in Vitoria-Gasteiz (Aristizabal et al. 2018), both the management teams and a majority of the teaching staff agree that coeducation is a responsibility of the centre, which should be worked on in a transversal way in all fields and subjects of education. In order to meet this challenge, both the management and the teaching teams consider it necessary to train teachers in this subject and to have the appropriate resources to enable it to be integrated into the different subjects. 85% of teachers are very clear that in order to achieve a fairer and more egalitarian society, it is essential for teachers to receive good training.

According to Aristizabal (et al. 2018) and in line with our interviewees, the type of training should be:

- the management team needs specific training on gender issues,
- the teaching staff calls for specific training and is also demanding training based on practical cases that analyse the situations that arise on a daily basis in everyday life. This training should be capable of breaking patterns and helping to detect the actions that contribute to maintaining gender roles and stereotypes that are so internalised that we consider them to be "normal". To this end, all teachers should go through a process of self-knowledge and awareness of their practices as a prevention against the "gender blindness.

In-service training on gender+ is:



- Not always based on practical cases.
- Uneven distributed across regions.
- Optional (in-service training is compulsory, but the content is optional).

In the previous report of the Kinder project we presented the SKOLAE programme as a good practice to be analysed and possibly reproduced in the in-service training of professors (and families). In the following section we present the reasons why, according to the professor Carmen Ruiz Repullo who had been working two years in the programme.

- The programme is ambitious and has a good architecture.
 - o The training programme is designed around concrete objectives organized around each stage of growth.
 - o The training programme is designed around 3 fields in order to create a transformation at different levels: personal, relational and contextual.
- The training programme is compulsory for teachers and all of them received it.
- It is a clear political challenge, with a lot of efforts put in communication at both the school and the family level.
- The changes are visible in educational centres.

In general, although positive changes have been observed in recent decades, there is still resistance in the attitudes of teachers towards equality and coeducation, as well as a low level of practical and relational skills in this area, as a result of the few skills that can be developed through the curricula of the different universities in reference to gender+ and coeducation. Also, the in-service training, that could be complementary to initial training, has a very different development in the different regions, according to different political priorities and conceptions of education.

In some autonomous communities, training in new technologies is strongly promoted, but little in coeducation. (I4)

The need of gender+ training is not only addressed to the teaching staff, but to the whole educational community that comprises also non-teaching staff, parents and the community in order to build a comprehensive and coherent education project:

For coeducation to permeate the school, it has to permeate the entire educational base and that means revolutionizing the school. It means taking the teachers, the non-teaching staff, the students, the families, the environment, and asking: "let's see, in mathematics, how sexism is reproduced, how can we correct it? (I3)



Materials for gender+ training

According to the results of the mapping on gender+ initiatives in schools, we detected a great availability of materials for teachers and educators. Nevertheless, the materials are not classified and the quality is very uneven.

There is a lot of material without a line... this confuses teachers. It would be necessary to map the material! [...] Moreover, not everything that says "coeducation" is coeducational! There is material with this label that doesn't have inclusive language, or always put the same examples of women without a further research. (I1)

Another point raised by our interviewed experts (I3 and I2) is the risk that the didactic manuals are used by professionals that didn't receive specific training. In this case, the superficial aspects of the activities can be reproduced, but without managing an in-depth reading of the phenomenon, the consequences of a specific activity are not manageable and can create further suffering.

In one school a teacher run a workshop and the son of a woman who was killed because of gender-based violence was there... and the teacher did not know how to treat what came out, how to manage it and how to refer it. In some workshops I have given in high schools I have had girls that fainted or facing anxiety attacks, but I have training in this, I follow up on what happens in the classroom. If this happens to someone who has no training, you generate a huge problem that you don't know how to handle. (I3)

Legislative measures don't automatically assure implementation

Legislative initiatives need to be properly implemented in order to build educational centres that use a gender+ perspective in their activities.

Mainstreaming the gender approach is a declared objective in practically all the plans/initiatives considered. Thus, gender mainstreaming is encouraged during the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and interventions aimed at guaranteeing the right to education. Nevertheless, mainstreaming needs to be accompanied by a strong commitment of the management staff or of professors that decide to include the gender+ perspective in their annual teaching plan. All professors are obliged to do it, but there are no solid mechanisms to facilitate and control it

With mainstreaming, content is lost; teachers are afraid of certain topics: those that may cause conflicts, political issues, migration, etc. What teachers do not understand is that they have a legal obligation to work on them. I include these topics in my programming and work on them every year and I have never had any problems with parents. (I1)



All the interviewees expressed frustration because of the gap between recognized principles underpinning a coeducational school and the level of implementation. Coeducational plan, promoted by the majority of the autonomous Communities, do not result in operational policies at school level and/or they depend almost exclusively on specific persons' commitment:

[The coeducational plan] becomes a piece of paper in a drawer, like the equality plan. Some people take it seriously and others do not. It is taken seriously by the centre whose management team is committed to it and believes in it. (I)

A shared idea transmitted by our interviewees is that in many cases there are not the conditions to construct a coeducational school. Laws are clear, but teachers do not have the instruments to do it, both at the level of initial training as well as at the level of in-service one.

Teachers do not have the tools to incorporate coeducation... you cannot ask teachers for something at a legislative level when at a basic level you are not giving it to them. (I3)

Temporality of contracts for teachers

According to the trade union Comisiones Obreras [FECCOO 2019], following the cuts in expenditure for education in the last decade, there have been two main effects: the destruction of jobs and an increase in temporary and partial employment . Concerning the increasing temporality, the number of temporary staff since 2009 has increased by 59,491 persons, from 95,955 to 155,416 in January 2019. This represents an increase of 62% in ten years. Increase in part-time work: during the period 2009-2017, part-time work increased by 48.59%, from 25,189 teachers working part-time in the academic year 2009-2010 to 37,428 in the academic year 2017-2018.

The precarization of the teaching and school staff is especially serious when considering rural schools and disadvantaged urban schools: in these cases, the great turnover of teachers combined with the lack of resources makes difficult to run medium- and long-term projects. These centres will tend to reproduce social inequalities since they don't have the human and material resources to plan educational activities even if the initiatives are proposed and implemented by third sector organizations.

Even if we try to promote our coeducational and inclusive project from our Foundation, it is difficult to plan long-term interventions because many teachers work in the school centre just for one year or for few months. It's like starting from scratch every year (I8)



Bureaucratization and fragmentation in schools

According to the field research and to the UGT Education Sector (trade Union) there is a need for a less bureaucratized school, with more time for teaching, innovation and research. In this sense, it is considered "essential" to unify the legislation that regulates the life of schools, or to simplify and specify documents, both institutional and pedagogical, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and fragmentation.

The main gap in this sense has to be found in the shortages of administrative and service staff to carry out non-teaching tasks and in the inadequate technological resources that could simplify and streamline documents and the tasks of teachers and non-teachers by providing more staff and a flexible and simple platform that allows access to the programmes and tools necessary for teaching and school management, facilitating communication between the administration, schools, teachers and families.

UGT also sees the need to offer pedagogical and management training during school hours and to adapt both the timetables of management positions to the number of groups/classes in order to guarantee better management, as well as working times updated to the new reality: teleworking, virtual classrooms, online teaching, etc.

Another important aspect underlined by our interviewees is that, because of bureaucratization, but also for the pandemic and changes in legislation, mechanisms of participation of parents/guardians to the life of centres have been diminishing. This is particularly strong since ICT are more and more important in the relationship between schools and families/legal guardians. Many low-income families do not have access to ICT and they are not able to maintain and nourish a fluent communication with the school that could allow building a common educational project.

Another aspect that has to deal with the growing complexity, with different approaches to inequalities and with the different priorities in schools' policies is the fragmentation of the educational project.

In the same school there may be programs that deal with different inequalities separately: the eco-school, the intercultural program, the best thing would be for the different projects to converge, to see the points in common and the synergies. (I3)

In this sense, different policies – like the equality plan and the peaceful coexistence plan – can have different perspectives: not always coinciding and also not always talking to each other:

Sometimes coexistence plans and equality plans coincide, sometimes they do not. Sometimes coexistence plans have a gender focus, sometimes they do not (although it would be logical that they do, because coexistence problems have a lot to do with the social construction of



masculinity and power relations). Sometimes there are separate departments: coexistence and equality, which do not talk to each other. (I3)

Role of the management team

The management team of educational centres play a big role in implementing educational project with a gender+ perspective.

Coeducational schools depend to a large extent on the specific composition of the management team and teaching staff of a specific school. Their motivation and their implication are what really makes the difference.

Some people are working hard to implement coeducation and others don't care. There are schools that have been working on this for more than 20 years and continue to do so. Coeducation is carried out on a daily basis. There are others that have done almost nothing. (I3)

When the management team is motivated and trained in gender+ perspective, the whole school itself incorporates such perspective, which becomes visible.

It is clear when a school works with a co-educational perspective. You go into the schools and you see it: there are things about equality, interculturality, diversity... you can see the commitment, it becomes real. (I1)

3. Recommendations

How should the training be?

Initial teachers' training:

- Compulsory
- Theory + practical/experiential part.
- Entail an intersectional approach.

Different interviewees emphasise that the in-service training processes should:

- Have a practical orientation (workshops with an experiential part),
- Carried out in the school itself, based on real cases of school life and on collaboration between teachers and with experts;



- Give instruments to introduce the gender perspective in the different subjects.
- Be organized in three levels, according to an initial diagnosis: beginners, intermediate and advanced in order to avoid repetition of contents.

In other words, the articulation between theory and practice should be one of the guiding principles of the training programme.

Material with gender+ perspective

There are a lot of materials and manuals, they generally have a good availability from different website, but, at the same time, there is no recent mapping so it is difficult to navigate among them and know which ones are appropriate for each need/situation.

- Design and implement a project to map all material on education with gender+ perspective.
- Revision and update of all curricula materials used in the classrooms with gender+ perspective.

Long-term project with gender+ perspective

- Short Project produces short-term consequences: Long-term project are needed in order to change the general gender+ culture in a specific school centre and they can continue even if the rotation of teachers is high.

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Education, Gender Equality and Childhood: Croatian Case.

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1. Introduction

The basic principles for education are established in the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia in Articles 65 and 66. According to the Constitution, primary education is free and compulsory, while secondary and higher education are available to everyone under equal conditions and in accordance with their aptitudes. The Constitution guarantees the autonomy of universities, more specifically, universities decide independently on their organization and operation, in compliance with the law.

The Republic of Croatia has signed and ratified a great number of international and European legislative instruments which are crucial for advancing general education, education for democratic citizenship and the management of diversity. These include the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Croatian education system is centrally managed by the *Ministry of Science and Education*. Besides Ministry, other national public bodies involved in the regulation, development and quality control of the educational sector in Croatia are *Education and Teacher Training Agency, Agency for Vocational Education and Training, Agency for Science and Higher Education, Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes and National Centre for External Evaluation of Education*. Ministry and the agencies legally proscribe and accredit educational programs provided by educational institutions at all levels. Ministry also administers the salaries of teaching staff - which is the major share of the total budget for education - for all levels of education, except for the early childhood education and care which is provided and administered by the local governments (source: Eurydice - National education systems²³). The system of education of the Republic of Croatia has been regulated by the Act on Preschool Education (Official Gazette No. 10/1997, 107/2007, 94/2013) the Primary and Secondary School Education Act (2008), the Vocational Education Act (2009), the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act (2003), and the Adult Education Act (2007).

²³ <https://www.eurydice.hr/en/>, searched 16th April 2021



2. Main characteristics of Croatian educational system

2.1 Preschool education

In Croatia, there is a long tradition of preschool education. Even though preschool education in Croatia is not compulsory, it represents the starting part of the educational system. The Act on Preschool Education (Official Gazette No. 10/1997, 107/2007, 94/2013) stipulates that early childhood education can start when the child becomes six months old, but children enter preschool institutions in the existing practice when they are one year old. Preschool education takes place in various types of institutions – kindergartens, play groups, children’s libraries, children’s wards in hospitals, mobile kindergartens, orphanages, elementary schools – which the state can found, the local governing bodies, physical and legal entities, religious communities, citizens' associations. Despite the variety of institutions, the prevailing organisational form of the preschool education is that of the kindergarten, in which children spend from five to ten hours per day. In addition to the so-called common regular programme, kindergartens also offer specialised programmes (foreign languages, sports, music, dramatic and visual arts expression, etc.).

According to the National Curricula Framework²⁴, preschool education is a first level of education system which is not obligated. It is divided in three educational cycles: from 6 months to 1 year, from 1 year to 3 years, and from 3 years to the moment that child is entering the school system. Since 1st October 2014 one year of preschool before going into school has become obligatory to every child. According to the Croatian Bureau of Statistics data, at the beginning of the year 2015/2016 there were 1.602 kindergartens and other legal entities implementing preschool education programs, and 134.573 children enrolled in some type of preschool program. In percentage, there were 17,6% of children up to 3 years in the total number of preschool attendants, 36,4% of children between 3 and 5 years of age, and 46,1% of children were 5 years old or older (up to the moment/age they are entering schools). According to the Eurydice report on preschool education (2011)²⁵ Croatia has had between 70 and 79% children between the age of 4 and the starting age of compulsory education enrolled in any type of preschool program.²⁶ On average in the EU-28, 93% of children at this age are already in some preschool program. In the same Eurydice report it is noted that Croatia has very low participation in preschool programs of children under the age of 3:

²⁴Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (2010). National Curricula Framework for preschool, elementary and secondary education. Searched 18th February 2017 on: http://www.azoo.hr/images/stories/dokumenti/Nacionalni_okvirni_kurikulum.pdf.

²⁵European Commission (2014).Key Dana on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe. Searched 18th February 2017 on: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/key_data_series/166EN.pdf.

²⁶The goal of Europe-wide benchmark i.e. by 2020 is that at least 95 % of children between the age of 4 and the starting age of compulsory education should be participating in early childhood education.



approximately 15%²⁷. This analysis will not go into reasoning why such a high percentage of children are not enrolled in any preschool program, but this data could lead to a conclusion that preschool education is not available to every child in Croatia. Another dimension that is showing the availability of education is accessibility, which means that education should be: all-encompassing, free-of-charge and include parental freedom of choice²⁸. Preschool education in Croatia is not free of charge for parents. All preschool programs have their economic prices, and different local communities are financing some percent of that price, while the rest of the amount is left on parents²⁹. In relation to the element of parental freedom to choose program, it could be partially measured through number of alternative preschool programs in Croatia. The data on webpage of Ministry of Science and Education³⁰ is showing that in year 2015/2016 there were 27 kindergartens with Montessori program, 5 kindergartens based on Waldorf program and 1 kindergarten that is acting according to the Agazzi pedagogy. Also, there are 53 kindergartens whose founders are religious communities. According to the same data, in year 2015/2016 there were 791 kindergartens in Croatia, which leads us to the conclusion that a mere 4,2% of all kindergartens are kindergartens with alternative preschool program, and 6,7% of them with religious program. The National Strategy for the Rights of the Children for period from 2014 to 2020³¹ declares that preschool education in Croatia is only part of the educational system that is not at the same level as in other countries in EU, and problems are mostly connected to the lack of physical capacities, inadequate safety conditions in kindergartens and in organization of programs that are not adjusted to the needs of the parents.

2.2 Primary education

Primary and lower secondary education is organised as a single structure system. Elementary schooling, lasting eight years, is the compulsory part of education in the Republic of Croatia for children between the ages of seven and fifteen and corresponds to the ISCED levels 1 and 2.

²⁷ For example, Denmark has 74%, Netherlands and Sweden a little more than 50%. Around 20 countries in EU have better percentage of participation in preschool programs than Croatia.

²⁸ Tomaševski, K. (2001). Human Rights obligations: making education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. Gotenburg: NovumGrafiska AB. Searched 18th February 2021 on: http://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/Tomasevski_Primer%203.pdf.

²⁹ Ratio of percentage between local authorities and parents is different from community to community, and also it is different for public and private programs.

³⁰ <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?art=13968>, searched 18th February 2021.

³¹ Ministry of Social Policy and Youth. (2014). National Strategy for the Rights of the Children in Republic of Croatia 2014-2020 - searched 18th February 2021, on:

[file:///C:/Users/Vrtic/Downloads/NACIONALNA+STRATEGIJA+ZA+PRAVA+DJECE+U+RHZA+RAZDOBLJE+OD+2014.+DO+2020.+GODINE-1%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Vrtic/Downloads/NACIONALNA+STRATEGIJA+ZA+PRAVA+DJECE+U+RHZA+RAZDOBLJE+OD+2014.+DO+2020.+GODINE-1%20(1).pdf).



The structure of elementary education has been most resistant to changes in the last fifty years. Elementary school is divided into two levels: the first level comprises grades 1 to 4, and the second grades 5 to 8. The curriculum is comprehensive and compulsory for all the children. These two levels differ in the form in which a curriculum is delivered. The curricula in grades 1 to 4 are organised into seven teaching subjects, which are taught by a single teacher (the so-called class-teacher). The rate of success in completing the elementary school education is very high. Almost all enrolled pupils complete their elementary education and of those who have completed it continue their education in higher secondary schools (ISCED level 3).

Pursuant to Article 66 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette No. 56/1990, 135/1997, 8/1998 – consolidated text, 113/2000, 124/2000 – consolidated text, 28/2001, 41/2001- consolidated text, 55/2001 – amend., 76/2010, 85/2010 – consolidated text), single structure education in the Republic of Croatia is free of charge for its beneficiaries. Single structure education is regulated by the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette No. 87/2008, 86/2009, 92/2010 amend. 105/2010, 90/2011, 5/2012, 16/2012, 86/2012 – consolidated text, 12620/12, 94/2013, 152/2014). In 2015/16 in elementary education were 317312 pupils and 32 429 teachers (female 26 447, male 5982)³². Educational activities at primary schools are performed in Croatian language and Latin script, but special care is dedicated to the possibilities for education of pupils of national minorities in their mother tongue.

3. Mapping National initiatives and public policies on early childhood development and gender equality

At the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia in Articles 65 and 66 the basic principles for education are established. According to the Constitution, primary education is free and compulsory, while secondary and higher education are available to everyone under equal conditions and in accordance with their aptitudes. The Constitution guarantees the autonomy of universities, more specifically, universities decide independently on their organization and operation, in compliance with the law.

The Republic of Croatia has signed and ratified a great number of international and European legislative instruments which are crucial for advancing general education, education for democratic citizenship and the management of diversity. These include the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Framework Convention for

³² CBS data basis, https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/ljetopis/2017/sljh2017.pdf (retrieved: 5th Sept. 2020)



the Protection of National Minorities, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Croatian education system is centrally managed by the Ministry of Science and Education. Besides Ministry, other national public bodies involved in the regulation, development and quality control of the educational sector in Croatia are Education and Teacher Training Agency, Agency for Vocational Education and Training, Agency for Science and Higher Education, Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes and National CentreCenter for External Evaluation of Education. Ministry and the agencies legally proscribe and accredit educational programs provided by educational institutions at all levels. Ministry also administers the salaries of teaching staff - which is the major share of the total budget for education - for all levels of education, except for the early childhood education and care which is provided and administered by the local governments (source: Eurydice - National education systems). The system of education of the Republic of Croatia has been regulated by the Act on Preschool Education (Official Gazette No. 10/1997, 107/2007, 94/2013) the Primary and Secondary School Education Act (2008), the Vocational Education Act (2009), the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act (2003), and the Adult Education Act (2007).

3.1 Gender equality in Croatian society: short overview

The traditional stereotypes regarding the gender roles of men and women continues and are still present in many areas of life of people in Croatia. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended to Croatia “*more intensive efforts to eliminate stereotypes and to strengthen the enforcement of the principle of gender equality in Curriculum and school books*”.³³ Also, the Council of the European Union has recognized that gender-stereotyping is one of the most persistent causes of inequality between women and men in all spheres and at all stages of life, influencing their choice of education, training and employment, the sharing of domestic and family responsibilities, participation in public life, and participation and representation in decision-making positions, both in political life and in the economy³⁴.

Gender inequality is still present in the area of labour market. In 2019 an employment rate of women in Croatia was 61.5% (EU-27 average is 67.3%), and for man 72.0%³⁵. According to the

³³ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women’s 61st session Periodic review of Croatia, July 2015. Available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/CRO/INT_CEDAW_NGO_CRO_20902_E.pdf, searched 25th April 2021.

³⁴ UNICEF (2011). Croatia – Analysis of gender issues. UNICEF Office Croatia. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/croatia/media/536/file/Analysis%20of%20Gender%20Issues%20.pdf>, searched 25th April 2021.

³⁵ Eurostat <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tesem010/default/table?lang=en>.



data of Eurofond, women spend approximately 26 hours weekly working nonpaid jobs, while that number for men is 9. An inequality at the labour market is also readable from the statistics that 33.9% of women (and only 9.7% of men) in the age 20- 64 years old in 2018 claim that the reason for their work inactivity is care for another family member³⁶. Already mentioned problem of low availability of preschool education, especially for children under the age of 4 in Croatia, is contributing to the high number of women that are inactive at the labour market in order to take care of a child. Further on, within all professions, monthly incomes are higher for men, then for women. Average monthly income in 2018 for all employed persons in Croatia is 5.716 Kuna's for women, and 6.571 for men. The same inequality is visible also in the professions where mostly women are employed. For example, in the field of an education in 2019, 80.5% of all employees are women. Meanwhile, average monthly income for women is 5.717 Kuna's, and for men is 6.775 Croatian Kuna's. That is more then 15% higher income for men³⁷.

Regarding education, gender stereotypes and gender roles are important factors for girls and boys, and men and women, in the process of choosing their education and future profession. For example, in year 2018 there were only 34.4 % of women in industrial and craft schools, while in art schools there were 72.8 % of them³⁸. Girls have lower expectations of themselves regarding their academic achievement in mathematics and in physics, while boys have lower expectations of themselves it in the field of Croatian language³⁹. Equally as in the EU, in Croatia there is necessity of raising number of women employed in STEM, especially in the field of engineering, and also in the field of science and research. For example, in the year 2017/2018 there was only 37.5% of women employed at the position of professor at universities⁴⁰.

Accept from the labour market and the education, gender inequality is present in the different areas of everyday life, such as: violence, health protections, media, access of women to the legislation and participation in the public life. One of a possible reasons for such structural gender inequality is of course lack of systematic and qualitative education for gender equality. Only when public's awareness is raised about multiple ways and situations where women are being treated differently through years, the true change will be possible. Meanwhile, gender inequality remains key barrier to development of democratic society in Croatia. At the moment, foundation for gender equality was set by key laws and institutional mechanisms

³⁶ Eurostat <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tesem010/default/table?lang=en>.

³⁷ Data of Croatian Bureau for Statistics, https://www.dzs.hr/default_e.htm.

³⁸ Data of Croatian Bureau for Statistics, https://www.dzs.hr/default_e.htm.

³⁹ Jugović, I. (2010). *Važnost rodnih uloga i stereotipa u objašnjenju akademskog postignuća i odabira zanimanja* Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet, Sveučilište u Zagrebu.

⁴⁰ Data of Croatian Bureau for Statistics, https://www.dzs.hr/default_e.htm.



but key challenges are present in the area of employment, violence against women, health and social protection⁴¹.

An important topic to raise, accept structural gender inequality that is present at the systematic level, are gender stereotypes and prejudices that are main part of parenting and family life. According to the results of UNICEF research made in 2020⁴², girls of all ages are more involved in the housework than boys. For example, regarding the frequency of participating in housework (at scale form 1-5), an average arithmetic size for girls age 8 is 3.47, and for boys is 2.97. Meanwhile, boys are more often involved in playing video games and watching television. Same differences are found regarding out-of-home activities. Boys are more often included in sport, and girls in religious activities. The same research reports that girls are more worried about future of the family and social relationships between family members than boys, that is suggesting that they are gradually talking over their feminine gender role. Research results also show that with aging girls are more dissatisfied with relations with their classmates and feel less secure on their way from school to home, which is indicating that they are more often exposed to different violent behaviors in schools and on their way from school to home. With all those in mind, it is not surprising that boys more than girls believe that in Croatia grownups care about children (an arithmetic size of children age 11 – boys 2.97, girls, 2.83) and that children rights are respected by grownups (an arithmetic size of children age 11 – boys 2.90, girls, 2.63).

3.2 Analysis of public policy frameworks for Education, Gender Equality and Childhood

Croatian national public policy framework for gender equality acknowledges the content of gender equality that is guaranteed with international documents that Republic of Croatia has signed and ratified, such as The European Convention for protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, The Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and especially its 5th objective – Gender Equality, The EU Strategy for Gender Equality 2020 – 2025 and The Council of Europe strategy for Gender Equality 2018 – 2023. National gender equality policy is implemented by main institutions that are responsible for promoting and protecting gender equality in Croatia, and those are: the Croatian Parliament, the Government of Republic of Croatia, different state administrator offices in counties all over the Croatia and also local governmental units. Specifically, each of those institutions have committees, offices or coordinators to deal with gender equality policy (Figure 1).

⁴¹ UNICEF (2011). Croatia – Analysis of gender issues. UNICEF Office Croatia. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/croatia/media/536/file/Analysis%20of%20Gender%20Issues%20.pdf>, searched 25th April 2021

⁴² Ajduković, M., Rajhvan Bulat, L., Sušac, N. & Vejmelka, L. (2020). Subjektivna dobrobit djece u Hrvatskoj. Zagreb: UNICEF.



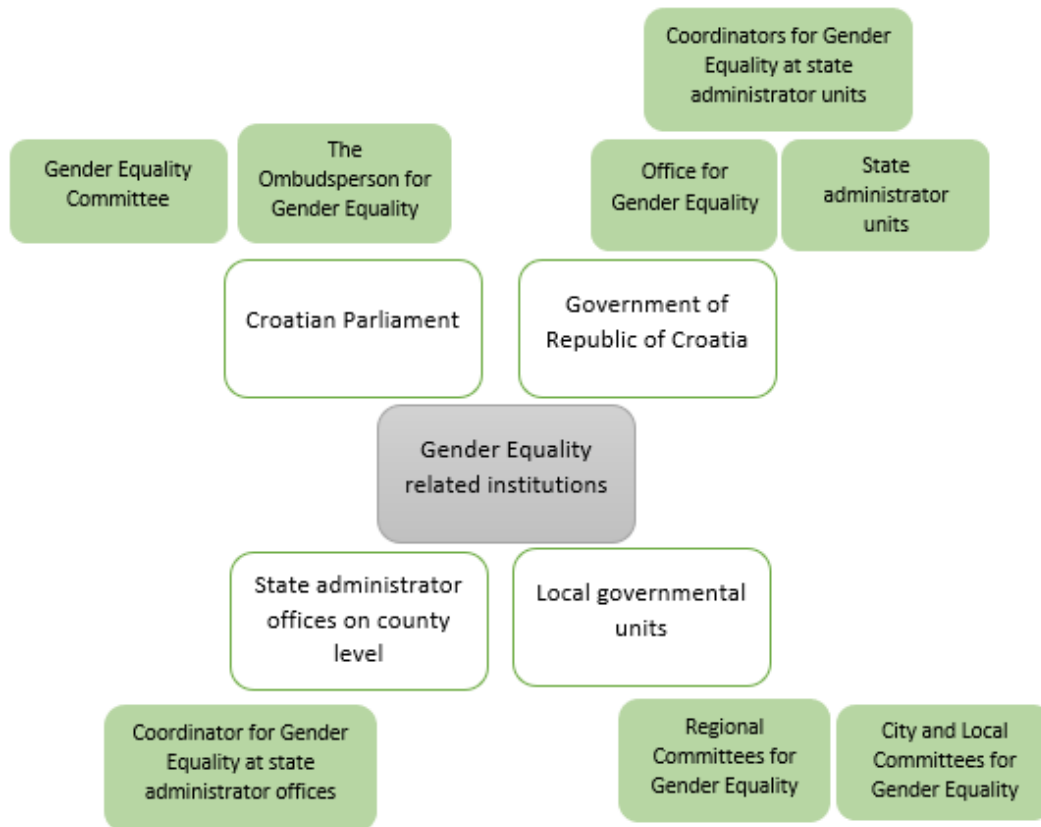


Figure 1 Institutional framework of Gender Equality policy

The Gender Equality Committee establishes and monitors the implementation of policies and procedures, and in order to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of an independent working body. Ombudsperson for Gender Equality is an independent body in charge of combating discrimination based on sex, marital and family status, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and gender identity. Office for Gender Equality is a professional service of the Government of the Republic of Croatia that performs professional and administrative tasks related to the realization of gender equality in the Republic of Croatia. Coordinators for gender equality on regional, local and city level are cooperating with national institutions and bodies in order to answer to specific questions regarding gender equality adjusted to their special context.

Legal framework for gender equality policy is primary shaped with The Act on Gender Equality (NN 82/08, 60/17), but also with The Labour Act (NN 93/14, 127/17, 98/19) and The Anti-discrimination Act (NN 85/08, 112/12). In connection to education, Article 14 (2) of the Act on Gender Equality claims: *“Subject matters related to issues of gender equality shall be an integral part of pre-school, primary and secondary school education as well as higher education and lifelong learning and additional training and they shall include measures aimed at preparing both sexes for active and equal participation in all spheres of life “*. Also, all

subject matters referred to in mentioned article shall be used to promote non-discriminatory knowledge with regard to women and men, to eliminate inequality of sexes and gender-related stereotypes in the education process at all levels as well as to respect gender-related aspects in all areas of education.

Under the different conventions and acts, Croatia creates specific national policies in order to promote and protect gender equality. Some of them include education in their specific objectives and measures. In such a manner, the document called *The National policy for gender equality for the period from 2011 to 2015* has introduced for the first time a term “gender sensitive education”. There are three strategic goals regarding this specific subject and those are: (1) to introduce gender sensitive education on all levels of educational system, especially by removing gender stereotypes from textbooks and from educational programs; (2) to develop continuous education about gender sensitive education for all educational workers; and (3) to reach gender balance in choosing professions. According to this policy some improvements were made, however, it is important to mention that last document that directs Croatian national policy for gender equality was the one for the period from 2011 to 2015, therefore for more than 5 years Croatia is with no such policy. Nongovernmental institutions have more than once discussed this problem via media and public actions, but still no new national policy is assigned. Besides documents that prescribe national policy towards gender equality, there are some reports that could indicate the position of gender equality education in Croatian politics. The Governmental Office for Gender Equality of Republic of Croatia has in 2019 prepared the report that provides a review of national-level implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform in Action⁴³. According to the report there are five priority areas of gender equality policy actions in Croatia and those are: *Non-discrimination and equality in legal framework, Elimination of violence against women and girls, Political inclusion and representation, Right to work, and Harmonization of family and work life*. Therefore, it could be concluded that directly, gender equality in preschool and elementary school education was not in the focus of Croatian policy.

There are few main education policy documents that create framework for development of preschool and school programs. Based on the Convention on the Rights of a Child (1989), the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and two main education acts (the Act on Preschool Education and the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools) are grounded on the principle of non-discrimination and equal access of everyone to their human rights. An important educational document for both preschool and elementary school is the *National Curriculum Framework for pre-primary, general compulsory and secondary education* (2010)

⁴³ Reached on 17th April at:

<https://ravnopravnost.gov.hr/UserDocImages//arhiva/preuzimanje/dokumenti/un/beijing//PEKING25%20hrv%20finalno.pdf>



that has recognized *education for gender equality* as one of cross-curricula and out-of-school activities that should be implemented into all education levels. This document also emphasizes the significance of a non-discriminatory approach in teaching curricula. Further on, regarding preschool education there is 45 legal documents (acts and regulations) that are creating legal framework for its implementation. None of them is specifically focused on the gender equality issues in preschool education. Regarding elementary education there is 87 legal documents (acts and regulations) that are creating legal framework for its implementation. There are few documents that mention gender equality education. Two documents discuss importance of introducing topics of gender equality at elementary and secondary education level: the *Decision on program of cross-subject and interdisciplinary contents of civic Education in elementary and secondary education schools (NN 94/13)* and the *Decision on implementation, tracking and evaluation of curricula of health education in elementary and secondary education schools*. Further on, The Ministry of Science and Education adopted in 2007 a new *Textbook Standard* which is aligned with the Gender Equality Act. It prescribes gender sensitivity in the language and contents of textbooks, the use of nouns in both grammatical genders when mentioning occupations and professions, and the obligation of promoting gender equality in visual art solutions. The draft of the new *Textbook Standard* of 2010 extends this requirement to all other graphic solutions. *The Amendments to the Primary and Secondary Education Textbooks Act* of 2006 and 2010 prohibit all forms of discrimination and prescribe that textbooks, supplementary and auxiliary teaching resources in terms of their content may not be contrary to the principle of gender equality as one of the fundamental constitutional values.

Some of those documents made some changes. Based on an analysis of elementary education textbooks conducted in 2007, the Ombudsman for Gender Equality concluded that “a positive step has been made in the use of gender-sensitive language, which conforms with the ethical requirements of the *Textbook Standard* – 94% of the texts from the main body of the text in textbooks use either gender-neutral or gender-sensitive language”. The Ombudsman for Gender Equality also conducted an analysis of history textbooks for elementary schools, which showed that there is room for improvement with regard to gender equality related contents. The survey “*Human Rights in Elementary Schools – Theory and Practice*” 2008 – 2009, conducted by the Centre for Human Rights⁴⁴, confirms that there is a tendency to present a gender equal image of success and participation in different activities and in the performance of different jobs by women and men, and that the major part of textbooks do not promote stereotypes based on gender affiliation and physical appearance. Further on, according to the *Consideration of report in relation to the combined fourth and fifth periodic*

⁴⁴ Batarelo, I., Čulig, B., Novak, J., Reškovic, T. i Spajić-Vrkaš, V.. (2010). *Demokracija i ljudska prava u osnovnim školama: teorija i praksa*. Zagreb: Tipograf Zagreb d.o.o.



reports of Croatia made by UN Committee in the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in 2014, an analysis of textbooks has shown progress in eliminating stereotypes from the texts used in textbooks. State administration bodies, civil society organizations and the Ombudsman for Gender Equality, who monitors the situation in the Croatian education system and includes a gender analysis of textbooks in their annual reports to the Croatian Parliament, participated in many discussions on the elimination of gender stereotypes.

Finally, an important part of introducing *gender equality education* into preschool and elementary school education is systematic preparation of teachers for teaching and discussing such topics. At the moment, none of seven universities (Zagreb, Rijeka, Osijek, Pula, Zadar, Split, Slavonski Brod) that are preparing future preschool and elementary school teachers does not have this kind of education in their obligatory program, or an opportunity for students to join such subject as facultatively.

3.3 Analysis of Public-School Plans at National/regional/City Level

Croatian education system is centrally managed by the *Ministry of Science and Education*. Therefore, school plans are determined with national documents, and what *is* or *it is not* implemented on the regional or the local level arises from national documents.

As it was mentioned before, *National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for pre-primary, general compulsory and secondary education* (2010), is one of the most important documents in Croatian educational system, because it is the main document that determines all important components of educational system, from preschool to the end of the secondary education. In other words, The NCF contains main competences that should be developed within all levels of education. One of those competences is *social and civic competence*, that implied respecting of differences and responsible and active acting in promoting and protecting non-discrimination. Further on, one of the main principles that should be integrated in all levels of Croatian education system is equality. In the part of the NCF where *humanities and social sciences* are explained, this document recognizes that it is important to discuss with children and students' topics such as: *sexuality, equality of sexes, importance of equal access to human rights by members of both sexes, differences between sexes* etc. There are few important outcomes that should be achieved, such as: *to recognize and to describe stereotypes and prejudices towards gender-sex identity, social roles and relationships, to list possibilities of taking over stereotypes and prejudices that are connected with gender-sex identity, social roles and relationships, and to understand the meaning of sex and sexuality and the meaning of equality between sexes*. All of those outcomes should be reached during the secondary education level. During the lower primary education level, on which this analysis is focused, the children should be introduced with general human rights system and understand that all people have equal access to human rights, regardless their sex. There is no mention of a term or idea of *gender* at that level of education.



Main document for preschool education that gives a framework for what should be developed during children early and preschool education (ages 1 to 7) is the *National Curricula for Early Childhood and Preschool Education* (NN 05/15). National Curricula highlights main values that should be nurtured and developed by preschool teachers with children they work with. Those are: knowledge, identity, humanity and tolerance, responsibility, autonomy and creativity. Values such as identity, humanity, tolerance and responsibility highlight the importance of building child identity and educating child as a person who respects dignity of others and acts responsible towards them. Further on, as one of the main competences that should be developed is *social and civic competence*, that implies accepting differences and responsible acting towards others human rights. Terms *sex, gender or equality* are not mentioned in Curricula in the way that would promote integrating *gender equality education* into preschool institutions. To conclude, with the framework that is made by main values and principles of the National Curricula, preschool institutions are given with an opportunity to work on the subjects and issues that are connected with differences between sexes and with gender issues within their individual kindergarten curricula. Meanwhile, those topics are not mentioned on any way in the document itself.

Obligated and mandatory subjects in lower elementary school in Croatia (ages 7-11) are determined by *National plan and program for elementary schools* (2006) adopted by Ministry of science and education. In lower elementary school there are 7 mandatory (Mathematics, Croatian language, Nature and society, Music, Arts, Physical education, Foreign language) and 1 facultative subject (Catholic education). Within all those subjects there is only one topic within subject *Nature and society* that is discussing sex, and that is topic called *Child*, with main terms that should be discussed inline: *boy* and *girl*. The objective that should be reached within this topic is to help children *to understand physical differences and similarities between boys and girls*. In lower primary education level, except of subjects that are held on everyday basis, there are also some topics that should be introduced in class interdisciplinary. According to the National plan and program for elementary schools (2006) those are: *Health education, Education for sustainable environment, Transport culture and Education for human rights and democratic citizenship*. Those subjects could be integrated cross-curricula (through other subjects), as out-of-class activities, as out-of-school activities or as a facultative subject. Even though in National program *gender equality education* is not mentioned explicitly, those topics could be included in class while implementing Health education and Education for human rights and democratic citizenship.

Health education is introduced in schools by *Resolution on implementation, tracking and evaluation of curricula of health education in elementary and secondary schools* (2013) that was adopted by Ministry of science and education. Health education, according to the curricula, is divided into four modules: *To live healthy, Prevention of addictions, Prevention of*



violence and Sex/gender equality and responsible sexual behaviour. In classes of lower primary education most of the health education come out of module *To live healthy* (23 hours out of 44) and *Prevention of violence* (9 hours out of 44). Topics from *Sex/gender equality* should, according to curricula, be introduced for the first time to children in third and fourth grade of lower elementary school (children age 10 to 11) with 2 school hours (45 minutes) in each year. Along with health education curricula, Ministry of science and education along with National Agency for Teacher Education and Training, in 2013 has published a manual for implementation of health education curricula into lower elementary school classes. In the manual there are examples of topics that could be discussed with children in 3rd and 4th class: *Responsibility and respect towards your own body* (3rd grade), *Gender roles in family* (4th class) and *Differences between sex and gender in society and in the school* (between peers) (4th class).

Table 1 Outputs of topics of gender education in lower elementary school

Topic	Outputs
<i>Responsibility and respect towards your own body</i>	To recognize a need to take care of your body and understanding of a positive attitude towards it. To understand what is an acceptable and appropriate touch, and what is not.
<i>Gender roles in family</i>	To understand and discuss sex and gender roles in the family.
<i>Differences between sex and gender in society and in the school</i>	To help children to understand through examples differences between sex and gender.

Since an important part of gender equality education is also dealing with peer violence, it is important that topics from module *Prevention of violence* are also part of Health education curricula. According to the Resolution, 9 school hours should be dedicated to this module at lower primary education level. The manual for teachers is suggesting following 9 topics: *How we act towards other children and grown-ups* (1st class), *How do we act towards animals* (1st class), *Behaviour in school* (2nd class), *Behaviour towards children and grow ups* (2nd class), *Behaviour towards animals* (2nd class), *Respecting rules and authorities* (3rd class), *Human behaviour* (3rd class), *Expected behaviours* (4th class) and *Life important skills* (4th class).

The interdisciplinary topic Education for human rights and democratic citizenship is introduced in Croatian education system under the name of *civic education*. Ministry of science and education adopted in 2014 a *Resolution on program about cross-curricula and interdisciplinary subject civic education into primary and secondary schools*. According to the Program in all four classes during the lower primary education the teacher should discuss with students a topic of an *equality in the relation to sex, gender, and national or religious*



affiliation. Also, the civic education program highlights many more topics important for nonviolent conflict resolution, such as: respecting opinion of others, team work skills, awaking stereotypes and prejudices, etc.

To conclude, in Croatian preschool and lower elementary school education the main educational documents are based on principles that teachers have “open hands” to discuss topics about gender equality in their classrooms. However, topics themselves are mentioned only in two resolutions that are connected with cross-curricular and interdisciplinary content. So, in the end, the decision if gender equality topics will be discussed, is given to teachers, who are mainly unprepared for education⁴⁵ about human rights in general, and also for specific topic of gender education.

3.4 Identification of good practices put in place by schools and kindergartens regarding the promotion of gender equality and questioning gender stereotypes

Examples of good practices put in place by schools and kindergartens regarding promotion of gender equality are mostly connected with different projects. Some of those projects are short term projects that are coordinated by nongovernmental organizations, that include schools and/or kindergartens as final beneficiaries of their project activities (to organize some education or to lead an institution to held a little project of their own). Other projects are long term projects that have established as a method of working in the field of human rights education in kindergartens and schools.

There are two main long-term projects that continuously through years motivate kindergartens and schools to implement topics that promote equality into their institutions and practices. The first one is a project called *Project Citizen* and it was established as a product of *Croatian National program for human rights and democratic citizenship education* that was adopted by Ministry of science and education in 1999. It is not obligated to implement this program in kindergartens or in schools, or more specifically, the decision if some institution will work on it or not is left to head-teachers and teachers themselves. Even so, with years the program obtained and many kindergartens and schools implemented it. *Project Citizen* provides a practical first-hand approach to learning about topics from human rights education: human rights, political education, sustainable environment, society education, intercultural education and economic education. Teacher along with children follow some steps, that enables them to work together to research their community to

⁴⁵ According to the results of different researches: Pažur, M. (2016). *Rekonstrukcija građanskog odgoja i obrazovanja: koncept, teorije i prakse*. Zagreb: Mreža mladih Hrvatske.; Spajić-Vrkaš, V. (Suradnici: Čehulić, M., Elezović, I., Pažur, M., Rukavina, I., Vahtar, D.) (2016). *(Ne)moć građanskog odgoja i obrazovanja: objedinjeni izvještaj o učincima eksperimentalne provedbe kurikuluma građanskog odgoja i obrazovanja u 12 osnovnih i srednjih škola (2012./2013.)*. Zagreb: Nacionalni centar za vanjsko vrednovanje obrazovanja. (https://www.ncvvo.hr/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/GOO_e_publicacija.pdf)



discover problems and then identify solutions in the form of policy that require government involvement. Students also have the opportunity to display their research and policy suggestions through [showcases](#), a way for students to display their research and present their policy solutions to their classroom and/or community. The best projects each year come to a national level, where children have the opportunity to participate and share their work with other children from other regions. Even so this project has many good examples of promoting human rights in kindergartens and in schools, it is important to mention that since there is many contents that could be done within children’s small projects, there is not so many teachers and children who decide to work on gender equality issues. Most of those projects is in the field of environmental issues, nonviolent conflict resolution and nurturing cultural heritage⁴⁶. One good example of *Project Citizen* connected with gender equality education implemented in Kindergarten and one implemented in lower primary education level are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Examples of good practice of Project Citizen

Project name / Where it was implemented / With who	Objectives	Activities
Differences are beautiful / Elementary school, Children age 10	To recognize differences and similarities between children. To understand the importance of equality between society members.	Writing everything we see similar and different among us Reading and discussing about Convention for the right of a child Discussing discrimination Investigating differences around the world through media and books Holding video conferences with children from England and USA Creating coloring book “Differences as beautiful”
Pictures on Croatian Kuna’s / Kindergarten / Children age 5 and 6	To understand gender inequality	Investigating different bills of Croatian Kuna’s and painting people on the bills

⁴⁶ According to the Pažur, M. (2016). *Rekonstrukcija građanskog odgoja I obrazovanja: koncept, teorije i prakse*. Zagreb: Mreža mladih Hrvatske.



	To promote gender equality	<p>Recognizing who are persons on the bills – concluding that there are only men, no women</p> <p>Discussing about differences between men and women through history and today</p> <p>Investigating and targeting important women in Croatia that should be on the bills of Croatian Kuna’s through books and media</p> <p>Drawing and coloring “new” Croatian Kuna’s with pictures of important women</p>
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Another project that encourages kindergartens and schools to work on the topic of nurturing differences and promoting equality is an international project *Say hello to the world*⁴⁷. *Say hello to the world* is an international project that connects children in kindergartens and schools by video network, where they can see each other live, wave to each other and learn their first foreign words. Much attention is given to learning about different cultures, traditions and ways of living. The purpose of the project is to motivate children through different interesting activities and thus teach them to loosen stereotypes, prejudices and intolerance to otherwise thinking, to foreigners, to people with special needs, elderly, etc. This will contribute to a greater quality of life, solidarity and respect, especially now, when the world is becoming increasingly open and accessible. Every school and kindergarten that takes part in the *Say Hello to the World* project and successfully implements the program will obtain the honorable title 'A Tolerant Kindergarten' / 'A Tolerant School'. Schools and kindergartens thus show that children are taught tolerance and understanding of diversity in all forms. Example of one project held by Say hello to the world that is connected to nurturing equality is readable in Table 3.

Table 3 Good practice example – Implementation of the project Say hello to the world (kindergarten, children age 6-7)

Subject	Objectives	Activities
My self – my identity	<p>To encourage and lead children in better knowing and understanding themselves</p> <p>To understand differences and similarities between children</p>	<p>This is me! – Children are looking themselves in the mirror and they are painting their portrait where they highlight everything important about them.</p> <p>My needs and my wishes – Children discuss about what is they need and what is they wish. They discuss how they</p>

⁴⁷ Web page of the project: <http://www.sayhellototheworld.eu/hr>



		<p>have different wishes and sometimes also different needs.</p> <p>Me in measures – Through different height and weight, children discuss about physical differences between boys and girls.</p> <p>My day – Each child present himself/herself on one day. They present everything that he/she is.</p>
Me and my family	<p>To understand different roles of family members</p> <p>To discuss differences between men and women</p>	<p>Me and my family – Children present they family through its members hand marks. Differences within families are discussed.</p> <p>What is mum for, what is dad for? – Children present their roles in the family and roles of their family members. The discussion about “mums” and “dads’ jobs is open.</p>

Some examples of good practice could also be found by projects that are coordinated by nongovernmental organizations, that encourages and gives support to schools and kindergartens to raise and discuss gender equality topics in their institutions. This kind of project was *Education for gender equality* coordinated by *Women’s group Izvor*⁴⁸. The objective of the 2nd modular program of the project was to transfer the knowledge and skills concerning gender equality to the holders of educational activities with the goal of spreading it further within schools and to open the question about the importance of education and identity through raising awareness about discriminatory social attitudes as well as stereotypes about gender, patriarchal culture, the system of common law and enabling an understanding of the concept of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The good practice example was a project implemented by one elementary school that realized several activities in their school: firstly, they presented the project to the students of the 7th and 8th grades, then to the teachers’ council, and finally the realization of the topics they presented at the parent-teacher meetings. The activity included ninety-nine students. The goal of the activity was to raise awareness and sensitivity on gender equality. Another activity included thirty-six teachers. Teachers were surprised with students’ individual reflections and concluded that this topic should have a significant place in lectures. The third activity included a hundred and six parents who were presented with these topics. The parents were extremely interested and pointed out the importance of having more frequent mutual talks in the school on this topic, since they rarely talk to their children about it, and they consider this way of discussion productive and useful for both sides.

⁴⁸ Macelaru, M. & Tešija, T. (2010). *Obrazovanje za rodnu jednakost*. Zagreb: Grafika d.o.o.



3.5 Identification of projects on Gender Equality, Children, Stereotypes, gender inclusive methodologies, last 5 years

After detail analysis of web pages of main stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental institutions), it could be concluded that most projects in the field of gender equality are connected with topics other than childhood and education.

For example, Governmental Office for Gender Equality of the Republic of Croatia in years 2016 and 2017 was part of Twinning project *Support to the gender equality* which overall objective was to enhance the coordinated implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of gender equality principles. The project was aiming to increase public awareness and trust in protection from gender-based discrimination. It shall also strengthen the institutional mechanisms for gender equality and efficiency of judiciary in the area of gender-based discrimination. The purpose was to secure advancement in gender mainstreaming of policies and elimination of gender-based discrimination at all levels. Also, in period from 2013 to the end of 2015 the Governmental Office was part of a project *My voice against violence*, whose objective was to raise awareness among main stakeholders and public about no tolerance towards all forms of violence against women and girls. Similar project was held by nongovernmental organization *Ženska soba*, who carried on a project called *Protection of women and children survivors of sexual violence and gender based violence during the COVID pandemic* (2020). Another important project, carried on by nongovernmental organization B.A.B.E. from 2019 to 2021 is a project called *How Expertise Leads to Prevention, Learning, Identification, Networking and Ending gender Based Violence* (HELPLINE). Its goal is to provide effective support and protection to victims of gender-based violence by strengthening the capacity of all those involved in the implementation of protection.

Non-governmental organizations implement little project on local level by applying for grants of Ministry of science and education under the topic *Out-of-school education* and of Ministry of demography, family, youth and social policy under the topic *Improving services for children in the system of early childhood education and care – Kindergartens for more harmonious life*. Ministry of science and education gives annually approximately 50 non-governmental organizations a grant around 3.500 Euro to implement activities that are connected with human rights education and preventing violence between children of school age. Under the grant called *Improving services for children in the system of early childhood education and care – Kindergartens for more harmonious life*, Ministry of demography, family, youth and social policy, has so far arranged around 70 projects that are aiming to introduce in kindergartens new programs, adjust working hours of kindergartens, and enable educations of employees of kindergartens.

To conclude, there are no projects that are connected with promoting gender-based education in preschool or lower elementary school institutions. There are some projects that



are promoting gender equality and tackling gender inequality, whose objectives would indirectly influence on the field of education.

3.6 Conclusion of the analysis

This analysis could propose few concluding thoughts. Croatia has aligned its legal system with international documents that are guaranteeing promoting and protecting gender equality in all spheres of society, education included. Main documents at national policy level regarding gender equality are acting in few main fields: *Non-discrimination and equality in legal framework, Elimination of violence against women and girls, Political inclusion and representation, Right to work, and Harmonization of family and work life.*

Regarding education in general, there is still no focus of policy to work towards creating gender sensitive education or including gender equality content into it. There is no systematic approach to teaching and discussing gender issues with preschool children or children in lower primary education level. Topics of gender equality come into some educational institutions only through short term projects or project initiatives, and they mostly stay at the level that children learn that they all have equal rights no matter differences among them. Key educational preschool and elementary school programs incorporate gender equality issues in the area of education for human rights. More specifically, into schools, those topics are part of two subjects that are included in schools interdisciplinary: health education and civic education. However, unfortunately, the decision if preschool teachers and teachers will work on those topics is left completely to them.

4. Research on gender equality in preschool and primary education in Croatia

4.1 Methodology

This research overall goal was to examine the situation regarding gender equality in preschool and primary school education. The research had three specific research goals:

1. To examine *the approach and an interest* of relevant stakeholders (educational institutions, preschool teachers, teachers, parents) for promoting and educating for gender equality.



2. To examine *the level of preparation (knowledge, skills)* of relevant stakeholders (preschool teachers, teachers, parents) for promoting and educating for gender equality.
3. To examine *values and attitudes* of relevant stakeholders (preschool teachers, teachers, parents) for promoting and educating for gender equality.

The research has been conducted via online questionnaires that were designed for the need of this research.

The questionnaire for students contained 13 questions: 3 with general demographic information, 6 with questions connected with so-far experience regarding gender equality education and 4 with questions regarding potential future development of gender equality education.

The questionnaire for teachers contained 17 questions: 6 with general demographic information, 7 with questions connected with so-far experience regarding gender equality education and 4 with questions regarding potential future development of gender equality education.

The questionnaire for parents contained 21 questions: 4 with general demographic information, 12 with questions connected with so-far experience regarding gender equality education and 5 with questions regarding potential future development of gender equality education.

4.2 Sample

Altogether, the questionnaire was fulfilled by 33 people already working in kindergartens and schools (preschool teachers, primary school teachers, school counselors, principles), 15 students of preschool education and primary school education and 34 parents. Some characteristics of the groups are readable from the Table 4.

Table 4 Characteristics of the sample

	Practitioners	Students	Parents
How much?	33	15	35
Gender	31 F / 2 M	15 F	30 F / 4 M
Where from?	24 Kindergarten / 9 Schools	10 students of preschool education / 5 of primary education	Highest education: Elementary s. – 1 High school – 2 Faculty – 27 PhD – 3
Who exactly?	2 Principals 6 External experts 21 Preschool teachers 4 Teachers	3 rd year – 4 students 4 th year – 3 students 5 th year – 8 students	1 child – 14 2 children – 19 3 children – 1



Something more...	From 1 – 30 years of work experience (M = 8.8)	-	25 children – F 30 children – M Age from 1 – 18 (M = 5.8)
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4.3 Results

A level of an initial education: students

Students feel that they have been in touch with the topic of gender equality *rarely* (M = 3.06). While answering to an open question, where they were asked to shortly explain what gender equality is, most of them explained it as an *equality between man and women*. Some of them added further explanation such as: *equal rights in education, work esc. or giving same opportunities, work conditions and ways of progress to all gender*. An interesting answer is that gender equality are *stereotypes towards male preschool teachers*. Also, one answer said that it is *equality towards gender orientation that is not connected with the sex of a person*. While they were asked for an example of a situation where they were discussing gender equality during their initial education most of them said that for them an important topic is the one *about the feminization of profession of (preschool) teachers*. Just few students came up with some different examples such as discussion about why always mothers go on maternity leave and the discussion that women are incapable of doing physical work.

Participants of the research were also asked how would they implement gender equality topics in their work. Most of them said that they would discuss professions in the way that they would highlight that all professions are both for women and men. One idea was to give a girl in the school to play a male role and another one was to make to all children an option to do what ever they want at their physical class (esc. girls can play football and male volleyball). One example was very interesting, and is showing an ignorance regarding sex/gender equality, it says: *I would bring in school two eggs and I would break them in front of the children. I would ask them: what is the difference between those two eggs? None! Because the appearance varies but our anatomy is completely the same*.

Further on, students were asked if they have recognized that there is an interest during their initial education for talking and learning about gender equality. Most of them believed that there is some interest (N = 8) and few of them that there is enough of interest (N = 6). Topics with which students had meet *never, rarely or often* during their so far studies are readable from the Table 5. The least they meet with gender / sex equality topics and peer violence. All of them said that they meet often with topics of nonviolent conflict resolution and human/children right.

Table 5 How often did you discuss following topics during your initial education?



	Never	Rarely	Often
	Row Valid N %	Row Valid N %	Row Valid N %
Gender / sex equality	0.0%	53.3%	46.7%
Stereotypes and prejudices	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%
Nonviolent conflict resolution	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Peer violence	0.0%	13.3%	86.7%
Discrimination	0.0%	6.7%	93.3%
Human / Children rights	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Students were asked to estimate at the scale from 1 - 5 how much do they feel prepared (knowledge, skills) to deal with some gender equality important issues (Table 6). The best prepared they feel for: recognition of sex/gender stereotypes and prejudices ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.632$), recognition of sex/gender discrimination in picture books and school materials ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.617$) and recognition of sex/gender discrimination in the group of children ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.755$). At the other side, their perception is that they are the least prepared for implementation of international and national documents in the field of gender equality ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.125$), for creating a class climate that is sex/gender equal ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.828$) and for dealing with sex/gender caused peer violence ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.976$).

Table 6 Students perception on level of knowledge and skills in different gender equality areas (M, SD)

	M	SD
Implementing of international and national documents in the field of gender equality	2.47	1.125
Creating a class climate that is sex/gender equal	3.40	.828
Dealing with sex/gender caused peer violence	3.67	.976
Implementing working methods that are nurturing sex/gender equality	3.80	.941
Nurturing relationships in the group of children that are based on sex/gender equality	3.87	.915
Reacting adequately on sex/gender discrimination situations	3.93	1.100
Breaking sex / gender stereotypes and prejudices	4.07	.961
Nurturing and creating nonviolent communication between children	4.07	.884
Recognition of sex/gender discrimination in the leadership of the institution	4.07	.961
Nurturing and creating nonviolent communication towards children	4.13	.990
Recognition of sex/gender discrimination in the group of children	4.20	.775
Recognition of sex/gender discrimination in picture books and school materials	4.33	.617
Recognition of sex/gender stereotypes and prejudices	4.40	.632

Finally, students were asked what support would they need and from whom to be able to work more quality on the topics of the gender equality. Almost all of them said that they

would need support from parents and external experts. Some of them mentioned other teachers and principals, and few of them remembered resource ministry and faculty.

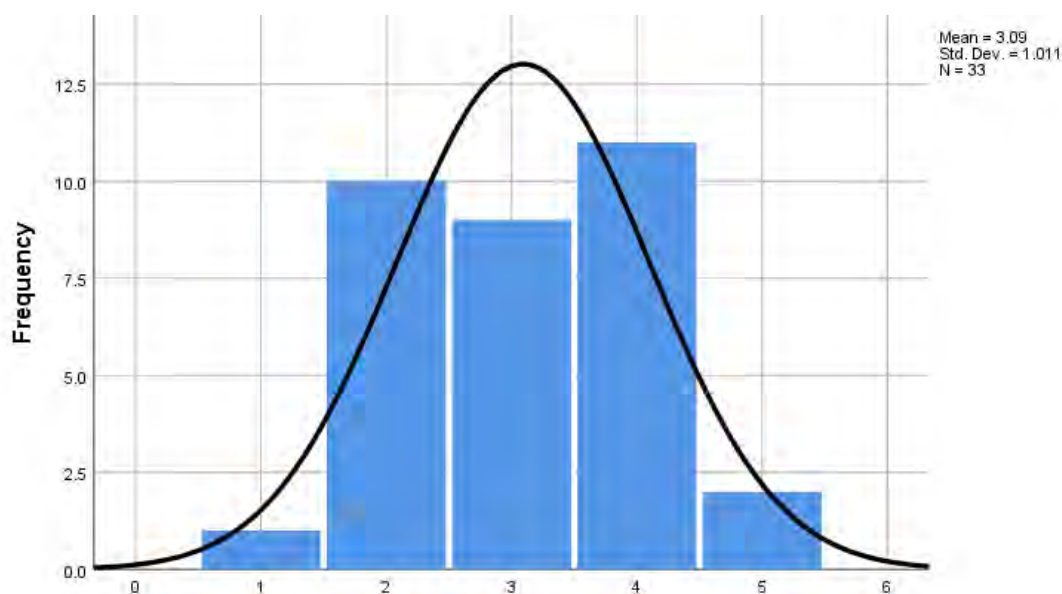
In the Table 7 some attitudes of students towards the gender equality are visible. Most of students *somewhat agree* that they understand the concept of gender equality ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.71$) and that they are prepared to teach others about it ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.92$). Around a quarter of them *don't agree* that parents (33.4%), kindergartens (24.3%) or schools (27.3%) develop children attitudes about importance of acting and promoting the gender equality. Students believe that an education for gender equality is more important to them ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.88$) than to others ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 0.90$). Actually, a quarter of them feels that an education for gender equality is not at all important to others.

Table 7 Students attitudes towards importance of gender equality (GE) education and promotion (Agenda: 1 – I do not agree at all, 2 - I do not agree, 3 – I somewhat agree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I agree completely)

	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
I understand a concept of the GE.	0.0%	0.0%	39.4%	45.5%	15.2%	3.76	.71
I am prepared to teach others about the GE.	0.0%	12.1%	24.2%	45.5%	18.2%	3.70	.92
Parents are raising their children according to the principles of GE.	6.1%	27.3%	48.5%	18.2%	0.0%	2.79	.82
Children in the kindergarten are developing attitudes towards the GE.	6.1%	18.2%	33.3%	39.4%	3.0%	3.15	.97
Children in the school are developing attitudes towards the GE:	6.1%	21.2%	45.5%	21.2%	6.1%	3.00	.97
Education for GE is important to me.	0.0%	6.1%	12.1%	39.4%	42.4%	4.18	.88
Education for GE is important to others.	9.1%	15.2%	48.5%	27.3%	0.0%	2.94	.90

4.4 A level of the practice: employees of kindergartens and school

Practitioners feel that they have been in touch with the topic of gender equality (Picture 1) very rarely to rarely (M = 3.06).



Picture 1 Perception of practitioners of how often they have been in touch with the topic of gender equality (1-never, 2-very rarely, 3-rearily, 4-often, 5-very often)

While answering to an open question, where they were asked to shortly explain what gender equality is, most of them explained it as an *equality between man and women*. Some of them added further explanation such as: *equal rights in education*. or *same paycheck of women and men*. Some of the answers were focused on attitudes, such as: *no stereotypes and prejudices, seeing people by their skills and not by their sex and tolerance of differences*. Further on, participants of the research were asked to name one example when they have had a connection with the topic of gender equality in their work. Three groups of examples could be highlighted in the answers: (1) during their professional trainings; (2) by discussing about male preschool teachers; and (3) in the group of children when girls choose toys “for girls” and boys toys “for boys”. An interesting example was mentioned within the discussion about male preschool teachers: *“Male preschool teacher is leading a preschool group of children (age 3-6) by his own. Both, parents and children are very satisfied with his work. Then there is a situation when children from that group go at the winter holidays. Parents are concerned how will he be able to take care of the girls’ care (showering) during the holidays. They did not want to agree for children to go on holidays until there was an agreement made that his female colleague from another group will take care of the girls showering”*.

There is another interesting example mentioned regarding “girls” and “boys” toys. One practitioner said that he/she has faced *dissatisfaction of parents because their male child is playing with female toys (babies, taking care of a baby)*.

One of the questions was for the participants of the research to name some activity that they could implement in their everyday work to promote gender equality. Most often, the practitioners, just as students, came up with activities connected with discussing different jobs and professions and highlighting that all of them are both for women and for men. Also, they said that they could encourage boys and girls to play even with all available toys, no matter for what “sex” they are meant. Few participants came up with ideas of different education activities such as an education for teachers, raising awareness for stereotypes and prejudices with preschool teachers and parents and workshops for parents focused on father’s role in “female house jobs”. Different methods, that could be used to deal with gender equity topics, were mentioned, for example, theater of the oppressed, peer mediation, workshops with changing roles, and creating different pictures books and posters for children education about the topic.

Practitioners were asked if, towards their perception, is there is an interest to work on the topics of gender equality in the part of educational system where they work. Most of them said that there is *a very little interest* (42% of answers) and that there is *a little interest* (42%). To explain their answers, they said that there is a lack of education reading the topic and that this is the topic that is rarely opened, maybe only in the context of accepting differences. Few answers are actually highlighting that there is a lack of knowledge about it, for example: *“I believe that people don’t want to deal with this and they often say or do something that is connected with gender inequality”* or *“People sometimes talk about it, but I am not really sure they even know what they talk about”*. Also, few people highlighted that the problem is lack of the systematic approach to this topic, and if the topic arises, it is because the interest of the single person: *“Individuals start to talk about this topic, but there is no further interests from others”*. Further on, there are few answers that said: *“I have never discussed with anyone at the workplace anything regarding this topic”*. Few interesting answers to this question are actually indicating very little interest of people in the educational system for the gender equality. For example, one person says: *“There is to many burning problems in the practice, so there was no time for this topic”*, or another one claims: *“Most of the people is not dealing with “higher” life questions and problems, they are just worrying about their existential problems”*. The need to talk and educate more about the topic is also readable from some answers that are indicating exitance of different prejudices and even a discrimination situations in their everyday work: *“I believe that “older” colleagues are not supporters of male preschool teachers, bit I am actually looking very forward to it”*, *“I have never discussed this topic with my colleagues but sometimes when I talk to fathers I have a feeling that they talk*



to me from “up high” just because I am a women” or “Since I work in a little community, I believe that beliefs towards gender equality are pretty conservative. That is visible in the communication with parents and grandparents”. It is important to mention that few people believe that just because they are working in the mostly female environment, where they do not recognize inequality or discrimination, there is no need to discuss this topic at all. These answers are well explained with this example: “Simply these topics do not appear, because we work in the environment where female gender is more present and not endangered”. From all presented questions it is obvious that there is a lack of knowledge, interest or even systematic education regarding gender equality in the practice in educational institutions, but to include those topics might also come to some obstacles because as one person says: “There is a resistance towards everything that is not part of the existing curriculum”.

The practitioners were asked how often during their professional trainings and educations did they meet different gender equality topics. Their answers are readable in the Table 8. All together, they rarely get education and training in this field. More then three quarters of research participants were never involved in any education or training with topic of *gender/sex equality*. That is the situation for approximately half of practitioners regarding topics of *discrimination* and *stereotypes and prejudices*. It could be concluded that there are some more educations in the field of *nonviolent conflict resolution* and *human/children rights*, but still there is a little less then one third of research participants who had never had education in these fields.

Table 8 How often were you involved in education or training with following topics?

	Never	Once	More then once
	Row Valid N %	Row Valid N %	Row Valid N %
Gender / sex equality	75.8%	15.2%	9.1%
Stereotypes and prejudices	42.4%	30.3%	27.3%
Nonviolent conflict resolution	30.3%	18.2%	51.5%
Peer violence	30.3%	30.3%	39.4%
Discrimination	48.5%	18.2%	33.3%
Human / Children rights	24.2%	21.2%	54.5%

Practitioners were asked to estimate at the scale from 1-5 how much do they feel prepared (knowledge, skills) to deal with some gender equality important issues (Table 9). They feel the best prepared for nurturing and creating nonviolent communication towards children (M = 3.94, SD = 1.20) and for nurturing and creating nonviolent communication between children (M = 3.82, SD = 1.24). They also feel they are moderately prepared for recognizing of sex/gender discrimination in the group of children (M = 3.39, SD = 1.14) and for recognizing of sex/gender stereotypes and prejudices. Practitioners perception is that they are the least



prepared for implementing of international and national documents in the field of gender equality ($M = 1.82$, $SD = 0.88$), for reacting adequately on sex/gender discrimination situations ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.20$) and for dealing with sex/gender caused peer violence ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 1.16$). It is important to mention that around 80% of research participants perceive that they are *not at all* or are *a little* prepared for implementing of international and national documents in the field of gender equality. Further on, around 40% of them are *not at all* or are *a little* prepared for reacting adequately on sex/gender discrimination situations and for dealing with sex/gender caused peer violence. Even with the situations that practitioners feel more comfortable about, there are high percentages of those who feel that they are *not at all* or are *a little* prepared to react adequately or to even recognize the situations of sex/gender discrimination. For example, 15% of research participants feel *not at all* or *a little* prepared for nurturing and creating nonviolent communication between children or towards children. The same feels around 20% of practitioners for situations where they need to recognize sex/gender stereotypes and prejudices or to recognize situations of sex/gender discrimination on any level (in the class, in the picture books/textbooks or in the processes of leading institutions).

Table 9 Practitioners perception on level of knowledge and skills in different gender equality areas (M, SD)

	M	SD
Implementing of international and national documents in the field of gender equality	1.82	0.88
Reacting adequately on sex/gender discrimination situations	2.76	1.20
Dealing with sex/gender caused peer violence	2.82	1.16
Implementing working methods that are nurturing sex/gender equality	2.85	1.33
Creating a class climate that is sex/gender equal	3.03	1.36
Nurturing relationships in the group of children that are based on sex/gender equality	3.09	1.35
Breaking sex / gender stereotypes and prejudices	3.18	1.26
Recognition of sex/gender discrimination in the leadership of the institution	3.18	1.21
Recognition of sex/gender discrimination in picture books and school materials	3.36	1.17
Recognition of sex/gender stereotypes and prejudices	3.39	1.26
Recognition of sex/gender discrimination in the group of children	3.39	1.14
Nurturing and creating nonviolent communication between children	3.82	1.24
Nurturing and creating nonviolent communication towards children	3.94	1.20

This group of research participants was asked what support and from whom could they use in order to contribute more to gender equality education from their position. Almost all stakeholders were mentioned, from ministry and faculty to national agency for trainings and education, to school experts, principals, colleagues and parents. Also, some of them said that



they could use literature, that would be brief, concrete with examples of good practice or even direct workshops that could they implement in their work.

Regarding some main attitudes of practitioners about the gender equality, they are pretty confident that they understand the concept (M = 4.47, SD = 0.64) and are prepared to teach others about it (M = 4.40, SD = 0.83). They believe that preschool institutions (M = 3.53, SD = 1.13) and schools (M = 3.67, SD = 1.11) are moderately developing children’s attitudes towards the gender equality. Still, they think that parents are raising their children according to the principles of gender equality even less then educational institutions (M = 2.93, SD = 0.80). Practitioners believe that education for gender equality is more important for them (M = 4.40, SD = 0.91) then for others (M = 3.53, SD = 0.63). More specifically, 66.7% of research participants *completely agree* that an education for gender equality is important to them, but only 6.7% of them chooses that answer when answering to the same question about others.

Table 10 Practitioners attitudes towards importance of gender equality (GE) education and promotion (Agenda: 1 – I do not agree at all, 2 - I do not agree, 3 – I somewhat agree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I agree completely)

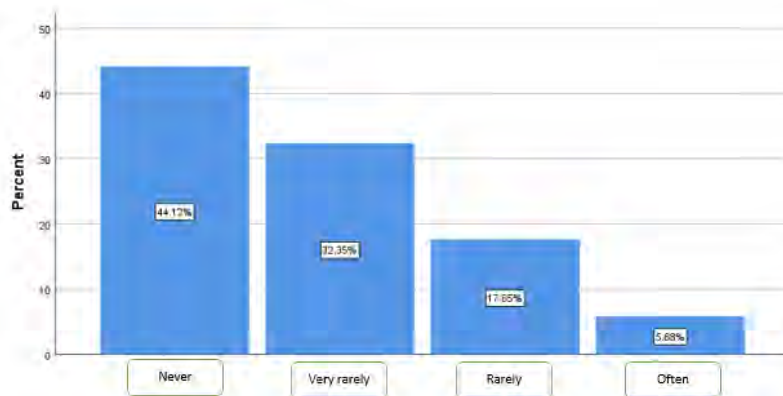
	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
I understand a concept of the GE.	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	40.0%	53.3%	4.47	.64
I am prepared to teach others about the GE.	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	4.40	.83
Parents are raising their children according to the principles of GE.	0.0%	26.7%	60.0%	6.7%	6.7%	2.93	.80
Children in the kindergarten are developing attitudes towards the GE.	0.0%	26.7%	13.3%	40.0%	20.0%	3.53	1.13
Children in the school are developing attitudes towards the GE:	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	33.3%	26.7%	3.67	1.11
Education for GE is important to me.	0.0%	0.0%	26.7%	6.7%	66.7%	4.40	.91
Education for GE is important to others.	0.0%	0.0%	53.3%	40.0%	6.7%	3.53	.64

4.5 Family level: parents

Parents are important stakeholders regarding gender equality education. Important is how much they know about gender equality, what are their attitudes and of course how they act. More than half of the parents who were part of the research (55.9%) claim that they have heard *often* about concept of gender equality. Around one fifth of them (20 %) discussed this construct *never* or *very rarely*. However, it seems that they talk about gender equality on other places then in the contact with educational institutions, because most of them (44.1%) claims that they have never meet a construct of gender equality from the education



institution where their child is involved in the preschool or primary school program (Picture 2).



Picture 2 Parents perception on how often did they hear about gender equality in contact with an educational institution of their child

When parents were asked to explain contacts that they had with their educational institution regarding gender equality they came up with examples such as: Mothers and Father’s Day and some experiences when boys were playing “girls’ games” (esc cooking, baking, dolls). Some of them came up with examples of gender inequality, such as comments of preschool teachers: “*boys as boys*”. The work of preschool teachers and teachers on the gender equality parents mostly see through *letting* children both sexes to play with any toys.

Parents who were involved in the research were asked if they think that it is important for they child to meet with topics in the field of gender equality, and 94.1% of them answered “YES”. They believe that children should hear about this topic in the family but also in the educational system programs. However, 73.53% of them are aware that their children did not meet the concept of gender equality during their so far education. Probably because of that most of them believes that there is *no interest* or a *very little interest* of preschool (64.7% parents) and primary school (50.0% parents) education to work on the topics in the field of gender equality. They believe that there is no systematic approach or an interest of institutions for this topic, that if there is any talk about it, it comes from individual (preschool) teacher. Some of them mentioned that there are “*greater problems than this*”, that mostly “*curriculum is followed*” that there is “*too many administrative work and children in the group for teachers to work on something more*”. Few parents said that preschool teachers are actually often sharing and promoting some sex and gender stereotypes such as: “*It is easier to work with girls*” or “*Those are boys, they are restless and they fight*”. On the other side, they claim that they as well did not discuss with their children about topics that are close to sex/gender equality. More specifically, 58.82% of parents said that they have discussed that

topics *never* or *very rarely*. Still, 35.29% claim that they discuss it *often*. Parents see their role in promoting gender equality in two main ways: by being a model and by acting actively. Most of them talk about their role in the way that they are a model of not implementing gender inequality. Examples of that are: there is no male and female housework, boys and girls both need to do all same things regarding household and they are playing with their children all games regardless their sex. Some of them see their role more actively, like talking about situations where gender inequality was present, creating critical thinking towards existing stereotypes and prejudices or reading different picture books where the topic is present. They believe that they could use some support in parenting in more gender equal way, and as main stakeholders that they could use in this area they target: schools, preschool institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and finally whole community and an educational system. Mostly they talk about support in the way of organizing different educations and workshop for parents.

An important part of parents' contribution to a gender equality education are their behaviors (Table 11) and their attitudes (Table 12) towards it. Research participants were asked to assess how often in the regular week they do different behaviors: *never*, *once*, *few times a week*, *every day*, and *few times over the day*. There were 5 behaviors that are promoting gender equality and 5 of them that are nurturing sex and gender stereotypes. Most rarely parents tell to a child to not act in some way because that is not typical for its gender ($M = 1.03$, $SD = 0.17$) and tell to a child that it must act in some way because it is typical for its gender ($M = 1.06$, $SD = 0.24$). Other behaviors that are based on gender stereotypes are as well not happening often, but it is important to highlight that around one third (29.4%) of parents once or few times over the week justify some behavior of a child by saying: that is normal for him, he is a boy or that is normal for her, she is a girl. Also, a fifth (20.5%) of all research participants every week or even more often compare a child with a parent of the same sex in the situation when a child is doing something typical for that gender (esc. when girl is cleaning you say: just like her mum).

Table 11 Parents perception about the frequency of their behaviors during the regular week

	Never	Once / Few times over the week	Every day / Few times daily	M	SD
You tell to a child to not act in some way because that is not typical for its gender (esc. don't cry like a girl).	97.1%	2.9 %	0.0%	1.03	.17
You tell to a child that it must act in some way because it is typical for its gender (esc you are a boy, you have to behave nicely to girls).	94.1%	5.9%	0.0%	1.06	.24
You justify some behavior of a child by saying: that is normal for him, he is a boy.	70.6%	29.4%	0.0%	1.32	.53



You compare a child with a parent of the same sex in the situation when a child is doing something typical for that gender (esc. when girl is cleaning you say: just like her mum).	79.4%	17.6%	2.9%	1.29	.68
You discuss with a child about different roles that he/she should take because of its gender (esc. mummy should cook).	88.2%	8.8%	2.9%	1.18	.58
You encourage children to do housework that are not typical for its gender (esc. boys to cook with mum).	5.9%	44.1%	50.0%	3.44	1.16
You dress a child in the colors that are not typical for its gender (esc. boys in purple).	0.0%	61.7%	38.3%	3.21	.88
Conduct activities with children that are not typical for its gender (esc. play football with girls).	0.0%	47.0%	53.0%	3.53	1.05
Read picture books to a child that are not typical for its gender (esc. girls about pirates).	8.8%	44.2%	47.0%	3.21	1.27
Talk to a child about inequality between sexes and genders.	35.3%	41.2%	23.5%	2.38	1.30

Most often during the regular week parents conduct activities ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.05$) with children that are not typical for its gender (esc. play football with girls or dance with boys) and encourage children to do housework ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.16$) that are not typical for its gender (esc. boys to cook with mum). However, there is still 8.8 % of parents who never read picture books to a child that are not typical for its gender and 5.9% of them who never encourage children to do housework that are not typical for its gender. Finally, 35.3% of research participants never discuss with their children inequality between sexes and genders. In Table 12 some parents' attitudes about raising children of different sexes are readable. The statements that parents agree the most with are the once connected with their role in fighting gender equality. All parents included in the research believe that parents with their behaviors can contribute towards reducing sex and gender discrimination ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 0.36$) and that parents are very important in promoting sex and gender equality ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 0.48$). However, they are not so sure about that parents with their behaviors can contribute towards developing or breaking stereotypes and prejudice ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.59$). There is high level of believing that boys and girls should be raised alike ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 0.61$). Even so, a half of parents (50.0%) thinks that boys should be more often remembered about sex/gender discrimination. Further on, a quarter of parents *somewhat agree* or *agree* that girls are more into cooking and baking than boys (26.4%) and that boys need more sport activities within a week (29.4%).

Table 12 Parents attitudes about raising boys and girls



	I don't agree	I somewhat agree	I agree	M	SD
Girls and boys should be raised alike.	0.0%	5.9%	94.1%	4.47	.61
Girls should be more often remembered about sex/gender discrimination.	35.3%	20.6%	44.1%	3.12	1.12
Boys should be more often remembered about sex/gender discrimination.	29.4%	20.6%	50.0%	3.26	1.21
Girls more often help in household jobs.	61.8%	17.6%	20.6%	2.29	1.12
Girls are more into cooking and baking than boys.	73.6%	17.6%	8.8%	1.94	.98
Boys need more sport activities within a week.	70.6%	11.8%	17.6%	2.15	1.16
Boys have more interest in fixing things around the house than girls.	79.4%	11.8%	8.8%	1.91	.93
Parents are very important in promoting sex and gender equality.	0.0%	2.9%	97.1%	4.79	.48
Parents with their behaviors can contribute towards reducing sex and gender discrimination.	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	4.85	.36
Parents with their behaviors can contribute towards developing or breaking stereotypes and prejudice.	0.0%	88.2%	11.8%	3.21	.59

Finally, parents were asked to assess some statements regarding importance of gender equality education (Table 13). Most of them agree or completely agree that they understand a concept of a gender equality ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.70$) and that they are prepared to teach others about it ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 0.89$). Around one third of them don't agree that children in the kindergarten (26.6%) or in schools (32.3%) are developing attitudes towards the gender equality. They believe that parents are even less involved in raising their children according to the principles of gender equality, or more specifically, 50.0% of research participants do not agree that parents are doing that at all. Parents believe that education for gender equality is important to them ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.88$) but that it is not as important to others ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.79$).

Table 13 Parents attitudes towards importance of gender equality (GE) education and promotion (Agenda: 1 – I do not agree at all, 2 - I do not agree, 3 – I somewhat agree, 4 – I agree, 5 – I agree completely)

	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
I understand a concept of the GE.	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	47.1%	47.1%	4.38	.70
I am prepared to teach others about the GE.	2.9%	0.0%	11.8%	41.2%	44.1%	4.24	.89

Parents are raising their children according to the principles of GE.	8.8%	41.2%	26.5%	8.8%	14.7%	2.79	1.20
Children in the kindergarten are developing attitudes towards the GE.	5.9%	20.6%	35.3%	23.5%	14.7%	3.21	1.12
Children in the school are developing attitudes towards the GE:	8.8%	23.5%	23.5%	29.4%	14.7%	3.18	1.22
Education for GE is important to me.	2.9%	0.0%	8.8%	35.3%	52.9%	4.35	.88
Education for GE is important to others.	2.9%	38.2%	41.2%	17.6%	0.0%	2.74	.79

5. Discussion and conclusions of the research

As one of the research goals was to examine *the approach and an interest* of relevant stakeholders (educational institutions, preschool teachers, teachers, parents) for promoting and educating for gender equality, part of the research questions were focused on these dimensions of a gender equality education. It is interesting that both students and practitioners claim that they have been in contact with the topic of gender equality *rarely*, while most of the parents think that for them it happened *often*. But on the other side, when they are asked about interest of an educational institutions about a gender equality education, ***all three groups agreed that institutions mostly implement content that is part of an obligated curricula, and rarely include anything else.*** Students, practitioners and parents, ***all believe that the problem is a lack of systematic approach towards a gender equality education, which leaves its implementation just on the interest and motivation of individuals.*** Another problem that was highlighted by all participants included, is that there are some people who are in resistance to implement ideas of gender equality in an educational system. While talking about interest for a gender equality education of included groups themselves, all groups believe that this concept is very important to them. On the other side, all three groups estimate, with more than a 1.5 mean difference, that a gender equality education is less important to *others*. ***From the research results it could be concluded that students, practitioners and parents talk about the gender equality promotion in two main ways – a passive and an active.*** While talking about a passive approach, participants explained their behavior as being a good model and not implementing gender inequality actions in their everyday work or behaviors. Some examples are: letting children of both sexes to play with any toys they want or encouraging both boys and girls to do all household jobs. Some of them mention more active approach like talking and discussing with children about gender equality or reacting on the situations of gender inequality by creating critical thinking of children. ***When they were asked to give examples of how they could be a part of a***

promotion of gender equality they most often came up with active approach ideas, but when they talk about what they actually do in order to raise awareness of children for gender (in)equality issues, they most often use a passive approach. Seeing a passive approach as an only way of promoting gender equality goes so far that some research participants feel that they do not have to discuss those issues at their workplace because there are only female employees there so they “don’t have that kind of problems of gender inequality”. Finally, all groups that were included in the research see other groups as those whose support they could use to be better promoters and educators of gender equality. They also mention ministry, educational agency and nongovernmental organizations. ***They are aware that this topic is something that should be squeezed through all levels and layers of the educational system and that should be discussed with children from all main stakeholders who are part of their upbringing.***

Another goal of the research was to examine *the level of preparation (knowledge, skills) of relevant stakeholders (preschool teachers, teachers, parents) for promoting and educating for gender equality.* ***Even though all three groups have a feeling that they have a good knowledge and skills about gender equality and that they are pretty much ready to teach others about it, some answers to open questions indicate that that is not a case.*** The full definition of gender equality⁴⁹ is that it is *equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, thereby recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.* While asked to shortly explain what gender equality means, most of the participants replied that it is an *equality between man and women.* Also, all of their other answers to further questionnaire questions are showing this narrow perception of understanding of this concept. Further on, practitioners and students were asked about their preparation in different dimensions of gender equality education. Both groups said that ***during their formal or nonformal education they meet more often with topics of nonviolent conflict resolution and human/children rights. The topic they meet the least is sex /gender equality.*** Very rarely practitioners were also educated in the field of discrimination and stereotypes and prejudice, and students with the topic of a peer violence. By assessing the level of their competence development for working on gender equality

⁴⁹ Definition by European Institute for Gender Equality, <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1168>, visited 12th August 2021



issues, both practitioners and students feel the least prepared for implementing of international and national documents in the field of gender equality into the practice. Students feel best prepared for recognizing different situations of gender inequality, but they are feeling less prepared for creating a climate that is gender equal, for implementing working methods that are nurturing gender equality and for nurturing relationships in the group of children that are based on gender equality. Practitioners also feel more confident about recognizing different situations of gender inequality but they also feel they are prepared for nurturing and creating nonviolent communication. On the other side, they don't feel well prepared for reacting adequately on the gender discrimination situations or for dealing with gender caused peer violence. It is interesting that they as well feel not completely confident about implementing methods that are nurturing gender equality. ***It could be concluded that both students and practitioners feel more prepared for recognitions of different situations of inequality, but are not well prepared for taking an active approach in promoting gender equality or in reacting in the situations of gender-based discrimination.***

Finally, the last specific goal of the research was aiming to examine *values and attitudes* of relevant stakeholders (preschool teachers, teachers, parents) for promoting and educating for gender equality. All three groups decided that they somewhat agree that kindergarten, schools and parents are raising children according to the principles of the gender equality. ***Practitioners believe that an education for gender equality is something that is important, but that there are some more crucial problems that should be discussed. They, both with students, find those topics relevant just in the situations that are close to them, therefore in the problems of including male teachers in their work.*** Very important part of children upbringing are values of their parents. All parents included in the research believe that parents with their behaviors can contribute towards reducing sex and gender discrimination and that parents are very important in promoting sex and gender equality. However, they are not so sure about that parents with their behaviors can contribute towards developing or breaking stereotypes and prejudice. There is high level of believing that boys and girls should be raised alike. Even so, a half of parents thinks that boys should be more often remembered about sex/gender discrimination. Further on, a quarter of parents *somewhat agree* or *agree* that girls are more into cooking and baking than boys and that boys need more sport activities within a week. Those attitudes are readable from some behaviors that parents reported, such as that a third of parents once or few times over the week justify some behavior of a child by saying: *that is normal for him, he is a boy or that is normal for her, she is a girl*, or a fifth of all research participants every week or even more often compare a child with a parent of the same sex in the situation when a child is doing something typical for that gender (esc. when girl is cleaning you say: just like her mum). ***To conclude, parents feel that they meet with the topic about gender equality often and that they know a lot about it, but going more deeper***



into their everyday life and values, it is readable that some of them are not compactly aware what gender equal behavior should be.

6. Recommendations

An overall recommendation is that an educational system, on all levels (preschool education, primary education, secondary education, higher education, an initial education of teachers and preschool teachers) **should take more systematic approach in implementing education for gender equality**, align with what is written in main educational documents.

Meanwhile, **nongovernmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should organize more educations and workshops in the field of gender equality** for all groups that are in direct contact with children: preschool teachers, teachers, students that will be preschool teachers, students that will be teachers and parents, in order to fill gaps in the knowledge and skills of those groups.

Research results are leading towards few recommendations that could contribute in developing curricula for educations with parents, preschool teachers and teachers:

- ***Education should contain open discussions during which a concept of gender equality is deeply explained and connected with the human rights system in general.*** During those open discussions' participants should be asked to freely share situations of gender inequality in their surroundings in order to discuss with an educator which of those actually were and were not gender inequality issues. One important part of those discussions should be a feminization of profession of preschool teachers and teachers because that is something that those groups mostly connect with gender (in)equality issues.
- ***Education should have as a main goal to encourage participants in taking more active approach in promoting and protecting gender equality in their everyday life and in highlighting the importance of it.*** At the moment, the educational system itself, but also all stakeholders in it, take more passive approach, and that is trying not to implement gender inequality actions. Rarely, they act in order to promote gender equality themselves or prepare children to be active in promotion and protection of it as well.
- ***Education should contain presentation of main national legal and pedagogical documents, with an overview of all the places where gender sensitive education is included and mentioned as something that should be developed within an educational system.*** At the moment students, practitioners and parents believe that those topics are not a part of an official curricula or something that should be integrated in programs of educational institutions.



- **Education should focus on developing attitudes of preschool teachers and teachers that a question of gender equality is something that is important to everyone, and a value that should be developed within every child.** At the moment, preschool teachers and teachers feel that gender equality is something that should be discussed when gender inequality happens, and not something that should be discussed as an important part of child's upbringing.
- **Education should offer clear guidelines with many examples and ideas of how the gender equality issues could be introduced towards children in preschool and primary school education.**
- **Education should contain knowledge about gender/sex equality, peer violence and discrimination,** as topics that practitioners and students highlighted as once that they meet the least during their initial education and professional development.
- **Education should focus on preparing preschool teachers and teachers for implementing different methods that are nurturing gender equality in the group of children and different methods for reacting adequately on the gender discrimination situations.** Nonformal educational methods that are applying experience learning and active participation of participants should be implemented. At the moment practitioners and students feel that they are good in recognizing gender inequality issues but are not well prepared in acting and reacting in those situations.
- **Education should focus on preparing preschool teachers and teachers for dealing with gender caused peer violence.**
- **Education should prepare parents to discuss with their children gender equality issues.** At the moment most parents are taking a passive approach and that is not actively steering boys in the way to act "like boys" and girls in the way to act "girly".
- **Education should gather all groups of main stakeholders together, preschool teachers, teachers and parents,** because they all see themselves as those who can give each other's support in the process of gender equality promotion and protection.



EU mapping & analysis of gender-responsive methodologies, programs and projects for KINDER project.



Authors: ISSA

1. Introduction

Gender stereotypes strongly influence children, yet they are not often addressed and reflected upon. Education institutions and systems carry the potential power to promote gender equity and challenge gender stereotypes that will lead to more equal and healthier societies. However, between different levels of education, there is a gap in how the issues related to gender roles and gender equality are prioritized and discussed or whether they are being focused on. The KINDER project seeks to tackle this gap by developing effective program and training curricula for professionals working with children from preschool to the end of basic compulsory education.

To achieve this aim, examining and understanding these gaps are necessary. This document provides an overview of the characteristics of gender-responsive approaches and effective and inspiring practices from different countries aiming at gender equity in education and society.

2. Main Elements for Gender-Responsive Approaches

Gender-responsive programming and initiatives refer to programmes and initiatives where gender norms, roles, and inequalities have been considered, and measures have been taken to address them actively. They go beyond raising sensitivity and awareness and do something about gender inequalities. The methods and learning materials used in such programmes and initiatives are free of gender stereotypes or challenge these stereotypes. They consider the specific needs of female and male students and take gender context into account in terms of what is taught, how it is learned, and how it is practiced. The whole system must be gender-responsive, beginning from the individual classrooms to enabling policies. Gender-responsive work should be regarded as the responsibility of teachers only. Within the educational system, teachers should be supported by their work environment to implement gender-responsive pedagogies.

Practitioners can adopt many different strategies to challenge patriarchal power relations and create an environment in educational institutions free of or challenging biases. All of them should provide children with alternative examples of masculinity and femininity to remove the polarity of gender. Examples include introducing activities into the curriculum that both



preschool and school -aged boys and girls enjoy engaging in, such as sewing, woodwork, etc. These activities have the potential to challenge traditional gender roles. Another example of providing alternatives to the polarity of gender is introducing gender non-conforming professions (e.g., male nurse, female firefighter). Inviting these professionals to the center/school will help practitioners to highlight gender stereotypes in their practice.

Yet, applying these strategies is not sufficient. Reflecting on one's own beliefs and biases is crucial in implementing such practices. The researchers' highlight that feminist discourse analysis in a given organization will help to achieve gender equity. In other words, the categories to make meaning of social life and one's own life should be reflected and analyzed. It is important to understand what is "normal" in terms of gender roles and how the dominant discourse shapes how we understand and put in emotional effort. Once the shared understanding is established, gender-focused child observations can effectively implement the practices mentioned above and internalize gender roles that are alternative to the dominant discourse, rather than just remaining on the practice level.⁵⁰

3. Enabling characteristics of educational organizations for gender-responsive pedagogies

Earlier research has suggested different stages of receptiveness and flexibility of (pre)schools in their way of understanding and handling gender roles and gender equity. The three stages of gender equality work are defined as 'private, internal and external stages'. The stages are hierarchal - a more developed and complex way of working to promote gender in the external stage is more visible than work seen in the private stage. In the private stage, for example, the content of gender equality is unclear, and this stage involves instability but moving towards the external stage, the direction of the gender equality work is clear, transparent, and open for communication.

The findings of a Nordic Study have shown that an institution in an internal stage shows the following characteristics:

- External support from politicians and school management;
- Resources are available for the work to be carried out;
- Externally formulated goals and expectations that the school organization will work with gender equality;
- The organization around the work is stable, and all teachers at a school are expected to participate, though possibly to different degrees;

⁵⁰ ECS, J. M. O. S. B. (2013). How can early childhood practitioners, in seeking to challenge patriarchal gender relations, promote gender equity through practice?. Practice, 5.



- Cities working thoroughly with gender equality by offering preschools and schools a 'gender certificate'. For a school to get a gender-certificate, teachers must get gender education on regularly arranged lectures. It is also required of the preschools and schools to formulate a gender equality plan for the preschool or school.

When an institution moves toward the external stage, the following are present:

- Regular and frequent collaboration with others;
- Work for gender equality is on its way to being integrated into the regular preschool activities;
- Activities build on evaluated experience or research.
- Knowledge is communicated efficiently, the efforts undertaken are part of a process, and the actions are rarely if ever, ad hoc;
- Gender equality is seen as an area of knowledge, and the organization contributes to the development of this knowledge through its own follow-up research, e.g., in the form of research circles or action research.
- Continuous and comprehensive documentation aimed at promoting the development of knowledge.
- Work within the external stage always takes place in a larger context—in a municipality or region—where preschools carry out gender equality development work together and exchange ideas within that framework.

Institutions go through change moving forward in these stages in terms of five key phases of gender equality work. It is important to note that these five aspects are overlapping and parallel processes:

1. Epistemological understanding: Approaches to and awareness of gender knowledge (both concerning curriculum issues and gender knowledge).
2. Management support: Principals and preschool leaders/ local politicians who support the efforts made and believe in the ongoing gender equality work.
3. Goal setting for gender equality work, including the follow-up of goals.
4. Organization around the work to be carried out, including available resources and assuring that the staff understands the importance of gender equality.
5. Development climate: Degree of dialogue and collaboration amongst the teaching staff.



4. School Management

A gender-responsive school is one in which the academic, social and physical environment takes into account the specific needs of both girls and boys. This implies that all stakeholders understand the educational principles and practices that promote gender equality. For example, the teaching methodologies, language use, educational materials, classroom set-up, interactions, and physical environment should all be gender-responsive and learner-centered.

Thus, a gender-responsive school:⁵¹

- Recognizes and addresses gender-based needs of both boys and girls through its management system, policies, and practices;
- Ensures adequate infrastructure based on needs (e.g., students with disabilities, separate toilets, etc.);
- Develops and enforces teacher codes of conduct;
- Establishes student safety and protection measures;
- Ensures equality between male and female teachers by:
 - Transparent recruitment and selection of teachers and staff.
 - Providing equal pay, equal teaching conditions, equal representation in management positions.
- Reviews the curriculum, textbooks, other learning materials, and teachers' guides how issues related to gender, equality, and inclusion are addressed;
- Provides teachers, principals, and staff gender-responsive teaching training including topics such as equity issues and learner-centered education; gender-responsive teaching approaches and tools; conflict resolution; trauma-informed practices; addressing and preventing sexual harassment and physical and sexual abuse; and school management and leadership;
- Generates and looks for funding to provide scholarships to poor girls or at-risk students, abolishing school fees and reduce hidden costs, provide incentives for teachers, ensure an adequate supply of materials, and upgrade the school infrastructure;

⁵¹ FAWE (2018). Gender Responsive Pedagogy: A Toolkit for Teachers and Schools. 2nd, updated ed. Nairobi: Forum for African Women Educationalists. FAWE House



- Connects with the community; shares information, engages in collaborative projects with other local schools and education institutions, and involves community members in school committees and parent-teacher associations.

What does not work well:⁵²

- When gender equality work appears to be a private matter for teachers: Gender equality is mainly concerned with personal dilemmas in life, and the work done for gender equality is a matter for enthusiasts and not a concern of the organization as a whole.
 - The leadership of the school is disconnected from the teachers' individual voluntary initiations about gender-related issues.
- Lack of shared understanding and values *within* the organization, such as not seeing gender-related issues as problematic or seeing it as unimportant for educational contexts.
- There is no organization of the work done, meaning that there is, for example, no explicit management support, no special resources for the work and no explicit goals to strive for concerning gender equality at that preschool.
- Weak knowledge of the curriculum or other guidelines concerning gender equality was regulated, combined with weak support from the particular organization/unit.
- No collaboration with others, and barely within the unit—only sporadic discussions and talking about gender issues combined with a tendency towards simple explanations as to why gender matters and why gender dilemmas occur.
- No follow-up of the work done.
- No clear structure for who was responsible for the work done and seldom any collaboration with other preschool or school units concerning gender equality issues.

5. Learning Environment

The way the learning environment is arranged affects the process of boys' and girls' learning. The positioning of chairs, tables and desks, decorations, and the space on the wall, and how accessible and organized the materials are important factors that should be considered.

A gender-responsive learning environment may involve⁵³:

⁵² Heikkilä, 2020.

⁵³ FAWE (2018).



- A mixed seating arrangement to enhance the equal participation of women and men—and particularly to encourage women to speak out and overcome shyness.
- A seating arrangement allowing all students to be positioned at the same level
- Fixtures, posters and visual aids on the walls that send gender responsive messages and highlight student work.
- Consistency, structure, and safety that allows for healthy interactions.
- Active participation of students where they can take responsibility for creating a positive learning environment.

Challenges in providing a gender-responsive learning environment:

- Overcrowded classrooms and limited space
- Limited resources
- Fixed or hard to change classroom configurations (e.g., object not moveable)
- Lack of understanding by the school staff about the effects of classroom set-up on learning processes.

6. Teaching and learning

Understanding and protecting the human rights of all children are fundamental elements that teachers should be equipped with and provide age-appropriate sexual health information. Teachers have an important role by working closely with the school management system through regular communication on classroom-related gender issues. Moreover, they need to be knowledgeable about gender-based violence-related issues.

Teaching should be around gender-responsive pedagogy: Processes of lesson planning, teaching practices, classroom management, and performance evaluation should all be implemented around an inclusive gender approach. The language used in the classroom should refer to both genders and refer to all children with respect. While planning their lessons, teachers should consider differences in the learning needs based on different learning styles and social backgrounds. Moreover, teachers should develop their gender-inclusive materials or adapt the existing materials with a gender equality lens. Overall, they should be equipped with a learner-centered pedagogy approach that fosters the motivation to become lifelong learners among children and choose their own learning activities.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Ibid.



Key skills and strategies demonstrated by teachers who promote a gender-responsive classroom environment include⁵⁵⁻⁵⁶:

- Valuing equally the learning ability of both female and male students and giving them equal chances (e.g., while answering questions, leading discussions)
- Facilitating both female and male students' learning abilities, progressing equally, and developing their potential to the fullest.
- Reacting cautiously to unfriendly and potentially gender-biased attitudes that students may demonstrate toward their female and male peers
- Helping students question gender-biased attitudes in order to prevent them from happening in the future
- Looking for characteristics/behaviors resulting from social norms that may hinder academic learning and performance (e.g., shyness, arrogance, dominance, bullying, lack of confidence, and fear of speaking out in class)
- Phrasing questions to reflect equal gender representation—using female and male names and characters when providing examples/illustrations
- Ensuring each student has equal opportunities to practice on the demonstration models without being made to feel uncomfortable and without being belittled by others.
- Assigning similar duties to both female and male students (for example, tidying, moving furniture).
- Discouraging and punishing gender-discriminatory and sexist behaviors

⁵⁵ Mlama P, Dioum M, Makoye H, Murage L, Wagah M, Washika R. 2005. Gender Responsive Pedagogy: A Teacher's Handbook. Nairobi, Kenya: Forum for African Women Educationalists

⁵⁶ UNESCO, 2009. Gender in Education Network in Asia-Pacific (GENIA) Toolkit: Promoting Gender Equality in Education. Bangkok, Thailand



- **Non-effective practices that are frequently used**
- **Feminisation** involves placing materials traditionally associated with girls in an area traditionally seen as male. The thinking behind this method is that girls will be more likely to enter such a 'masculine' area as it will now also contain materials which interest them. Having entered the area girls may be more likely to engage with the 'masculine' materials in their play. However, this strategy was generally unsuccessful as the boys tended to simply remove the 'feminine' materials from the area.
- **Separatism** entails allowing access separately to the boys and girls to particular materials, e.g. introducing an allocated time for girls to use materials considered more 'masculine' such as Lego. Two failings of this approach were observed. Firstly, boys tend to disrupt this play intentionally and secondly, once girls-only time comes to an end, children tend to revert to their usual gender relations.
- **Fusion** involves combining areas considered masculine and feminine together to achieve a gender-neutral play-space. The shortcomings of this approach include the fact that boys playing in such a space exclude girls and both sexes continue to play in a way that maintains gender stereotypes.
- Finally, **policing** involves continuous observation by the practitioner of children's play in order to intervene in situations where boy's behavior is dominating or excluding girls. This approach did not facilitate the girls to engage more often with materials seen as 'masculine' and was a considerable strain on the time of the practitioner.

7. Teaching and Learning Materials

Teaching and learning materials are a crucial part of the learning process. They contribute to constructing beliefs and values in students about gender norms, vocational choices, and future opportunities. How and whether teachers develop gender stereotype-free materials or adapt the existing materials in that manner to promote gender equality. Students should also participate in the process by analyzing and reconstructing gender representations⁵⁷.

Questions to consider when assessing and/or designing teaching and learning materials:

How many women and men are portrayed or mentioned in the text and images?
 When and how often do female characters appear compared with male characters?
 What kind of activity (productive/reproductive/community) is each person involved in?

Are both pronouns used (she/he)?
 Who are the main characters in the stories/case studies?
 Is there an equal representation of both women and men in the images/illustrations?

⁵⁷ FAWE (2018).



<p>How are women and men portrayed? (e.g. nurturers, economic producers, leaders, victims)?</p> <p>Do the materials use gender-neutral/inclusive language? (i.e., “people” or “persons” vs. “men” and “women”?)</p>	<p>How do women appear in comparison with men, especially in terms of their image sizes?</p> <p>How do the teaching/learning materials promote equal partnership between women and men?</p>
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What does not work well:

When standard teaching methods and learning materials tend to:

- Depict men as powerful, assertive, and intelligent
- Depict men in leadership and professional roles (e.g., doctors)
- Portray women as weak, passive, and submissive
- Depict women in domestic, caregiving, and supportive roles (e.g., nurses).
- Use the masculine pronoun ‘he’ to refer to both men and women or to human beings generally.



Effective and Inspiring Methodologies, Programs and Projects.

Authors: ISSA



1. Europe

FINLAND

- > **Gender Equality in Education (Eng) — Tasa-arvo kasvatuksessa (Fin) — Jämställdhet i lärande (Swe)**

The study package www.tasa-arvokasvatuksessa.fi supports a gender perspective of the pedagogical work carried out within early childhood learning (day care and pre-school) and the education of the comprehensive school (grades 1—9) in Finland.

The study package comprises material and interviews by teachers, day care personnel, students, principals, supervisors, officials, researchers, consultants and people involved in gender equality projects carried out by various organizations. They relate their experiences, research results, and methods by which you can start your gender equality project and development. There are reflective questions added to further deepen your learning, along with practical exercises for implementation.

The study package, which can be carried out as self-studies, used in class, in a group, with colleagues or parents as support for discussion and development, is divided into three separate portals, based on the intended target groups.

BELGIUM

- > **Genderklik in de kleuterklas:**

Instrument (in Dutch) to sensitize nursery schools to the gender dimension of education. This practical [guide](#) gives teachers and school administrators an overview of all areas of nursery education in which gender can play a role; these dimensions are explained and supplemented by a series of practical tips that readers can apply in the classroom and at school.

This guide is the result of action-based research by Genderatwork funded by Equal Opportunities in Flanders. Through visits to preschools, discussions with teacher and school management, comparison of experiences, individual surveys and in-depth interviews, this practical guide was developed. It provides examples and tips and tricks to work on gender in class and in school (visual aids, gender neutral teaching materials, non-conforming role play, play corner, library, father groups, etc.). Useful links: www.genderatwork.be



> **Genderklik.be.**

This is a [website](#) with resources and practical tips addressed to teachers at all educational levels and the wider community (e.g., parents). Genderklik.be is an official website of the Flemish government. Genderklik.be gets rid of simplistic categories for girls, boys, women and men in society and helps you make the gender click in a fun and interactive way.

> **Initial and in-service training for teachers and future teachers on equality of boys and girls in school**

The Walloon-Brussels Federation has devised an initial and in-service training module for teachers and future teachers to promote equality of boys and girls at school. The initial and in-service training module "Boys and girls – the same school?" was devised by a team of teachers from all the branches of higher education including both the traditional and social advancement sectors. It introduces the gender dimension and helps teachers to deconstruct sexually stereotyped representations in an organised manner. It is divided into 4 sections:

- nursery school education;
- primary school education;
- secondary education;
- higher education.

Each of these sections is divided in turn into different environments (institutional, educational, relational, etc.) proposing practical teaching approaches designed to prompt an investigation of ideas about the relationship between girls and boys at school. On the website, teachers and future teachers will find references and definitions, examples of activities, teachers' thoughts about gender issues, questionnaires for pupils, video reports, etc. Short teaser video introducing the training module: <http://youtu.be/m57LSLdyY84>. Online access to the training module: www.egalitefllesgarcons.be, Useful links: www.egalitefllesgarcons.be

BELGIAN CASE EXAMPLE

On 23 October 2012 the Flemish minister for Education and Equal Opportunities, invited a broad range of key actors and organisations in the field of education to sign a Common Declaration for a gender sensitive and LGBT friendly policy in schools. Through this Declaration the Flemish schools committed themselves to setting up a structural approach (pedagogical and policy wise) to raise awareness about gender and sexual diversity and to create an environment of openness and tolerance for all students, teachers and other educational personnel. This Declaration was then translated into concrete actions.

- A teacher was specially appointed to take stock of and compile the existing didactical teaching materials. This compilation is accompanied by fling cards holding all the practical information about the educational materials. Via these fling cards schools



can easily find the tailor made tool they want to use when dealing with gender issues in class.

- In September 2013 a follow up project was launched. For the duration of two years two teachers were specially appointed to work on implementing a gender sensitive and LGBT friendly policy in schools.

SCOTLAND

> Gender equal play in early learning and childcare

This [resource](#) has been co-produced by the Care Inspectorate and Zero Tolerance in order to help practitioners enhance gender equality for children across all ELC settings. This resource is intended to complement the **Scottish Government's ongoing activity to attract more males to join the workforce**, supported by key partners such as Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council.

The **Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy**, for the prevention and eradication of violence against women and girls, is supported by this publication. It also meets the **Public Sector Equality Duty**, which applies to all public services in Scotland. While most people agree that gender equality is a good idea, within ELC services there is a need for advice and guidance for practitioners on how to support gender equality and avoid harmful stereotyping in their practice. The resource therefore offers practical and helpful tips on how to promote gender equality in an accessible way.

> Just like a Child – [A guide for childcare professionals](#)

In 2013 Zero Tolerance published **Just like a Child – A guide for childcare professionals**, a guide for childcare professionals on respecting gender equality in the early years and 2016 **The Default Setting: What parents say about gender stereotyping in their children's early years**. By featuring the direct experience of children and highlighting the positive impact practitioners can have on their outcomes, we are also modelling Scotland's new Health and Social Care Standards.

- > **Just like a child. Respect gender equality in the early years: A guide for childcare professionals.** This guide is aimed at childcare professionals who work with very young children in nurseries/educational settings. The information it contains is also helpful for parents and careers.

FRANCE

> "The School of Equality"

Under its educational space, the Academie de Poitiers features various resources, some for taking action for gender equality in kindergarten. In addition, in 2020 new version of the teaching materials "The School of Equality" has been published. The tool consists of four brochures offering numerous



activities from the age of 4 to the age of 12. The objectives of "The School of Equality" are multiple: encourage consideration of equality, both among students and among teachers, develop harmonious relationships between the sexes, raise students' awareness of gender stereotypes to enable them to identify and break free from them, broaden the choices of educational and vocational guidance for girls and boys. The ONISEP (National Office for information on education and professions) also provides many resources for teams, you can find [here](#) (in French).

SPAIN

> Equality in game/play

This [guide](#) (in Spanish) provides guidelines on incorporating a gender perspective in Physical Activity and Sport Science (PASS) degrees and research. It is divided into three parts. The first part introduces the current situation of PASS studies, including the decline of women's interest in them, and then focuses on what image should be projected for promoting these studies. The second part proposes some organisational strategies for incorporating gender mainstreaming in high education institutions' management and in the design of the contents of teaching, both in higher education and in primary and secondary education. Finally, the third part offers some indicators on how to measure gender equality in the organisation of the institution and teaching and research to raise awareness amongst lecturers, professors, and educators.

PORTUGAL

> Education Guides For Gender And Citizenship Project - A Strategy To Gender Mainstreaming In Education

The Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) has been implementing this project since 2008. The project has 2 dimensions:

1. The conceptualisation and edition of five Education Guides covering the five cycles of compulsory public education system (from 1st grade to 12th grade) and its dissemination through the national school network libraries (and higher education institutions providing teachers' training);
2. The support of the application of the Guides by teachers through a nationwide teachers' training validated by the Ministry of Education.

The project intends to mainstream gender equality into the education system in a more effective and permanent way. The objectives are:

1. To integrate a gender equality perspective and women's studies in the curricula (providing scientific knowledge in curricular subjects), in teachers' pedagogical practices (leading to individual and collective changes in teaching



practices), in school decision-making and school organisation and communication (changing school culture and ensuring sustainability to individual changes);

2. To make gender equality a central issue of the National Strategy for Education for Citizenship and of the compulsory subject of Citizenship and Development, as well as to mainstream gender equality in the cross-curricular areas, which are priorities for the Ministry of Education, such as health education, sexual education and technological education.

You can find resources for school level [here](#), and preschool level [here](#).

IRELAND

[Diversity, Equality AND Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care AND Education](#)

Although not specifically addressed to gender issues these guidelines seek to raise awareness of all diversity experienced in every part of Irish society. It is important that we adapt to these changes with the assistance of clear guidance and advice so that, in positively responding to difference, we have a better understanding of the steps we should take and the practices where change may be needed.

CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY AND AUSTRIA

> [Towards gender-sensitive education](#)

This is a three-year-long [project](#) implemented by five organisations from three EU countries in a strategic partnership: Masaryk University (Czech Republic), Gender Information Centre NORA (Czech Republic), Hungarian Women’s Lobby (Hungary), Eötvös Loránd University (Hungary), and Verein EfEU (Austria). The project aims to improve teachers’ sensitivity for gender through a methodology for training gender sensitive education. The developed 30-hour courses will target both in-training teachers and teachers in practice, teaching at the lower secondary school level.

The training in the project will provide tools to help teachers recognizing their own biases and the effect of these biases in the classroom environment, techniques of gender-sensitive education for teachers which they can incorporate in their practice. The course content will also be based on the current policy analysis and focus group discussions with teachers, strengthened by the findings of the pilot implementation. ([The handbook](#))



CYPRUS

> [Interdepartmental Committee and Action Plan for Gender Equality of the Ministry of Education and Culture \(in Greek\)](#)

Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) is focused on ensuring equal opportunities in education for both genders on a nondiscriminatory basis in all levels of education. The Ministry has formed an Interdepartmental Committee with representatives from all its departments and services.

Target Group: Pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary general, Secondary technical and Vocational Education, and the Department of higher and tertiary education. In order to bring the gender mainstreaming strategy into educational policies and school practices, the Committee has prepared an Action Plan that promotes gender equality (2014-2017). This Action Plan includes actions on gender equality awareness based on three objectives:

1. Inclusion of gender equality in matters related to the structures of the educational system;
2. Inclusion of the principle of gender equality in matters relating to teacher in-service training;
3. The empowerment of the family in promoting gender equality.

Examples of the inclusion of gender equality in matters related to the structures of the educational system include the following.

The development of actions targeting all forms of stereotyping, and in particular that of eliminating the gap between men and women.

- Launching a webpage dedicated to Gender Equality by the Pedagogical Institute, which includes useful information, bibliography and teaching material for promoting equal opportunities of both genders and gender mainstreaming in the educational process;
- Utilising the all-day school which allows pupils to extend their stay in school, studying and being activated in other cultural, sporting and educational activities;
- Utilising the institution of the Zones of Educational Priority;
- Preventing and combating violence and delinquency in school and in the family (Departments of Primary Education, Secondary General Education, Educational Psychology Service);
- The Pedagogical Institute, in collaboration with the Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training, and the Departments of Secondary General and Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, organised an Essay Contest about Gender Equality among the pupils of Grade 11;



- Conducting surveys on the needs and aspirations of women of «diverse» cultural backgrounds and their children and creating educational/professional structures aimed at providing language skills and professional orientation (Pedagogical Institute, State Institutes of Further Education and Department of Secondary General Education);
- Most research projects, concerning pupils and teachers in all levels of education, are collecting and processing statistical data broken down by gender (Ministry of Education and Culture, Pedagogical Institute, Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation);
- Implementing programmes in schools with the aim of promoting gender equality and respect among all children in the class, irrespective of their background or gender (Educational Psychology Service);
- In order to promote discussion of educational and career choices in the classroom, special programmes are implemented (Ministry of Labour Welfare and Social Insurance and MOEC – Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education and Career Counselling and Educational Service).
- In-service training includes the promotion of awareness-raising and training on gender equality, the reflection of teachers’ own identity, beliefs, values, prejudices, expectations, attitudes, and representations of femininity/masculinity, as well as their teaching practice. It also aims to bring equality, diversity, and the gender perspective into various areas.

Examples of the inclusion of the principle of gender equality in matters relating to the teacher in-service training and the empowerment of the family in promoting gender equality include the following:

- Training courses aiming to raise awareness on gender issues related to the gap between men and women in labour (1-3 days training) addressed to all teachers in Primary and Secondary Education, all career counsellors in Secondary Education and all inspectors in Primary and Secondary Education and parents (collaboration of the Pedagogical Institute, the Career Counselling and Educational Service and the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance);
- Training of teachers and parents on issues related to active citizenship, multiculturalism, social inclusion/exclusion, identities, and relationships between girls and boys, gender equality awareness through school-based training seminars and programmes (Pedagogical Institute);
- Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute and the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS);



- In-service training of teachers on issues related to preventing and combating delinquency (Departments of Primary, Secondary General, Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, Pedagogical Institute);
- Organising conferences/seminars on gender issues for teachers of all levels (Pedagogical Institute);
- Organising workshops for teachers and pupils aiming at the promotion of equality and inclusion (Career Counselling and Educational Service).

SWEDISH CASE EXAMPLE

In order to facilitate compensatory pedagogy, some pre-schools in Sweden have occasionally switched into single-sex activities, an approach that is sometimes criticised for increasing gender stereotypes. Introducing occasional single-sex activities was done in order to facilitate the encouragement of practising those skills least used by each sex. It may enable children otherwise inhibited by mixed-sex groups to dare trying activities not usually associated with their gender. There were some concrete measures adopted in order to facilitate the gender pedagogy aim:

- o In some places the projects involved removing some of the gender specific toys, such as dolls and cars, while focusing instead on more gender neutral items such as jigsaws and painting material.
- o Another strategy was to set up various play stations and have the children rotating between these stations at regular intervals in order to give everyone the chance to use the various resources at the pre-school; The footage at one particular pre-school often showed a small group of boys claiming specific items for themselves, at the expense of the other children. But like many other measures to counter gender stereotypes, the setting up of various play stations requires monitoring and follow-ups to ensure this does not return the pre-school children into old gender stereotypes albeit manifested differently.

An Analysis of ECEC in terms of gender equality work in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden

Country	Legislation and policies supporting gender equality in ECCE	Governance and accountability mechanisms	Finance for gender equality in ECCE	Approaches to improving ECCE teacher quality
Finland	Non-Discrimination Act Equality Act "Government Report on Gender Equality"	Longterm, systemic promotion of gender equality, particularly the commitment to the policy implementation at all levels The assessment of teacher performance	No specific gender budget, but various project funds are accessible.	Government-provided teacher training includes gender equality, awareness, and pedagogy "Gender equality in early childhood education" website available as a teacher resource



		aligns with learning outcomes of children.		Online resources such as “Nordic Gender Equality Promotion E-training” available in multiple languages
Iceland	Government observes gender mainstreaming in school planning and school policies. Education policy emphasizes preparing girls and boys equally for the labor market. Pre-school national curriculum includes equality as one of the fundamental pillars.	Centre for Gender Equality is responsible for administration, guidance, and school education assistance. A government position of project manager for equality will support implementation of gender equality in preschools, compulsory schools, and after-school programs.	Budget allocation for a permanent government position for gender equality promotion in schools.	Gender studies on teacher education started around 1990. Handbooks on gender equality for educators available.
Norway	Established gender equality policies in education and implemented several action plans. The Kindergarten Act stated Framework Plan for Kindergartens. The 2011-2013 plan on early childhood education focuses on three issues: recruiting male ECCE teachers; teacher and staff gender equality awareness; and awareness of genderbased choices in education and occupations.	Experts in the Commission for Gender Equality examine the status of gender equality.	Budgeting for the recruitment of male ECCE teachers, as well as the specific events such as the sharing of experiences on conferences.	Gender equality is established in national competency standards for early childhood teachers. ECCE teachers and employees are provided with a 35-day course to improve their knowledge about and practice in gender equality. Recruiting male early childhood teachers to better balance teacher-gender ratio.
Sweden	Discrimination Act delineates the practical work needed to prevent discrimination and harassment in the school system. Education Act speaks to equality and children’s rights.	National Agency of Education and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate supervises the Education Act. Equality Ombudsman supervises the Discrimination Act. Council for Equality in Preschools awards projects, hosts extensive government.	No special gender budget, but preschools can apply to alternative funds. Principals allocate school resources on gender equality as they see fit.	ECCE teachers participate in training related to the Discrimination and Education Acts. University courses for teachers include gender equality requirements. Schools are staffed with gender advisers. Anti-discrimination is mainstreamed across the national curriculum.



		investigations, and conducts gender-based analysis of early childhood teacher policy The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions supports municipal needs School principals decide whether to budget for gender equality work		
Denmark	2014 education reforms and ECCE teacher training prioritizes gender equality No policy, regulation, action plan, or requirement stipulated for ECCE educators to have knowledge about gender equality and equity	Disconnected, no systemic approach	No gender budgeting Nationally funded projects on gender equality knowledge, increasing men in ECCE, and gender equality in educational systems	Lacks a gender approach and perspective in teacher training

Chi, J. (2018). Pathways for Gender Equality through Early Childhood Teacher Policy in China. Echidna Global Scholars Program, Discussion Paper. *Center for Universal Education at The Brookings Institution*

2. BEYOND EUROPE

AUSTRALIA

- > **Creating Gender Equity in the Early Years: [A Resource for Local Government:](#)**
This resource provides a number of tools and resources for the local government and early years sectors across Victoria. Sections of this resource may also be relevant to other sectors working to improve gender equity and prevent violence against women. Each section in this resource focuses on a theme or audience for improving gender equity in the early years, is accompanied by a training video, additional resources, and reflective practice questions.
- > **[The No Limitations Guide](#)** is about gender equality in early childhood settings and provides practical tools, tips, and resources for both an organizational focus and working with families. It also aligns with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. By providing tailored information and resources for the early years setting, the No Limitations Guide will assist educators in delivering services in a non-gender stereotypical way to enable boys and girls to



interact and learn without being constrained or limited by gendered expectations. (developed by <https://whe.org.au/>)

USA

- > [Healthy Gender Development and Young Children: A Guide for Early Childhood Programs and Professionals](#)

This [guide](#) offers practical guidance for teachers, caregivers, parents, and staff. It draws on decades of research on child and gender development and experiences of early childhood educators, pediatricians, and mental health professionals.

TURKEY

- > [GenEDU](#)

This [project](#) focuses on all levels of education, beginning from preschool to the end of mandatory school education, and targets both teachers and students. It aims to promote and foster gender equality in educational institutions through awareness seminars, training, and workshops with teachers and in-class activities with the students of these teachers.

The training module includes teachers' self-reflection on gender-related issues, the interactions with children through gender-responsive lenses, the organizational climate, and interactions with parents.

[Workshop toolkit](#) (in Turkish)

INTERNATIONAL

- > [GRP4ECE](#)

VVOB, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and public education partners in Rwanda, South Africa and Zambia have joined forces to develop a practical approach to gender-responsive pedagogy for early childhood education (GRP4ECE). The [GRP4ECE toolkit](#) empowers preschool teachers and school leaders to challenge gender stereotypes where they can do the most harm and be challenged most effectively: the classroom. An environment free of stereotypes lays a firm foundation for young children to grow up freely exploring and developing their unique interests and talents.



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