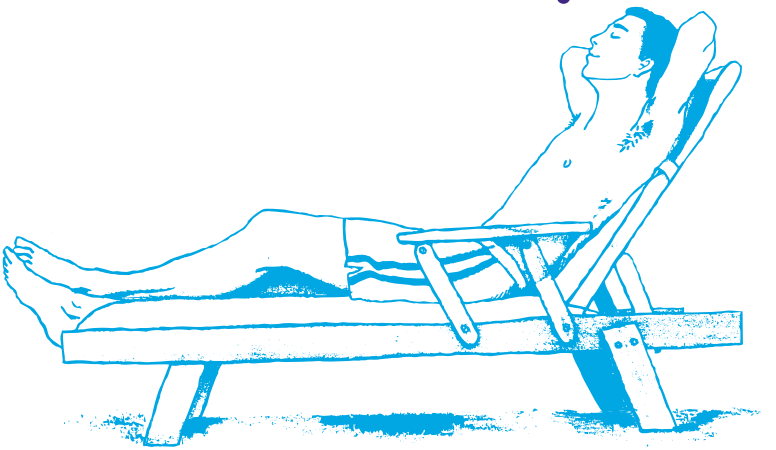
Elimination of Gender Stereotypes: MISSION (IM)POSSIBLE?



STEREOT

TYPE

Elimination of Gender Stereotypes : MISSION (IM)POSSIBLE?

Conference report
edited by Maruša Gortnar

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GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

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SUMMARY: On 29 and 30 January 2008, the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in cooperation with the European Commission, organised, as one of its core events in the field of equal opportunities, a conference entitled *"Elimination of Gender Stereotypes: Mission (Im)Possible?"*

The Conference featured speakers and participants representing the EU institutions, national administrations, politics, the social partners, non-governmental organisations, academic fields and other interested members of the public.

The *"Elimination of Gender Stereotypes: Mission (Im)Possible?"* Conference reviewed progress so far and pinpointed the key challenges faced at various stages of life in terms of eliminating gender stereotypes, in particular in education and training, employment, private and family life, participation and decision making, and in the media field. The central event of the Conference was a round table at which the ministers responsible for gender equality spoke about their private experiences of socialisation and the impact of gender-related stereotypes on their lives.

The first part, Early Childhood and Pre-School Period: Toddling in the Gender-Stereotyped World, focused on the role of various institutions and practices in socialisation (family, kindergarten, media, fairy tales, toys) and in reproducing traditional gender roles and stereotypes, and endeavoured to identify the consequences of certain gender-fixed behaviour and practices in women and men's subsequent relations, decisions and possibilities, as well as ways to overcome gender-fixed behaviours and stereotypes in various socialising institutions and practices. The second part, School Period and Adolescence: Recognising and Rebelling Gender Roles and Stereotypes, examined how education and training, leisure activities, culture and media continue to convey gender-related stereotypes and presented policies and practices to eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality in education, training, culture and the media. This session was dedicated to answering the question of how gender stereotypes embedded in education influence the further education and career choices and opportunities of women and men, including their participation in public life (politics, civil society organisations, etc.). The central event of the conference was a round table of Ministers responsible for gender equality. The final session of the Conference, Adulthood: Living with and Managing Gender Stereotypes, comprised a discussion on the (re)production of traditional gender roles and stereotypes in the labour market, work environment, decision-making processes, family and private life, and in the media; the issue of how to tackle obstacles to full gender equality, with particular emphasis on the role of men, was also discussed.

By convening this conference, the Slovenian Presidency wished to promote and bolster further efforts to eliminate gender stereotypes – one of the priorities of the European Union's policy on gender equality and a common thread running through the programmes of the German, Portuguese and Slovenian Presidency trio.

KEYWORDS: gender, gender equality, stereotypes, gender roles

POVZETEK: Slovensko predsedstvo je kot enega svojih osrednjih dogodkov na področju enakosti spolov 29. – 30. januarja 2008 v sodelovanju z Evropsko komisijo organiziralo konferenco *Odprava spolnih stereotipov: Misija (ne)mogoče?*

Govorke in govorci ter udeleženke in udeleženci so bili iz vrst institucij Evropske unije, državnih uprav, politike, socialnih partnerjev, nevladnih organizacij, akademskih vrst in druge zainteresirane javnosti.

Konferenca *„Odprava spolnih stereotipov: Misija (ne)mogoče?"* je poskušala osvetliti napredek ter izpostaviti ključne izzive pri odpravljanju spolnih stereotipov, predvsem na področjih vzgoje in izobraževanja, zaposlovanja, zasebnega oziroma družinskega življenja, participacije in odločanja ter medijev v različnih življenjskih obdobjih. Osrednja točka konference je bila OKROGLA MIZA MINISTRIC IN MINISTROV ZA ENAKOST SPOLOV, na kateri so predstavili svoje osebne izkušnje iz socializacije in vpliva, ki so ga imeli spolni stereotipi na njihovo življenje.

Prvi del ZGODNJE OTROŠTVO IN PREDŠOLSKO OBDOBJE: KOBACANJE V SVET SPOLNIH STEREOTIPOV se je usmeril na vlogo različnih institucij in praks pri socializaciji (družina, vrtec, mediji, pravljice, igrače) ter reprodukciji tradicionalnih spolnih vlog in stereotipov, poskušal pa odgovoriti tudi na vprašanji, kakšne so posledice spolno določenega vedenja in praks za poznejše odnose, odločitve in možnosti žensk in moških ter kateri so načini premoščanja spolno določenega vedenja in stereotipov v različnih institucijah socializacije in v različnih praksah. Drugi del ŠOLSKO OBDOBJE IN ADOLESCENCA: PREPOZNAVANJE IN UPIRANJE SPOLNIM VLOGAM IN STEREOTIPOM je skušal pokazati, kako izobraževanje in usposabljanje, prostočasne dejavnosti, kultura, mediji itd. nadaljujejo prenašanje spolnih stereotipov, ter približal politike in prakse za odpravo spolnih stereotipov in uveljavitev enakosti spolov v izobraževanju, usposabljanju, kulturi in medijih. V tem delu smo tudi iskali odgovore na vprašanje, kakšen je vpliv spolnih stereotipov v šolskem obdobju na nadaljnje izobraževanje in izbiro kariere ter možnosti žensk in moških, vključno s sodelovanjem v javnem življenju (politika, organizacije civilne družbe itd.). Osrednji dogodek pa je bila omenjena OKROGLA MIZA MINISTRIC IN MINISTROV ZA ENAKOST SPOLOV. V zadnjem vsebinskem delu konference ODRASLO OBDOBJE: ŽIVLJENJE S STEREOTIPI IN UPRAVLJANJE Z NJIMI pa je bil govor o (re)produciranju tradicionalnih spolnih vlog in stereotipov na trgu dela, v delovnem okolju, procesih odločanja, družinskem ali zasebnem življenju in v medijih ter o načinih, na katere se lotevati ovir, ki onemogočajo polno enakost spolov, s posebnim poudarkom na vlogi moških.

S konferenco je želelo slovensko predsedstvo spodbuditi in okrepiti nadaljnje prizadevanje za odpravo spolnih stereotipov, kar je tudi eden ključnih ciljev politike enakosti spolov v EU ter hkrati rdeča nit tria predsedstev Nemčije, Portugalske in Slovenije.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: spol, enakost spolov, stereotipi, spolne vloge

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FOREWORD

Gender stereotypes are one of the most persistent causes of gender inequality. They are rooted in every aspect of life and we encounter them at every stage of life. If not dealt with, gender stereotypes on the 'proper' roles of women and men become easily imprinted in people's thoughts and minds and are (re)produced from generation to generation.

The elimination of gender stereotypes is a process which can produce successful results only if supported by policy. The European Union therefore attaches special importance to this issue. Eliminating gender stereotypes in society is one of the priority areas on the *Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men (2006–2010)*. The *European Pact for Gender Equality*, adopted by the European Council in 2006 to encourage action at Member State and EU level, is also committed to closing gender gaps and combating gender stereotypes, in particular those related to gender-segregation on the labour market and in education. The European Commission's *Report on Equality between women and men – 2008* identifies as one of the key challenges enhanced action on tackling stereotypes in education, employment and the media and emphasising the role of men in promoting gender equality.

Eliminating gender stereotypes is one of the priority subjects and a common thread running through the programmes of the German, Portuguese and Slovenian Presidency trio, in line with the commitments set forth in their Declaration '*Towards Gender Equality in the European Union*.' Gender stereotypes are the common denominator in all instances of inequality between women and men.

The 2008 spring European Council underlined that, in order to achieve real gender equality, the availability and affordability of quality child care should be increased and efforts should be pursued to substantially and permanently reduce gender pay gaps. The Council also undertook to continue efforts for the implementation of the European Pact for Gender Equality.

In the new period of implementing European employment policy, the Council of the European Union has committed itself to further enhancing the implementation of gender mainstreaming and to promoting gender equality in all actions undertaken. Special attention should be paid to eliminating all gender gaps on the labour market and in particular to substantially and permanently closing pay gaps in accordance with the European Pact for Gender Equality. In the area of

promoting gender equality, the Council of the European Union is continuing the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, namely with conclusions in the area of the situation of girls and women's participation in political decision-making. In all these areas, gender stereotypes are one of the key obstacles to gender equality. The further commitments on eliminating gender stereotypes in society set forth in the Council conclusions to be discussed in June 2008 are, therefore, an important contribution to EU policy on gender equality.

The complex and interlinked nature of stereotypes is resistant to all kinds of changes. Overcoming them, consequently, constitutes one of the key challenges on the road to achieving a competitive and dynamic knowledge-based European economy, an innovative society able to fully exploit the human capital and potential of both women and men.

We firmly believe that the European Union is capable of meeting the challenges of eliminating gender stereotypes and that overcoming gender stereotypes is a by no means impossible mission!

Tanja Salecl
Director of the Office for Equal Opportunities, Republic of Slovenia

Marjeta Cotman
Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Republic of Slovenia

Vladimír Špidla
Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

PREDGOVOR

Spolni stereotipi so eden najtrdovratnejših vzrokov za neenakost spolov. Nanje naletimo v vseh sferah življenja in v vseh življenjskih obdobjih. Stereotipne predstave o spolnih vlogah žensk in moških se – če se z njimi ne spopadamo – zlahka usidrajo v zavest in razmišljanje ljudi ter se (re)producirajo iz generacije v generacijo.

Odpravljanje spolnih stereotipov je proces, ki je lahko uspešen samo, če ima podporo v politikah. Zato tej temi posveča posebno pozornost tudi Evropska unija. Odpravljanje spolnih stereotipov v družbi je namreč eno od prednostnih področij *Načrta Evropske komisije za enakost med ženskami in moškimi 2006–2010*. Za spodbujanje ukrepov na ravni držav članic in Evropske unije pri premostitvi vrzeli med spoloma in boju proti spolnim stereotipom, zlasti v zvezi s segregacijo na podlagi spola na trgu dela in v izobraževanju, se zavzema tudi *Evropski pakt za enakost spolov*, ki ga je Svet Evropske unije sprejel leta 2006. *Poročilo Evropske komisije o enakosti med ženskami in moškimi – 2008* kot enega ključih izzivov prav tako prepoznava okrepitev prizadevanja za odpravo stereotipov v izobraževanju, zaposlovanju in medijih, pri čemer je treba povečati vlogo moških pri spodbujanju enakosti spolov.

Odpravo spolnih stereotipov so si kot eno od prednostnih tem in hkrati rdečo nit predsedovanja Svetu EU izbrale tudi države tria Nemčija, Portugalska in Slovenija ter se k njej zavezale v *Deklaraciji tria K enakosti spolov v Evropski uniji*. Spolni stereotipi so namreč skupni imenovalec vseh neenakosti med ženskami in moškimi.

Spomladansko zasedanje Evropskega sveta 2008 je poudarilo, da je za dosego dejanske enakosti spolov pomembno okrepiti dostopnost in kakovost otroškega varstva ter se še naprej zavzemati za znatno in trajno odpravo razlik med plačami žensk in moških. Ena izmed zavez Sveta je nadaljevati prizadevanje, da se udejanja *Evropski pakt za enakost spolov*.

Svet Evropske unije se je v novem obdobju izvajanja evropske politike zaposlovanja zavezal k nadaljnjemu in okrepljenemu vključevanju načela enakosti spolov ter spodbujanju enakosti spolov v vseh dejavnostih. Posebno pozornost pa je treba nameniti odpravi vseh vrzeli med ženskami in moškimi na trgu dela, predvsem znatni in trajni odpravi razlik med plačami v skladu z *Evropskim paktom*

za enakost spolov. Kot nadaljevanje spodbujanja enakosti spolov Sveta Evropske unije s spremljanjem izvajanja Pekinških izhodišč za ukrepanje so njegovi *Zaključki glede položaja deklic in udeležbe žensk v političnem odločanju*. Na vseh teh področjih so ena ključnih ovir na poti do enakosti med ženskami in moškimi prav spolni stereotipi, zato bistveno prispevajo k politiki enakosti spolov na ravni Evropske unije tudi nadaljnje zaveze Sveta k odpravi spolnih stereotipov v družbi, opredeljene v njegovih zaključkih, ki bodo obravnavani junija 2008.

Medsebojna prepletenost in celovitost narave stereotipov se upira vsakršnim spremembam, zato je njihovo preseganje med poglavitnimi nalogami za vzpostavitev konkurenčnega, dinamičnega in na znanju temelječega evropskega gospodarstva, torej inovativne družbe, ki bo znala polno izkoristiti človeški kapital ter zmožnosti žensk in moških.

Trdno verjamemo, da je Evropska unija dorasla izzivom, ki jih postavlja pred njo odpravljanje spolnih stereotipov, in da je preseganje teh stereotipov misija mogoče!

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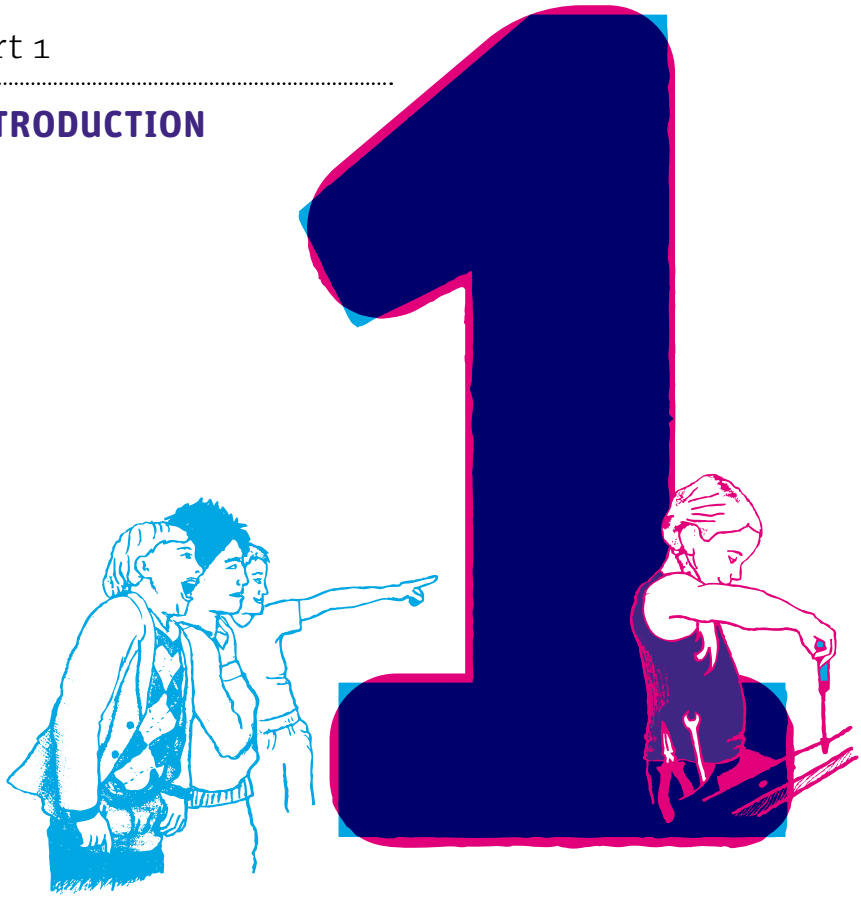
Part 1

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION TO GENDER STEREOTYPES

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ABSTRACT: *This chapter introduces gender role stereotypes whereby women are assumed to be 'natural' carers and men providers. It demonstrates how roles remain divided along gender lines, constraining the full integration of mothers in the labour market and other spheres. Men's involvement in care remains limited because the caring role is undervalued within society, not attracting the same level of citizenship or financial reward as market work. Also, men serve to gain more financially in the labour market than do women. To eliminate gender role stereotypes requires changing men, their identities, and ultimately their participation in 'women's work' and childcare. To achieve this requires society to actively challenge gender role stereotypes at every life stage – at the earliest ages to ensure that assumed gender roles do not persist throughout the life cycle; at school age so young people are not channelled into future roles in line with gendered norms, and in adulthood ultimately to prevent the transfer of gender role stereotypes to children.*

This book is the outcome of a conference exploring how to eliminate gender stereotypes. It examines how men and women are stereotyped into gender roles at different life stages, via every aspect of society – economic, family, political, cultural and educational. This chapter serves to introduce what we mean by gender role stereotypes, to understand why they still exist, and to discuss what changes we are striving for. The final section outlines the contents of the book to examine how gender role stereotypes persist over the life course, and how they can be eliminated.

What are Gender role stereotypes?

Gender role stereotypes are based upon a structural-functionalist argument (Parsons and Bales, 1955 cited in Hattery, 2001) that men and women are biologically and

socially evolved to be suited to different tasks, with the male as breadwinner and provider and the women as carer. Women are assumed the caring role as a result of the basic biological functions of females, such as breastfeeding, which have given them little opportunity to engage in alternative tasks that took them away from their children resulting in them becoming more skilled at child care and nurturing than men (Hattery, 2001). This in turn has affected men's skills, with men assuming the role as provider, and being less involved in childcare. According to this argument, the norm of the family is the male breadwinner – female carer model.

There is evidence that roles are still divided along gender lines in Europe today. Female employment rates have increased, but employed women are more likely than men to withdraw, at least partially, from paid work on the presence of children, especially very young children (Finch, 2006). Time use surveys show that any decrease in women's time spent undertaking childcare and domestic work has been relatively insignificant, both over time and in respect of differential employment status, and it fails to compensate for increases in time spent in paid employment (Gershuny, 2000). At the same time, men's involvement in care remains limited. Whilst men have increasingly contributed more to care and domestic work as women have moved into employment, this increase has been negligible, both over time and in response to their partner's employment status, and from a very low base (Sullivan and Gershuny 2001). Thus, although there are cross-national differences, women still spend more time (than men) in non-market care work, and men spend more time (than women) in market work (Finch, 2006). Indeed, women's unequal burden of care-giving constrains their participation in market work (Lister, 1994, Finch, 2006).

Combining paid work with children brings with it a time opportunity cost. The feminist literature argues that, since women still do a disproportional amount of the housework and childcare, undertaking paid work whilst caring results in a 'double work burden' or a 'double shift' (e.g. Hochschild and Machung 1989). Women work longer overall hours than men as a result of balancing market work with care work; a child's need for care does not cease when external childcare or education finishes for the day, and there exists other domestic work requiring attention. Also, care, work and education have to be carefully co-ordinated resulting in (employed) women 'running around in circles' (Skinner, 2003, 2005).

Moreover, because the female role is assumed to be a caring one in the home, women's choices and opportunities in public spheres have been constrained. In the labour market, there is evidence that gendered roles within the family are reproduced via gender segregation. This includes horizontal segregation, with women and men over-represented in particular types of jobs. Women tend to dominate 'care' occupations such as nursing, teaching, social care and especially child care. This reflects that care work is assumed to be 'women's' work; caring is something that is assumed to come naturally to women (Moss, 2003). As a result, paid care work is often under valued, little rewarded and unappealing. Vertical

segregation also exists, with men typically working in higher status (and higher paid) occupations than women. Because of their assumed caring role, women have more limited access to positions of power within companies as managers and directors. Positions of power in other spheres, such as politics, also remain heavily male dominated. Thus, gender role stereotypes are enacted within the family, with roles differentiated according to gender. But these stereotypical roles reverberate throughout society, with women's assumed caring role impacting upon her equal participation in society as a whole.

Why do gender role stereotypes persist?

The issue of why gender role stereotypes remain is a contentious one. Hakim (2000) argues that the persistence of gender role stereotyping is due to preferences. She states that the majority of men are work-centred, and the family-centred group is very small. Only the most 'modern' and 'egalitarian' men would like to combine unpaid work and employment. Moreover, men are a more homogenous group than women, with a clear bias towards their role as worker rather than carer. She also argues that most female part-time workers 'voluntarily' choose part-time work: part time work is a convenient way for mothers to reconcile work and childcare. Other researchers (Bardasi and Gornick, 2000) question what 'voluntary' really means. Burchell, Dale, and Joshi (1997) observe that while labour force surveys attempt to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary part-time work, they do not ask why respondents might state a preference for part-time work – that is, whether this was "a forced choice or their own preference" (ibid., p. 217).

Work-time attitudes have to be interpreted in the context of society and at an individual level. For example, at the individual level both men and women's employment commitments are influenced by occupational position and domestic circumstances (Fagan, 2001). It is therefore misleading to use employment status (whether someone works full or part-time) and gender as a reflection for their commitment to work. At societal level, differences are observed in relation to preferences, part-time work patterns and child rearing across countries, which questions the homogeneity of part-time women's working time preferences and suggests that social policies, gender norms, and working time regimes are all influential (Fagan, 2001). Preference is embedded within and originates from societal norms of what it is to be male and what it is to be female. As Rubery et al (1999) point out, women will be more able to exert a choice to remain in full-time employment whilst raising children where family policies, labour market conditions and dominant social attitudes support this. So, higher levels of voluntary part time work must be understood in the context of the male breadwinner model of the family having dominated the organization of society (Plantenga, 2002). Part time work is a forced voluntary decision, as a result of a policy environment preventing feasible alternatives to part-time work. Likewise, if society, in its attitudes and

policy, encourages and supports men as workers and places this role above men as parents, then men (and boys) as individuals are more likely to show a preference for this role; they are expected to undertake their position as a man (ie. as breadwinner) and are given limited opportunity to play a different role (ie. as carer).

Indeed, notions of citizenship in post-industrial societies have meant that the (male) breadwinning role is valued more highly than the (female) caring role, with women being awarded less than full citizenship. T.H. Marshall (1950) stipulated that there are three parts to citizenship – political rights, civil rights and social rights. In order to enjoy political and civil rights to the full, it is necessary to enjoy social rights, which include the rights to economic welfare and security; a right to full social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society. According to this mainstream definition, participation or not in market work defines the rights of social citizenship for the individual. Thus the caring role denies women access to social, political and civil rights. Since the caring role is undervalued, men, and boys, as individuals are unlikely to find caring an attractive pursuit and thus show a preference for the breadwinning role.

Whilst society acknowledges the need for care as well as a basic income, provision of care has generally been recognised as a private issue and, unlike paid work, has not often been considered to be part of the basic needs of citizens (Boje and Almquist, 2000). Care work is not as financially rewarding as market work, and more comprehensive and generous benefits are given to those who participate in paid work than those who participate in unpaid care (especially pensions) (Lister, 1994; Leira, 1998). As a result women's limited access to market work means that they are denied access to an independent income, and are therefore dependent upon men to live.

Within the labour market, men earn more than women, and have greater earnings potential over the life course (Mayhew, 2006; Rake, 2000). This is the result of horizontal and vertical occupational segregation – with men undertaking more skilled, and more highly paid occupations. This reflects the gender role stereotyping that men are the main breadwinner and women are the main carer, but also serves to perpetuate them. New Home economics theorists argue that men's clear advantage in the work place in terms of career progression and pay, as a result of gender discrimination, result in men's employment being favoured over mothers' (Hattery, 2001). Also, they take the view that women's ability to rear children is difficult – but also costly – to replace, and thus the mother over external childcare will be chosen to look after the child. As a result, women will only move into paid work and men will only pick up caring responsibilities when gender equity exists in the labour market.

Gender role stereotypes persist because society does not actively challenge them. Care is undervalued because society assumes that women are 'natural' carers and men are not. Therefore, eliminating gender roles stereotypes requires changing men, their identities, and ultimately their participation in 'women's work' and childcare (Segal 1990). Dual caring, 'shared' or 'co' parenting represents a shift from the as-

sumption of a gender division of labour in domestic and breadwinning responsibilities. The ideal would be that fathers take on activities that have been a traditionally 'maternal' role, that both mothers and fathers 'equally' share the tasks and responsibilities of childrearing, and that their roles are interchangeable (Pleck and Pleck, 1997). Indeed, paternal involvement in child-related housework would ease mother's workloads (Pleck, 1984). The norm of the family would be the dual earner- dual carer, in which men and women would engage symmetrically in both paid work and unpaid care-giving (Gornick and Meyers, 2003, Finch, 2006). As a result, mothers and fathers would meet in the middle in relation to the time spent in paid and unpaid work. Paid work and care would be shared between each parent and each parent's time would be shared between paid work and care. Care and breadwinning would hold equal value and these roles would be de-gendered. Thus all employees (not just women) would have care responsibilities, which would mean women would not face disadvantage due to their caring responsibilities. This would open the opportunity for women to take on positions of power – in the world of work and politics.

Achieving the vision of a dual earner / dual carer family would require society actively challenging the current status quo. Policy has an important role to play in this, and needs to challenge the assumption that women are 'natural' carers, whereas men are not by actively encouraging men's participation in caring. This needs to be matched with policy that ensures gender equity is achieved in the labour market, with (financial) incentives for mothers to take up paid work.

Welfare states can encourage women's role in paid work via defamilializing care policies, with states and markets absorbing care responsibilities, thus reducing the care responsibilities of the main carer (usually the mother), and enabling their transition into paid work (Lister, 1994; Esping Anderson, 1999). These include public provision of childcare and/or social services, or (the public subsidy of) care provision through the market.

Welfare states can encourage men's role in caregiving via policies that support 'familialization' of care, which aim at maintaining and strengthening the family's caring function. Familialistic policies include time rights such as parental leave and care leave; direct and indirect transfers for caring such as cash benefits and tax reductions; and social rights attached to care such as individual pensioner rights. Leitner (2003) argues that these can specifically address gender equity and weaken the male breadwinner model of the family via de-gendering care. De-gendered familialistic care policies provide incentives to ensure that care provision is shared equally between male and female family members. The extent that states support the dual earner/ dual carer model of the family depends on the balance between de-familialising and de-gendering familialising policies.

Policy, however, is not sufficient on its own. To enable both men and women to undertake care without economic and career sacrifices there would also require new employment arrangements that would enable time for care-giving. This means that work would need to be flexible, enabling parents to reduce their hours in paid

work in line with care needs without labour market penalties including wage, benefits and job advancement. This would require high-quality, reduced-hour jobs (Gornick and Meyers, 2003). But societal norms in relation to gender roles are deep-seated, unconsciously reproduced, and interrelated with other socio-demographic characteristics (see Aapola-Kari in this volume). Thus a move towards the dual earner / dual care model would require a more general change in mindset, and culture, which could take many generations to manifest itself. This would involve the conscious socialisation of children away from gender role stereotypes towards one where roles were not assumed to be arranged along gender lines.

How can gender role stereotypes be eliminated?

The chapters in this volume explore how society reproduces gender stereotyping at three different life stages: early childhood, school years and adolescence and adulthood. They emphasise roles will only be de-gendered once norms are actively challenged by all levels of society.

Early childhood

The first section of the book explores how gender stereotyping begins in early childhood. Children are socialised by the world around them to behave in certain ways according to gender stereotypical norms. This process starts at birth when children begin to be socialised into their female and male identities. Research suggests that parental behaviour towards their children, either overt or covert, is the primary influence on gender role stereotyping development in early life (Crespi, 2004; Santrock, 1994; Kaplan, 1991). Parents provide their children with gender-stereotyped toys, books and activities, such as dolls and housekeeping toys for girls and cars and sporting activities for boys (Eccles et al, 1990), and children develop preferences towards gendered toys as result of parental stereotyping (Eataugh and Liss, 1992). Gender stereotypical roles adopted by parents themselves can also play a part in the process of socialising children into these roles.

Parents, however, are not the only factor socialising children into gender stereotypes. Childcare and early education settings can reinforce stereotypes, for example through the gender of the carer themselves or through the activities undertaken. The media, especially television, further serves to reinforce a child's perception of appropriate behaviour (Barner, 1999; Witt, 2000) and as children move into the wider world, these ideas and beliefs are reinforced by people around them (Witt, 1997). Children become aware of gender role difference from a very early age (Weinraub et al, 1984), and begin to use and associate gender stereotypes with activities, objects and occupations (Fagot et al, 1992; Campbell, Shirley, & Candy, 2004). Children consciously conform to these norms in certain settings, and are sanctioned by their peer groups to do so. As children develop, gender stereotypes are further reinforced, and become entrenched in their belief

system and self-concept, which stay with them until adulthood (Witt, 1997). It is therefore essential to eliminate gender stereotyping at the earliest ages to ensure that assumed gender roles do not persist throughout the life cycle.

Nielson, Kolthoff, Eydal and Karabel in this volume emphasise that challenging gender stereotyping at this young age is, however, difficult, because the assumed gender roles pervade all aspects of society. Eydal introduces the role of policy in changing parental role model behaviour through encouraging paternal care, and the neutralising of gender roles within the family. She examines the parental leave scheme in Iceland, which is far-reaching in its goal to actively encourage fathers to undertake care, and concludes that it is having positive effects towards eliminating the parental gender division of labour, and thus potentially in the socialisation of children. Nielson, Kolthoff, Eydal and Karabel all emphasise the importance of early education and child-care settings in eliminating gender stereotyping in early childhood. They conclude that early educators must be trained to be interested in, and critical of, gender typical behaviour, and that gender equality can be incorporated into school material, such as books. Karabel and Eydal emphasise the importance of the inclusion of men in education and care settings to introduce children to a diverse set of role models from a very young age. Thus children are socialised by the world around them to behave in certain ways according to gender stereotypical norms. To prevent children from adopting gender stereotypical belief systems requires conscious efforts from parents, the media and early educators to challenge stereotypes, and also for the roles and behaviour adopted by adults themselves to become de-gendered.

School years and adolescence

Gender stereotypes developed in the early years continue to be reinforced in the school years by family, the media, and the school environment. Indeed, research has indicated that whilst young people's attitudes may challenge gender stereotypes, these views are tempered by the inequalities that they observe around them in the worlds of work and in their own families, resulting in their behaviour remaining gender-typical (Tinkin et al, 2004). An important influence of young people's behaviour is the school environment, which perpetuates and reinforces the existing gender stereotypes observed in the wider society, rather than questions them (Holdsworth, 2007). School books include images of gender stereotypical behaviour by men and women, boys and girls (Marinova, 2003), and teachers (as themselves products of the wider society) hold their own ingrained stereotypical beliefs about the appropriate gender roles. These together influence the expectations of boys and girls, and the future roles they will play in society. Crucially, they impact upon subject choice and level of achievement in different subjects, and, although gender inequality in access to different subjects has reduced (Croxford, 1996), there still remains gender differences in uptake of subjects where choice is available (Tinklin et al, 2001). That gender stereotypes persist in the school

environment can therefore have a long term effect on occupational choices and job prospects, with the associated disadvantages for girls in so far as 'female' and 'male' occupations do not attract equal financial awards.

Adolescence is an age critical to identity formation and decision making, and thus it is also a time when young people can be influenced, and a time when interventions challenging gender role stereotypes can have a strong impact (Holdsworth, 2007). Challenging gender stereotypes within the education system requires a change in schools' principles and practices and the whole school environment (Aapola-Kari in this volume). But, as Aapola-Kari in this volume points out, children and young people experience gender stereotyping differently, and thus the method for tackling them should take account of these differences. She observes that Finnish gender equality projects within schools recognise more the need to change the behaviour of girls, than of boys. Katsaridou (in this volume) shows how the Greek government has recognised the importance of changing male behaviour to influence gender stereotypes. It has introduced a programme at all levels of the education system, with the intention of paying particular attention to boys and men by raising awareness and training teachers to promote gender equality. Indeed, if gender role stereotypes are to be broken down within the school environment, there needs to a change in mindset by the educators themselves.

Whilst the education system is an important contributor to gender stereotyping, other aspects of society influence young people, and the roles they pursue as adults. The mass media is an important source of influence for adolescent girls thinking about their future roles (Signorielli, 1997). Also Doupona Topič (in this volume), highlights the role of sport in promoting and shaping gender stereotypes in young peoples lives. Both Aapola-Kari and Bazerkovska emphasise the importance of youth work for challenging gender stereotypes at this life stage, with Bazerkovska highlighting the work undertaken by the European gender youth forum, which is committed to tackling gender stereotypes in order to achieve social progress and justice. Without tackling gender stereotype behaviour from all aspects of society, the cycle of gender role stereotypes will not be broken and young people will enter into gender-stereotyped roles and occupations in adulthood.

Adulthood

By adulthood, gender roles stereotypes are ingrained in the psyche, and are more difficult to eliminate as result. These stereotypical beliefs continue to be influenced, shaped and reinforced by external factors. The external influences have been discussed above in the shape of a society that values breadwinning over care; a labour market that rewards men's work above women's policy that supports rather than challenges gender role stereotypes, but also includes the media's representation of men and women. As a result, men and women continue to enact stereotypical roles in private life. Merkle (in this volume) highlights how society is responsible for reproducing gender role stereotypes, with external influences

forcing conformity towards traditional gender roles within private life, even in adults with progressive attitudes. Ksieniewicz and Pilvre focus on the role that the media plays in the persistence of gender stereotypical roles in adulthood, with Pilvre highlighting the role and representation of women in the media in re-producing stereotypical images of the female-carer role.

However, adults are crucial for challenging gender stereotypes in society. Indeed, Ksieniewicz in this volume draws our attention to how adults, in their socialisation of children (unconsciously) generate and hand down gender role stereotypes. This continues the cycle of gender role socialisation discussed above, beginning at birth continuing into the school years and culminating in adulthood. To halt this cycle requires challenging the mindset, and behaviour, of adults, especially in relation to the assumption that men do not care. The contributions in this section demonstrate that the external forces that serve to maintain gender stereotypes amongst adults can also be responsible for challenging them. Ksieniewicz emphasises the part the media can play by increasing awareness of stereotypical behaviour amongst adults, giving an example of how the Polish media has attempted to do just that. Hoffmann examines how employers can play a role, especially in relation to tackling horizontal and vertical segregation. Merkle emphasises how policy can improve compatibility between work and family. Indeed, we have set out above how policy needs to challenge, rather than sustain the status quo and actively encourage, and enable, men to care.

The contributions to this book highlight how eliminating gender stereotypes is a challenging pursuit. However, they also provide positive glimpses into how parts of European society are committed to this end. To successfully meet the challenge requires effort from all levels of society, and ultimately, as Merkle, concludes, a paradigm shift whereby care is not considered a purely female pursuit, and male carers become the norm.

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Part 2

OPENING OF THE THEME

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

Marjeta Cotman
Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

Dear Chairwoman Záborská, Director Pyke,
Dear guests, representatives of governments, academic and non-governmental organizations, media,
Dear ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great honour to open the conference "Elimination of Gender Stereotypes: Mission (Im)Possible?" in the frame of the Slovenian Presidency. At this occasion I'd like to specially thank all who came to Slovenia to find with joint efforts the answers to many challenges, which the said topic sets before us. In the past we many times talked about gender stereotypes in relation to certain obstacles for achieving gender equality, like segregation of educational courses and labour market, unequal division of labour in the family, the glass ceiling in the economy, media representations of women, or absence of women in the decision-making positions. Today we want to pay special attention to the question how to face more efficiently the mechanisms, which create, drive and reproduce the dominant gender stereotypes in all areas and all stages of life. I'm convinced that this way we will better understand their complex nature and functioning, and know how to deal with them more successfully in the future. In the field of elimination of stereotypes we need an integrated, connected and coordinated strategy, clear guidelines for further work and more efficient measures for sensitization of all actors, who play a decisive role in the socialization process.

Today we will talk about a topic that represents one of the main and most difficult challenges on the path to gender equality, which is why the European Union is paying larger and larger attention to it in its political documents and commitments. Namely, gender stereotypes are one of the most obstinate causes of inequality between women and men in all areas and all stages of life. We all know that cultural prejudices and stereotypical conceptions are usually rooted so deep into the people's thinking that – if we don't deal with them early enough – they easily transfer and reproduce from one stage of life to another, as well as from one area to another. Mutual intertwining and complex nature of stereotypes defy all changes, therefore overcoming them represents one of the key challenges on the path to a competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based European economy,

namely to an innovative society, which would know how to take full advantage of the human capital and potentials of women as well as men.

Does this mean that overcoming of gender stereotypes is mission impossible? Absolutely not. We don't even have to go far back in history, when the beliefs that women are ineligible to vote or that housekeeping is the only true female "occupation" predominated. The conceptions of the roles of women and men in private and public sphere are changing, but unfortunately too slowly. The European Union and individual Member States determine that special attention has to be paid to overcoming the gender stereotypes, because the deeper causes for numerous inequalities are hidden in various socialization practices and therewith connected firmly rooted beliefs in "natural abilities and characteristics" of women and men. They of course don't reflect their true talents and potentials, but only hinder their self-realization in the areas where they are otherwise successful. Today's conference presents the opportunity to tackle this demanding challenge. It is also the opportunity to ask ourselves how efficient were the past measures for elimination of stereotypes and how to improve our strategy, especially in the areas of key importance for the progress in achieving gender equality and the Lisbon goals for growth, employment and social cohesion. Therefore, especially in the fields of education, training and culture, and labour market and media.

The European Commission defined the elimination of stereotypes in society as one of its priority areas in the Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006–2010. The European Pact for Gender Equality also strives to encourage the measures at the Member State level and the Union for elimination of the gap between the genders and the fight against stereotypes, connected to the gender, especially in relation to the gender-based segregation in the labour market and education. The Trio states – Germany, Portugal and Slovenia – chose the elimination of gender stereotypes as their priority topic and main objective of their presidencies, and committed to it in the Trio Presidency Declaration "Towards Gender Equality in the European Union". Namely, gender stereotypes represent a common denominator of all inequalities between women and men.

Men as well as women have to deal with prejudices ad stereotypes, but in the mentioned areas they have especially negative effects for women. Women, who nowadays strive to become equal partners to their male colleagues in the labour market, also have to deal with the segregation and numerous prejudices, which even deepen it, under the conditions of growing global competition. They still stereotypically define typical male and female occupations, the level a woman can reach on a career scale, and her place in relation to the division of labour at home. Negative effects of gender stereotypes are specially evident in traditionally male areas, for example in decision-making positions in politics, where male abilities of decision-making and leadership are often understood as self-evident and natural, whereas women have to constantly prove their leadership competencies.

Women in Europe made significant progress in many areas. We are more

educated than men, our employment rate is increasing faster than that of men, and we are entering the occupations that once were considered an insurmountable male fortress. However the progress of women, especially in the light of key areas for the Lisbon strategy, like education and research, isn't fully reflected in the women's position in the labour market.

Due to lack of flexible work arrangement and appropriate care services and stereotypes on the primary role of women to take care of others, women often have to choose between having children or a career. Because of stereotypical conceptions of female and male occupations, women less often than man choose study courses that represent the most important step on the path to an innovative and highly-competitive society. Even those women who are more successful than their male colleagues in science and technology. Thus they remain an unexploited source in the encouragement of knowledge and innovations, which are indispensable for research and development. Women scientists have to fight daily against socially established prejudices in their work.

Encouragement of higher harmonisation of professional and private life for women and men and overcoming stereotypes related therewith is of key importance for solving demographic challenges of the present Europe. As it turned out many times, even the most advanced legislation cannot win the fight in a society, which is ruled by deeply rooted prejudices against fairer distribution of family responsibilities and obligations. Therefore we pay a lot of attention to encouraging a more active role of men in the care for children and housekeeping in Slovenia. With successful awareness-raising actions under the title "Daddy, Be Active!" we have undoubtedly succeeded in eliminating many a prejudice and stereotypical conception of "the only real" male and female role in the family and society.

An important agent of people's socialization and value system formation are also the media. The contents that they publish have a big impact on formation of viewpoints on social roles of modern women and men, because they can either strengthen or eradicate prejudices of them.

These are just a few aspects of inequality related gender stereotypes. We will discuss them more deeply at today's conference Elimination of Gender Stereotypes: Mission (Im)Possible? It will be held in four parts. As determined by the Beijing Platform for Action, the discrimination of women begins in the earliest stage of life, which is also the time when we have to start eliminating them and overcoming gender-related prejudices and stereotypes. They are being created so to speak from the birth onwards, strengthened through various games, books, interactions with different actors in the formal as well as informal environment, affecting later stages of life. We shall talk about this in the discussion entitled Early Childhood and Pre-School Period: Toddling in the Gender Stereotyped World. According to some people's opinion it is necessary to place the school period in the centre of efforts for stereotype elimination. Namely at that time boys and girls form conceptions of genders, which affect their aspirations and motivations later while making

decisions regarding their occupation. In this period conceptions of gender roles can form through encouragement or hindrance of critical thinking, which either motivates or limits boys and girls in fully realising their potential. The title of the second part of the discussion is School Period and Adolescence: Recognising and Rebelling Gender Roles. The third part —the roundtable of ministers Gender Stereotypes and How to Survive Them will be especially interesting, because the participants shall present their personal experience in concrete confrontations with various stereotypical or non-stereotypical situations. And last but not least, in the fourth part we will enter the world of adults, in which we are living with the stereotypes, and ask ourselves how to manage and eliminate them. The title of this part is Adulthood: Living with and Managing Gender Stereotypes.

I'm convinced that today we will be successful in making a big step ahead in the sense of finding possibilities for a more efficient fight against the traditional gender roles and stereotypes, and thus eliminating the threat of spreading the inequalities under the conditions of growing global economic competition. I wish that in the 21st century Europe the mission impossible would become mission possible and that concrete goals and priority tasks, which we set, especially the European Pact for Gender Equality, the Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006–2010 and the Lisbon strategy, would be easier to realise.

In the end let me wish you a successful work and pleasant stay in Brdo in Slovenia, where we are hosting such an important event as the European conference on gender equality for the first time.

ADDRESS

Belinda Pyke
Director for Equality between Men/Women, Action against discrimination, Civil Society, European Commission

I thank the presidency for the organization of this conference. The selected topic is particularly relevant for equality between men and women. Combating gender stereotypes is a priority for the European Commission's work for gender equality.

The various interventions that we are going to hear today will remind us that gender stereotypes are present in each stage of our life. They shape our behaviour and our choices. They start from the early childhood. They are conveyed by parental expectations, literature, television, school. They predetermine and underpin the roles that boys and girls will hold. Later, stereotypes will condition young girls – but also young boys – in their choice of studies and in their choice of career.

These stereotypes result in a life time, a life cycle, of positive – or negative – reinforcement, trapping girls and boys, men and women, into roles, tasks and identities which may not let them realise their own potential, their own aspirations and ambitions.

And gender stereotypes are not only limit individual life choice: they also influence the decisions taken by economic actors, for example about the ability of women to women to hold positions of high responsibility, to be entrepreneurs, to be engineers.

And we all know what this leads to: the employment of women remains concentrated in a restricted number of sectors and of professions.

Although women account for almost 60 % of the new graduates in higher education, they remain in the minority in the technical fields and technological sectors.

In addition to that, women continue to be absent from the senior posts which remain dominated by men.

And we know too that task segregation carries on into the home: family responsibilities are not evenly shared, especially when children arrive so that women are too often obliged to sacrifice their working life for family reasons. One of the outcomes is the big gap in earnings between men and women – still on average 15 %.

The Commission has just adopted the "Report on equality between men and women 2008", which will be submitted to the Heads of State and Government at the next Spring Summit. The Commission welcomes the progress made in increasing the employment rate of women.

But we draw attention to the problems remaining in the quality of women's work for example a concentration in less remunerated sectors, an over-representation of women in part-time work compared to men.

It is therefore important to continue our efforts to increase women's employment, as this is the way towards women's economic independence. But in this new report, the Commission also calls for action to achieve the Lisbon goal of more jobs but also the other part of the Lisbon goal which referred for better jobs. For women, this means fighting against gender stereotypes; it means combatting horizontal and vertical segregation; and it means starting early.

Young girls should be encouraged to enter into the scientific and technical fields. But it is also necessary to ensure that graduate women can indeed develop their careers in these fields.

In order to have a more balanced distribution between young girls and boys among the students in these fields, we have to get rid of the idea that these subjects are really for men and that girls who study them are somehow a bit special, outside the stereotype.

Of course there is the other side of the coin: if we encourage young girls to enter fields that are still perceived as for boys, the opposite should also apply, and young boys should also be encouraged to explore fields that are perceived more as for women.

But how – in all honesty – can you possibly encourage a young person to choose to work in a sector where he or she will be less paid, will have less possibility of making a career and will be less rewarded socially? Even if that sector is one we claim is so valuable to our society, such as nursing, or childcare.

Is it just a coincidence that the jobs dominated by women are lower paid than those dominated by men? Have our stereotypes and our value judgements somehow influenced the market valuation of what women do? Our recent Communication on the gender pay gap highlights how the job classification and evaluation changes drastically following the predominance of women or men in the sector.

As you know, the elimination of gender stereotypes is one of the priority fields of the Roadmap of the Commission for gender equality. And as one of the actions to implement the Roadmap, we have just launched an awareness-raising campaign in companies to combat gender stereotypes and to better understand the economic benefits that this will bring.

Another priority action area of the Roadmap is the promotion of conciliation between working, private and family life. As you know, the Commission carried out a consultation with social partners on this subject. They asked us to give them time to see if they could agree on a way forward in improving the landmark parental leave agreement, which was the basis for Community law in this area. We hope to hear from them in March that they have made meaningful progress in their discussions.

We for our part are continuing with our impact assessment of improvements in

the legislative support for reconciliation, taking account of the fact that women's traditional role as carers extends to looking after older family members.

And in parallel we are preparing a report on the extent to which Member States have implemented the targets on childcare provision they set themselves at the European Council in Barcelona in 2002.

Finally, I'd like to say a few words about decision making as the persistence of gender stereotypes leads to a deficit of women in higher position, both in the economy and in politics.

The Commission has completed a report on women and men in the decision-making in 2007. This report shows that there is some progress even if the situation varies widely from one country to another. However, we are still far from a balanced participation between women and men in decision making positions in the majority of our Member States.

The Community database on men and women in the decision-making makes it possible to have relevant and up to date statistics, and contributes to the awareness-raising relating to the unequal situation of women and of men to the power.

Beside this, and how announced in the Roadmap, a Community network of women in economic and political decision making will soon be created. A good networking and mentoring have proved essential in the career development of many women.

Ladies and gentlemen, the fight against gender stereotypes and the improvement of the situation of women in the labour market and so in society will be realised through a number of connected processes:

- increased awareness of the pernicious existence and impact of stereotypes; and
- greater awareness and knowledge of the way in which we convey them – usually unwittingly – to our children, our pupils, our employees, our partners, in our daily life;
- and a common understanding that it is only through the elimination of gender stereotypes that we will make more possible our path towards gender equality and towards a more just society for current and future generations. For women and for men.

ADDRESS

Anna Záborská
President of the European Parliament Committee
on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Madam Minister,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I must thank the Slovenian Presidency for organising this conference on equality between men and women and focusing on the elimination of gender-related stereotypes.

As President of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality at the European Parliament I can testify to the fact that the struggle against this phenomenon constitutes an ongoing effort on the part not only of our Committee but also of Parliament as a whole and, strengthened by this support, the European institutions.

The Committee which I chair has as its mission the elimination of all forms of discrimination based on gender and the establishment and implementation of equality of opportunity in all sectors. As far as stereotyping is concerned, I have to inform you that, in spring, our Committee will be preparing an own-initiative report on 'How marketing and advertising affect equality between men and women'. The results of the present conference will be very useful for our report.

I should like to congratulate the Presidency on the choice of subjects for the conference, which I shall sum up as 'a multi-generational approach'. In those societies where a good number of fundamental points of reference have been eroded, it is both urgent and essential to remind our peers – and, in particular, the younger generation which will one day be responsible for this world of ours – of the nature, the role and dignity of each of the two sexes.

The title of the conference questions whether it is in fact possible to eliminate gender-related stereotypes. I feel that the notion or – more than notion – the reality of the complementary nature of the two halves of the world population could be a powerful means of combating these stereotypes.

Gender-related stereotypes, like all stereotypes, stem from education, media, culture and employment problems. As far as gender-related stereotyping in education is concerned, as the conference programme proposes, from early childhood, during the pre-school age, school age, adolescence and into adulthood, we must not only decry existing stereotypes but also teach and promote individual and

collective richness while respecting the dignity of all. It cannot be denied that, in the politics of equality between men and women, too, the principle of choice goes hand in hand with the principle of responsibility.

The eradication of stereotyping will not be visible by the end of the Slovenian Presidency. It is therefore important to recognise that the Slovenian Presidency has the courage not to limit itself to the short term but to launch a serious far-reaching debate. This is why exchanging good practice is practically the prerequisite first step, because it is not about just reforming or amending laws but about changing mind-sets, this being the real problem in the EU society in terms of reaching the objective of equality between men and women.

Allow me to assure you, Madam Minister, that you have the support of our Committee in your fight against gender-related stereotypes.

I thank you.

Part 3

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRE-SCHOOL PERIOD: TODDLING IN THE GENDER STEREOTYPED WORLD

DANISH PROJECT ON GENDER ROLES AND GENDER EQUALITY IN KINDERGARTEN

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of the project is to break down gender stereotypes among children in kindergarten and kindergarten teachers.*

The project takes as its starting point the results of a Swedish study during the years 2000–2003, which showed that a large number of kindergarten teachers had very gender-stereotypical expectations of boys and girls, and that their behaviour around boys and girls was very different and very gender biased.

This concerned us. Thus we decided to analyse the situation in Denmark.

The preliminary results of the study show that kindergarten teachers actually do try to include both girls and boys in common activities and they are aware of gender differences, but also that traditional perceptions and expectations of boys and girls still prevail.

This needs to be dealt with, since not only do stereotypical gender roles limit opportunities and gender equality for boys and girls, women and men; they also prevent our society from taking full advantage of all the competencies of women and men – of using all human resources in society to the fullest.

Our project has four elements:

- *An observation study in Danish kindergartens. How are Danish kindergarten teachers working with gender equality today?*
- *An "inspirational" guide for kindergarten teachers. Concrete examples and counselling on how kindergarten teachers can work with gender equality. This will be sent out to all Danish kindergartens.*
- *A children's book. The book is targeted at children, and it can help teachers to start a discussion on what*

girls and boys play with and how they play together. It will also be handed out to all kindergartens.
- *A follow-up study. To document the use and effect of products 2 and 3.*

The project has been running from mid-2007. The children's book and the inspirational guide will be finished by March 2008. The follow-up study will take place at a later date.

Why are we here?

Today we are here to discuss gender stereotypes and gender segregation. But we have to be aware that there are a number of reasons why it is so hard to combat stereotypes and segregation. We have to work on several different levels at the same time, and with many different actors.

Reasons for gender stereotypes and segregation:
- Gender blindness
- Boys and girls themselves
- Parents
- Kindergarten teachers, school teachers and education counsellors
- Traditional gender stereotypes and gender-specific expectations in society, the media, TV programmes, labour market

Our activities in Denmark focusing on boys and girls

What is the Danish Minister for Gender Equality doing about gender-related problems among boys and girls?

Our five main focus areas:
1. The gender-segregated choice of education – guide for counsellors, teachers, students and parents
2. The pornification of public space – discussion material for schools
3. Violence – discussion material for schools
4. Lifestyle and health – discussion material for schools
5. Gender stereotypes in kindergartens

As you can see, we try to approach gender stereotypes among boys and girls from many different angles, also depending on the age group. I'll be happy to elaborate on some of the other topics, but the focus now is No. 5: gender stereotypes among children in kindergarten.

I will elaborate on the following issues:
- What is the problem?

- Facts
- Examples
- What can be done?
- Activities

Is there a problem at all?

This is a question you will have to ask in order to be able to answer it in a qualified way. I am sure everyone in this room is easy to convince. We all work with gender equality. YES, there is a problem. But we will meet with great scepticism in many other settings.

Do we want to force girls to climb trees? Do we want to force boys to play with dolls? Even if they do not want to?

Obviously not. But we want them to have the opportunity. We want them to be able to see that this is an option for them. This is why we started this project on breaking down gender stereotypes in kindergarten.

Background facts – Swedish studies

We have based our projects on extensive studies from Swedish kindergartens, which show that kindergarten teachers often have a very stereotypical approach towards girls and boys.

Without being aware of it, they expect different things and treat boys and girls very differently. This is probably not their intention, but the results of the studies are worrying.

Examples from Swedish studies

Kindergarten teachers often:

- Expect GIRLS to be nice, good and do as they are told.
- Expect GIRLS to perform twice as well as boys.
- Expect GIRLS to be caring and considerate, especially towards boys.
- Expect GIRLS to avoid conflict.
- Expect GIRLS to be able to develop language skills to express emotions (tone of voice, nuances).
- Expect GIRLS to seek plenty of bodily contact.
- Encourage GIRLS to play close to grown-ups and two-by-two.

On the other hand, kindergarten teachers often:

- Accept that BOYS don't do as they're told – "boys will be boys".
- Expect BOYS to behave very physically and accept that they can't concentrate for long.

- Place BOYS at the centre of attention.
- Expect BOYS to seek conflict and train leadership.
- Expect BOYS to develop language skills by training on measurable, concrete things and sounds (car – *vroom-vroom*).
- Do not expect BOYS to seek too much bodily contact.
- Encourage BOYS to play in big groups or alone.

Why is it important to do something?

Because not only do stereotypical gender roles limit the opportunities and gender equality of boys and girls, women and men; stereotypical gender roles also block our society from taking full advantage of all the competencies of women and men – of using all human resources in society to the fullest.

Stereotypical gender roles create a gender-segregated education system, which in turn creates a gender-segregated labour market, which in turn creates bottlenecks and currently a lack of employees in some sectors in Denmark (such as nursing and social work), as well as a lack of innovation because employees are too similar, etc.

Stereotypical gender roles also prevent (some) women from seeking leadership positions, just as they keep (some) men with the assumption that men are the best leaders.

And finally they keep women in their homes, taking care of the babies and doing the housework, and men at their jobs, performing, coming home late, and so on and so forth. This in turn reproduces the gender roles for their children.

And so it goes around like a merry-go-round. We need to break that circle a bit more often.

What can we do about it?

Of course not every kindergarten teacher has these expectations! Many, many kindergarten teachers in Sweden, Denmark and elsewhere do a very good job. But the results from Sweden disturbed us, nevertheless. If it happens in Sweden, it happens in Denmark.

Our minister's goal on this issue is: "Both children and adults shall be granted the opportunity to thrive and develop. Society's conventional expectations of boys, girls, women and men must not be permitted to restrict the free choice of the individual."

Our project

This is why we started this project. If we want to obtain long-term effects and change, gender equality work has to start among small children. And kindergar-

ten teachers are an important target group. Our project certainly does NOT have the aim of girls and boys simply "switching roles", but they should be offered a broader spectrum of roles and competencies, to give them the opportunity to make their own personal choices.

Thus, what we have been doing for the last year is:

1. An observation STUDY in Danish kindergartens. How are Danish kindergarten teachers working with gender equality and gender roles today?
2. An "INSPIRATIONAL" GUIDE FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS. Concrete examples and counselling on how kindergarten teachers can work with gender equality. This will be sent out to all Danish kindergartens in March.
3. A CHILDREN'S BOOK. The book is targeted at children, and it can help teachers to start a discussion on what girls and boys play with and how they play together. It will also be handed out to all kindergartens in March.
4. A FOLLOW-UP STUDY. To document the use and effect of products 2 and 3. This will be done during 2008.

The preliminary results of the observation study have just come out last week. They show that kindergarten teachers in Denmark on an overall basis actually do try to include both girls and boys in common activities, and they are aware of gender differences. But they also show that in spite of good intentions, traditional perceptions and expectations of boys and girls often prevail.

A children's book

The book has two first pages – you can start it from "both ends". One story is about a boy called Frederik, who one day wakes up as Frida, a girl, and the other story is about a girl called Rikke, who one day wakes up as Rasmus, a boy. In the middle of the story they meet and play, and at the end of the day they return to their "normal" selves.

Working with BUPL

Lastly, I would like to add that we have done all this in close cooperation with our organisation/social partner in this field, BUPL – an association for, among others,

kindergarten teachers. So we have very qualified backing, just as it will help us to get our message across without offending the kindergarten teachers. This is very important. We are not doing this because we think they are doing a bad job, but because we think that with a few tools they can do better, and most importantly, they, as well as the children, can experience more gender equality.

Press

We have received a lot of press coverage on this project – and we continue to receive it. Gender roles and children are something which can really fire up debate. This is both good and bad. Some people get very upset that we are "interfering" with biology. Luckily many, many parents are very happy with the project. They want the best for their children. They want them to have as many possibilities as they can. They do not want them to be constrained by gender roles. They learn a lot from this project too, we hope.

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY PAPER ON GENDER STEREOTYPES

Kirsti Kolthoff
European Women's Lobby

ABSTRACT: *Gender stereotyping starts as early as infancy and therefore needs to be tackled in the earliest stages of life for both girls and boys. Children often try to conform to parents' or other adults' expectations; they perceive these expectations and adapt their behaviour accordingly. If what they observe around them in their families, attitudes, images, school material, etc. conveys traditional gender roles and stereotypes about what girls and boys "should" be or do, it is likely that they will try to fit as much as possible with this model, thereby continuing the cycle of inequalities between women and men throughout the life cycle. Concerted and coordinated action in different areas, including raising the awareness of parents; pressure and education directed at industries such as media, toy or clothing manufacturers; reform of education systems and material; and new legislation concerning the media is therefore highly necessary. This requires a reformation of the whole society. Only changes at many different levels and the cooperation of all concerned actors will support such a change, but political will at the highest level is central to this change, and EWL very much hopes that the conference organised by the Slovenian Presidency will be a step in this direction. The mission is possible!*

Introduction: the European Women's Lobby

The European Women's Lobby is a non-governmental organisation that brings together more than 4,000 women's organisations working to promote the equality of women and men and to ensure that gender equality and women's human rights are taken into consideration in all European Union policies. EWL membership is composed on the one hand of national coordinations of women's organisations

(28 coordinations in current EU MS and accession countries) and 18 large European and international networks.

In our work we focus on 1) women and economic justice, including labour market issues, employment legislation and social policies; 2) women in political decision making and institutional issues; 3) violence against women and women's human rights; and 4) issues linked to immigration and asylum.

Combating gender stereotypes: the need to start at the earliest stage

Gender inequalities and stereotyping start with the birth of each child, and even before. The fact that millions of women and girls are "missing" in the world is good proof of that fact. This situation is due to selective abortions and femicides, the higher mortality rate for baby girls, all forms of violence against women, and inequalities between women and men throughout the life cycle. One hundred million women have died or were never born simply because they were female.

This extreme example is of direct concern for us in Europe for different reasons. The first reason is that we have a responsibility in the way that we treat women from countries where these forms of violence exist. The second is that even in the European Union, gender equality is not a reality and inequalities start as early as pregnancy in the form of gender stereotypes or symbolic preferences towards boys. The idea that the birth of a boy is more valuable than the birth of a girl or that it is more important for boys to do well at school or to study relates to the differential value placed on the sexes and the fact that in our social organisation more value is given to male than to female roles. Even today, European societies are organised around patriarchal patterns where male domination and female subordination are still very present, including in symbolic representation, in the arts, the media, etc. Therefore, gender stereotypes play an important role in shaping gender relationships.

Generally speaking, the integration of a gender perspective is therefore necessary in all European and national policies related to children, including in relation to measures and activities undertaken in relation to the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. It should be noted in particular that girls as compared to older women have additional difficulties in opposing gender inequalities and gender-based violence, and that the language used plays an important role: the word "children" is mostly used in policy documents, but it is gender blind and hides differences faced by girls and boys.

Gender stereotypes and roles in childhood

Gender roles are shaped and imposed through a variety of social influences. Formed during the socialisation phases of childhood and adolescence, gender

roles influence people throughout their lives. The first and one of the strongest influences on a person's perceived gender role is his or her parents. Parents are the first teachers, and some parents still hold traditional definitions of maleness and femaleness and what kind of activities are appropriate for each.

Parents start early in treating their baby boys and baby girls differently. Although baby boys are more likely to die in infancy than girls, and are actually more fragile as infants than girls are, studies have shown that parents tend to respond more quickly to an infant daughter's cries than they are to those of an infant son. Parents are also more likely to allow boys to try new things and activities – such as learning to walk and explore – than they are girls; parents tend to fear more for the safety of girls. Children also look to their parents for examples and role models: boys and girls will be strongly influenced by the gender relations, behaviour, tasks and activities undertaken by women and men in the family. If a girl sees her mother taking part in physical activities, for example, she will grow up with the idea that it's okay for girls to play sports. If a boy sees his father helping to take care of the new baby, he will integrate this image of "daddy as caregiver" into his developing definition of masculinity.

Another influence and reinforcement of gender roles comes from the toys children play with, which set children up early on for the roles they are expected to play. As they get older, children are influenced in their choice of toys by television and advertisement, which often reinforce the traditional gender roles: boys are usually given more active and "technical" toys, while very often girls are expected to play with dolls or even items copying domestic work instruments (cooking tools, etc.). Clothing manufacturers produce (and parents buy) clothing in gender-neutral shades such as yellow and green, but the traditional blue for boys and pink for girls are still favourites. Peer pressure is also a means of reinforcing a culture's traditional gender roles. It can come in the form of taunting or teasing a child who does not fit the traditional gender roles that other children in the peer group have been exposed to, even to the point of excluding that child from group activities.

Education and schools play a crucial role in shaping gender stereotypes

Gender roles are also reinforced by school. Teachers, school administrators and educational materials have great influence as they pass along cultural information and expectations. More or less visible mechanisms of inequality and segregation exist in educational systems in Europe, despite increased co-education systems. It is not sufficient to put children with different life experiences and hierarchical social roles together at school groups to eliminate discrimination. Schools in fact prepare girls and boys to adhere and keep in line with the traditional gender roles (e.g. in Belgium there are only 10 % girls in computer curricula and

15 % boys in nurse training). Sexist stereotypes are conveyed both by teachers (willingly or not) and the educational support material.

Access to formal primary, secondary and tertiary education and the content of the curriculum as taught to girls and boys is a major influencing factor on gender differences, and correspondingly on choices and access to rights. In the EU, while both girls' and boys' access to education in general may appear to be less problematic in comparison to other parts of the world, it should nevertheless be pointed out that girls and boys are not equal in accessing and fully availing themselves of educational systems and opportunities. In particular, access to girls from minorities, such as girls from the Roma community, migrant girls, asylum seekers, refugees and girls with disabilities, remains highly problematic in some countries.

This has strong implications on the labour market: there are many jobs where one sex occupies more than 80 % of employment, but jobs that are male-dominated (more than 95 % men) are much more numerous and usually more valued than female-dominated jobs, which means that women have less choice when they choose a career and are left with less valued professions, both in terms of income and in terms of power and symbolic social value.

Developing girl-friendly school environments, educating on gender awareness and encouraging girls to become leaders are essential to ensuring that the girl-child is central to formal education systems, and this from the earliest levels of education. Awareness raising and education of the girl-child in relation to human rights instruments and capacity building to ensure full use of these are equally crucial.

Although the educational system is not solely responsible for this inequality, the situation could be improved through the following measures:

- Pursue active policies to ensure that girls from minority groups and girls from migrant communities have access to education and educational systems.
- Make it obligatory by law to include a gender perspective in teachers' training.
- Ensure training for professionals dealing with career orientation to make sure they are aware and given tools to challenge gender segregation in the choice and options of girls and boys.
- Assess syllabi and the content of school textbooks with a view to reform, which would lead to the integration of gender issues as part of all educational material as a cross-cutting theme, both in terms of eliminating gender stereotypes and in terms of making women's contributions and role in history, literature, arts, etc. more visible, including at the earliest school levels.
- Promote a European dimension in education through, for example: ensuring the sharing of good practices on gender equality as an educational tool, and developing and gathering gender-sensitive statistics on all aspects of education at the national and EU level.
- Include quantitative and qualitative gender equality indicators in all evaluation programmes aiming at evaluating the quality of education in European schools.

The role of media and social environment

Often, the way in which the image of girls is constructed in public space lowers her social value and promotes violence towards girls. While media can play a positive educative role, stereotypes about the girl-child are widespread in the media and often tend to reinforce traditional attitudes and behaviour, including in advertisement and children's programmes. Strict and precise legislative norms are needed to regulate the use of girl-child images in public space, the media, advertising and commercials, including the consequences of breaking the norms.

In relation to pornography, the changes that have taken place in pornography's cultural status need to be addressed. The changes, also referred to as the "mainstreaming of pornography", can be described as the current cultural process in which pornography slips into our everyday lives as an ever more universally accepted, often idealised, cultural element. This development is of great concern because power and gender are central elements in pornography, which are in total contradiction with the values of gender equality.

Mainstreaming pornography manifests itself particularly clearly within youth culture – from teenage television and lifestyle magazines to music videos and commercials targeted at the young. Young women and men are the ones most affected by pornography's new cultural status. But the major problem is that this exposure is not always voluntary. Little research has been conducted concerning the way in which the spread of pornography is affecting the perception of gender by young people.

Some measures could help to improve the situation, including:

- Monitor the implementation of existing provisions in European law on sex discrimination and incitement to hatred on the grounds of sex.
- Develop awareness actions on zero tolerance across the EU for sexist insults or degrading images of women and girls in the media.
- Adopt or revise European and national legislation with a view to regulate the use of girl-child images in public space, the media, advertising and commercials.
- Lead training and awareness-raising actions with media professionals on the harmful effects of gender stereotypes and good practices in this area.
- Research the links between child pornography and adult pornography and the impact on girls, women, boys and men, as well as the relationship between pornography and sexual violence.

Conclusion

Gender stereotyping starts as early as infancy therefore and needs to be tackled in the earliest stages of life for both girls and boys. Children often try to conform to parents' or other adults' expectations; they perceive these expectations and adapt their behaviour accordingly. If what they observe around them in their families, attitudes, images, school material, etc. conveys traditional gender roles

and stereotypes on what girls and boys "should" be or do, it is likely that they will try to fit as much as possible with this model, thereby continuing the cycle of inequalities between women and men throughout the life cycle. Concerted and coordinated action in different areas, including raising the awareness of parents; pressure and education directed at industries such as media, toy or clothing manufacturers; reform of education systems and material; and new legislation concerning the media is therefore highly necessary. This requires a reformation of the whole society. Only changes at many different levels and the cooperation of all concerned actors will support such a change, but political will at the highest level is central to this change and EWL very much hopes that the conference organised by the Slovenian Presidency will be a step in this direction. The mission is possible!

GENDERING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: POLICIES PROMOTING CARE FROM BOTH PARENTS – THE CASE OF ICELAND

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ABSTRACT: *During the first years of a child's life, its family and primary caretakers are the major providers of gender role norms. One of the two most persistent gender roles is the role of the caring mother and the working father. The aim of this paper is to present a picture of new Icelandic legislation on parental leave that aims to promote care from both parents, and to discuss if the goal of the particular act in question has been reached. The official statistics show that Icelandic fathers use their entitlements and welcome their new rights. In addition, the overall conclusion from the first results of a study on the effects of the new policy is that there is a clear tendency towards increased equality regarding both work and care for parents of children under three years of age. Obviously, further research is needed in coming years in order to comprehend the full effect of the policies, but it seems safe to conclude that children who experience care from both parents during their first years will construct their gender roles differently than children who do not.*

Even before a child is born, various gendering processes begin to take place. For instance, parents start to prepare for the birth of a boy or a girl by choosing different colours depending on the expected sex of the baby. During the first years of a child's life, its family and primary caretakers are the major providers of gender role norms. One of the two most persistent gender roles is the role of the caring mother and the working father. This division of labour between parents has historically been reinforced by welfare systems based on a breadwinner model (Sainsbury 1996). However, welfare systems that emphasise indistinct gender roles through support on an individual basis maintain the assumption that women and men share both the economic and care responsibilities of the family (op cit.). The welfare literature has defined the Nordic countries as belonging to the Scandinavian or

Nordic welfare model, which emphasises universal and individual entitlements and comprehensive public support to parents caring for young children (e.g. Bradshaw & Hatland 2006, Ellingsæter & Leira 2006, Kangas & Rostgaard 2007, Millar & Warman 1996). One assumption is that care and gender equality policies are key explanatory factors for the high labour market participation of women and, thus, mothers in the Nordic countries. Yet, at the same time, the policies have not ensured fathers participation in the care of their young children. The aim of this paper is to present a picture of new Icelandic legislation on parental leave that aims to promote the caretaker role of both parents, and to discuss if the goal of the particular act in question has been reached.

In general, Iceland has provided less care support in comparison with the other Nordic countries. The first law on universal rights to three months' maternity leave for working mothers was enacted as late as 1975, but replaced in 1980 by legislation that ensured universal rights to three months' paid parental leave, which was extended to six months in 1987. This entitled the mother to transfer her entitlements to the father after the first 30 days following the birth of the child, in congruence with the amount of time he took in parental leave from work. Here, Iceland was following in the footsteps of the other Nordic countries, which had expanded their parental leave policy (from 1974–1981) and emphasised the father's right to parental leave (Ellingsæter & Leira 2006, Eydal 2005). However, even though legislation in the Nordic countries ensured the father's legal rights to share the parental leave (if the parents wished), statistics show that the participation ratio of fathers was low (e.g. Leira 1999). This disappointing result gave rise to the attempts of some of the Nordic countries to implement new policies meant to encourage increased parental choice and a more active role of fathers when it came to providing care (Björnberg et al. 1996; Moss & Deven 1999).

TABLE 1 *Iceland, usage of mothers and fathers of parental leave days and % using some leave during the joint three months, children born 2001 and 2005.*

	2001	2005
Mean number of days		
▸ mothers	186	175
▸ fathers	39	95
% of parents that used some leave during the joint 3 months		
▸ mothers	94	89
▸ fathers	14	19

Figures from Gíslason 2007

In 1992, Norway was the first Nordic country to introduce the independent rights of fathers to a one-month paternity leave, sometimes referred to as the "daddy quota" or "use it or lose it", since the fathers could not assign their rights to the mothers. Sweden reserved one month for fathers in 1996 and extended their rights to two months in 2002 (Finch 2006).

Finally, in Iceland the *Act on maternity/paternity and parental leave* came into force in 2000. The goal of the act is "to ensure children's access to both their fathers and mothers. Furthermore, the aim of this act is to enable both women and men to coordinate family life and work outside the home" (*Lög um fæðingar- og foreldraorlof No. 95/2000*). Another argument is that in order to promote equal participation of parents in the labour market, it is necessary for them to have equal rights in balancing family and work responsibilities. In order to ensure these goals are reached, each parent will "have an independent right to maternity/paternity leave of up to three months due to the birth, primary adoption or the permanent fostering of a child. This right shall not be assignable.[2] In addition, parents shall have a joint right to three additional months, which they can decide how to divide. The right to maternity/paternity leave shall lapse when the child reaches the age of 18 months. … A non-custodial parent shall have the right to maternity/paternity leave providing the custodial parent has agreed that the non-custodial parent is to have access to the child during the period of the maternity/paternity leave" (*op cit.*). The act came into force in 2001, but the rights of fathers have been gradually implemented and, in 2003, they gained full entitlement to three months' leave. According to the new legislation, parents are also entitled to 26 weeks' parental leave without payment, 13 weeks each (*op cit.*).

The legislation from 2000 stipulated payments equal to 80 % of the working parents' average wages – including all forms of wages with no ceiling or upper limit and universal benefits for non-working parents, but in 2004 a ceiling was implemented at €5,650 (Gíslason 2007).

In parliament, it was argued that fathers had often been deprived of opportunities to take part in their children's lives and that research showed that fathers wished to spend more time with their children. Furthermore, it was argued that gender discrimination in the labour market would not be eliminated unless both parents took an active part in caring for their children. Thus, equal rights to parental leave were a necessary step in creating the possibilities to balance family and work. The EU directive on parental leave (No. 96/34/EB) was also mentioned as an argument concerning the importance of parents' equal rights (Eydal 2005). A coalition right of centre introduced the bill, but there was wide consensus on the issue, which was also supported by partners in the labour market (Eydal 2005, Gíslason 2007).

According to Moss and O'Brien (2006:22): "This scheme contains one of the

2 Only in cases where one of the parents dies before the child reaches the age of 18 months can the right to maternity/paternity leave not used by the deceased parent be reverted to the surviving parent.

most generous 'father-targeted' leave entitlements so far developed in modern economies in terms of both time and economic compensation (80 percent of prior salary)." Overall, Icelandic fathers have used their new rights, as Table 1 shows.

If the take-up ratios of the fathers in Nordic countries are compared (Table 2) it is clear that this is in line with the number of days to which fathers are entitled. Thus, Icelandic fathers take the biggest share, followed by Swedish fathers.

What happens after the parental leave? Do fathers continue to take an active part in the care for their children? It is a well-known fact that cultural norms and values are deeply embedded and tend to reproduce even after the context

TABLE 2 *Parental leave in Nordic countries, entitlements and the percent of total number of benefit days used by fathers, 2006.*

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Norway	Sweden
Maximum number of weeks in which maternity/paternity/ parental leave benefits are payable	50–64	44	39	42–52	69
Of which (weeks):					
▸ Only the mother	18	18	13	9	8
▸ Only the father	None	2*	13	6	8
▸ Additionally: father together with mother	2	3	None	2	2
Percent of total number of benefit days used by fathers in the event of pregnancy, childbirth and adoption during the year 2005	6	5	33	9	20
Percent of previous income in 2005**	100***	70	80	1¼	80****
Income ceiling per week for full compensation in PPP Euro	340	596	1,193	619	513

Source: NOSOSCO, 2007.

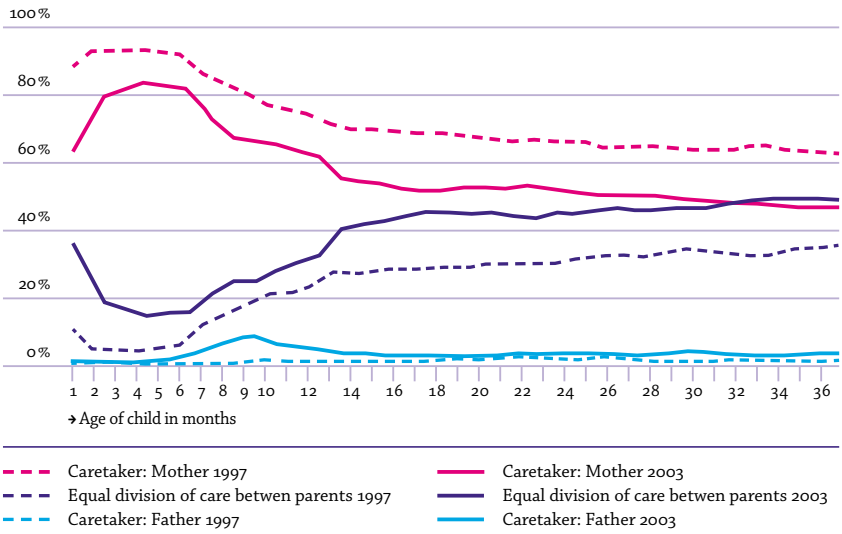
* If two of the three weeks of leave with the mother are used.

** Parents who have not been gainfully employed, e.g. students and the unemployed, are entitled to payments equal to certain minimum benefit amounts that vary between the countries.

*** When the common leave period of 32 weeks is extended to 40 or 46 weeks, the daily cash benefit will be reduced accordingly, so that it corresponds to 80 % for the 40 weeks and to about 70 % for the 46 weeks.

**** From 1 July 2008, Swedish parents who share the parental leave equally will receive a bonus of 3000 SEK per month (Westlund 2007).

FIGURE 1 *How mothers and fathers divide the care of their first-born during the first three years, 2001 and 2007.*



has changed significantly. Thus, in order to estimate the effects of new legislation on maternity and parental leave, a research project, *Child Care and Labour Market Participation of Parents of Children under Three*, was established.[3] One of the main aims of the project was to analyse the effects of the new Act on Maternity/Paternity and Paternal Leave (No. 95/2000) by comparing how parents of young children balanced labour participation and the care of their children before the legislation took effect, in contrast to once it took full effect in 2003. Two surveys were conducted among all parents when their first-born child was three years old. The first study was conducted in 2001, before the law came into force, and the second study was conducted in 2007, when the children of the parents who enjoyed full entitlements in 2003 were three years old.

The questionnaire included questions about the parents' status, childcare and employment practices over a four-year period (during pregnancy and until the child reached the age of three); family dynamics and background variables; and the work environment, i.e. the flexibility and support parents received, along with questions concerning changes to the parents' employment status after the birth of the child. The response rate was 57 % in 2001 and 59 % in 2007.

3 The project is funded by the Icelandic Research Fund (Rannís), the Icelandic Equality Fund and the University of Iceland Research Fund.

The first results show that the gender gap regarding both the number of parents in work and working hours is smaller after the implementation of the law. The number of fathers in work is lower in the latter study, while the number of mothers remained similar. However, mothers increased their number of working hours while fathers worked fewer hours. When the gap between the father's and mother's working hours is compared, once the child reaches the age of three, it has changed from 13 hours in 2001 to 9 hours in 2007 (Eydal 2007). Furthermore, there are clear changes in the division of labour when the parents are asked about how they distribute the care of their children at home during the day (Figure 1). In 2001 mothers were the main caretakers, but in 2007 the number of parents that divide the care equally between them is higher by the end of the period in question.

This pattern becomes even clearer when examining the results for those parents who live together with their child and who have not had a second child during the period of the study. In this group, the number of parents who divide the care equally exceeds the number of mothers as primary care-givers when the children born in 2003 are 13 months old.

To conclude

The official statistics show that Icelandic fathers use their entitlements and welcome their new rights. In addition, the overall conclusion from the first results of the study on the effect of the new policy is that there is a clear tendency towards an increased equality regarding both work and care for parents of children under three years old. Obviously, further research is needed in coming years in order to comprehend the full effect of the policies, including the direct effects on children and their ideas about gender roles. However, it seems safe to conclude that children who experience care from both parents during their first years will construct their gender roles differently than children who do not. Thus, the odds are in favour for this generation to become the one that breaks the vicious cycle of gender stereotypes.

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GENDER EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON GENDER-SENSITIVE EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES BASED ON THE EU PROJECT "GENDER LOOPS"

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ABSTRACT: *The article describes in the first part, illustrated by the example of two field reports, how children deal with the demands made on them by a gender-stereotyped world.*

The examples show that children behave gender-typically to find their way in a society that is organised along two-gender lines, and that assumes women and men are fundamentally different from one another. Additionally, the examples show that children in certain situations want to live out non-stereotypical behaviour and that they want to expand their range of activities. Educators should be aware of these sometimes contradictory needs of children. They should organise their educational practice in order to make the opportunities and freedom for behaviour that is not gender typical more accessible and more interesting.

In the second part of the article, the author explores some education policy and educational measures that must be taken to create a more gender-sensitive early childhood education system. The presented recommendations are based on the initial experiences and results from the EU project "Gender Loops".

The following lecture is based mainly on the initial experiences and results from the EU project "Gender Loops", financed by the Leonardo da Vinci programme. As part of this project, partners from Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Spain and Turkey aim to implement gender mainstreaming strategies in vocational training institutions for educators (schools, colleges and universities), further qualification institutions for educators, and early childhood centres.

I would like to begin my lecture with two field reports that should demonstrate how children aged four to six in early childhood centres deal with the demands

made on them by a gender-stereotyped world. After introducing and reflecting on these two field reports, I will show the consequences for educational policy and education that the initial experiences and results gained in our EU project "Gender Loops" entail for the "gender-sensitive" training of educators and educational practice in early childhood centres.

In November and December of last year, as part of the EU project "Gender Loops", we asked four- to five-year-olds in Germany, Lithuania and Spain about the images/ideas they have of girls and boys. During these interviews, a four-year-old boy in an early childhood centre in Berlin told us that he wanted to tell us a secret. However, we had to promise that we wouldn't tell anyone else in the centre, as he feared the other children would laugh at him. The little boy then told us that he put on dresses at home and that he really liked wearing dresses. However, he didn't feel he could do this in the early childhood centre.

In another situation, I met two girls in one of the early childhood centres who were hammering nails into a wooden board, seemingly with great excitement, and they were laughing and apparently having a great time. I stopped in front of them to watch what they were doing. Both of the girls spoke to me and wanted to assure me that they actually never hammered and that they weren't having any fun doing so. They then put the hammers aside to start doing something different. Both of the girls obviously thought that I would find girls who used a hammer silly.

Both of these situations make two things clear. On the one hand, they show that girls and boys in early childhood centres behave gender typically in certain situations – boys don't put on dresses and girls don't use tools. Gender-typical behaviour by children in early childhood centres is something that is often observed, which field reports and research results have shown. When children then also organise themselves in gender-homogenous groups, this tends to reinforce gender-typical behaviour.

The fact that children orient their behaviour towards stereotypical gender images from a certain age is hardly surprising. From their third year, children "understand" that they are growing up in a society in which the sex of a person represents a central model for that person's orientation (is it a boy or a girl?).

This society generally assumes that women and men are basically different from one another. From the girls' and boys' point of view, the development of sexual identity is thus (automatically) tied up with the questions: "What makes me different from boys and/or girls?" And: "How can I make this difference from the other sex clear?"

When answering these questions, children often follow gender stereotypes because they come across these everywhere. However, as pre-school children do not yet have a fully differentiated repertoire of behaviour to present themselves as girls or boys, they often make use of simple gender codes. Boys don't wear dresses and are "into" knights and pirates. Girls don't use hammers and are into princesses.

As the example of the four-year-old boy also shows, it is often the children themselves who conform to stereotypical behaviour within their peer groups and who sanction any deviations from this (a boy who wears dresses is laughed at).

The examples of the boy who only wears dresses at home and the girls using the hammers when they feel they are unobserved also show, on the other hand, that girls and boys do often indeed behave gender typically. In certain situations, however, they make use of a variety of possible actions and really don't want to stick to restrictive gender stereotypes even when, to do so, they have to "overcome" their own stereotypical gender images again and again, as well as those of the other children, those of the educators and those of their parents.

What is the significance of what has been said up to now for actual gender-sensitive practice in early childhood centres which tries to eliminate gender stereotypes?

Children behave in a gender-stereotypical way because this helps them to find their way in a society that is organised along two-gender lines. As such, children also must have the opportunity to behave in a gender-stereotypical way in early childhood centres. When backed up by educational work that tries to eliminate gender stereotypes, this is not a tragedy.

However, as children want to overcome stereotypical gender boundaries again and again, educators should organise their educational work in such a way that, firstly, girls and boys have the confidence to live out in early childhood centres the interests, desires and aspirations they have that are not gender typical.

Secondly, educators should generally give all girls and boys the opportunity to get to know games and activities that are not gender typical, to try these out and see what they are like and, in this way, give them the chance to expand their range of activities.

Educators must actively organise their educational practice in a way that is "gender sensitive", in order to make the opportunities and freedom for behaviour that is not gender typical more accessible and more interesting. However, the experiences made and the initial working results of our EU project Gender Loops show that this kind of gender-sensitive educational work does not take place in most early childhood centres. Gender-sensitive educational work is still in its early stages at the elementary level, at least in Germany, Norway, Spain, Lithuania and Turkey, even if there are, of course, differences in the countries that are part of the project. Norway certainly has the most experience with gender sensitivity in practice in early childhood centres.

To make sure that girls and boys are given the opportunity to orient themselves in a society that is organised along two-gender lines and have freedom to move in a way that is not gender typical, the following education policy and educational consequences must happen in the training of educators and in educational practice in early childhood centres. The recommendations are drawn from the EU project Gender Loops:

Firstly, educators must be trained and motivated to carry out educational work that is gender reflective. Educators must learn to recognise gender-typical behaviour in children and to take a critical look at this. As quantitative and qualitative surveys among experts from the area of further and advanced training for educators, carried out as part of Gender Loops, have shown, there is a definite need for something to be done here. The surveys carried out in Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Spain and Turkey show that teaching gender competence and gender knowledge in the training of educators almost does not exist, for example, in Lithuania and Turkey. In Germany and Spain, teaching gender competence and gender knowledge generally only happens at the initiative of dedicated lecturers as part of optional subjects chosen voluntarily during training. Only in Norway is it compulsory to teach gender subjects in academic training. However, Gender Loops' Norwegian partner made it clear that Norway is still lacking when it comes to making sure that recent results of gender research are given a firm place within training structures, meaning that students are taught "outdated" gender concepts and ideas. Here, there is a clear need for those responsible for education policy to lay down clear specifications in education policies.

Secondly, the Gender Loops surveys make it clear that – at least in those countries that took part in Gender Loops – gender topics are either uninteresting or completely non-existent for students and educators.

Furthermore, if one considers that in most European countries, gender-reflective education has only been developed in its initial phases, then we are faced with a question: "How can we open the door, how can we create an interest in and the motivation for gender-reflective educational work among (prospective) educators?"

Our experience from the Gender Loops project shows that we have to make educators curious about gender topics. Educators have to discover the subject of gender for themselves. They have to develop their own interest in gender research, prompting them to analyse gender situations in their own place of work off their own backs and observing matters accordingly. Normative appeals to promote equal opportunities often bounce off educators completely.

Within Gender Loops we have developed a three-part gender analysis instrument that is designed to create interest in gender questions among educators. The first part of this gender analysis instrument is a questionnaire that gives educators the chance to write down their initial assessment and perception of the behaviour of the girls, boys and colleagues they work with.

One of the questions, for example, is: "Do girls and boys prefer to spend time in different areas within the group rooms?"

The educators have the chance to tick off one of the following answers:

- No
- Yes, in the following areas in the group rooms:

- With the exception/exceptions of the following girls or boys: (the educators can enter the names of the girls and boys here who, as far as they have been able to see, do not have any preferred areas within the group rooms)

The educators then have the chance to write down their personal assumptions as to why they believe that certain girls and boys differ from the majority of their sex and do not have any preferred areas within the group rooms.

After the educators have written down their ideas, in a second step they can decide to test one or more of their assessments using observation instruments. In a third step, the educators are given gender-reflective proposals concerning methods and projects, with which the educators can "react" to their observations in a gender-reflective way. The Gender Loops research and analysis instrument is available as a download – currently in German only – on our home page at www.genderloops.eu.

Thirdly, educators require an understanding of education which regards education as self-education. Girls and boys develop their own picture of what it means to become a girl or a boy. They develop theories about what girls and boys should be like and base their behaviour on these. Educators can support this process of self-education by offering girls and boys diverse and differentiated gender images and allowing them to become familiar with these.

Children must have the opportunity to experience the diversity of being a girl or a boy visually as well. This can be done using pictures, photos and picture books of crying, laughing, caring, romping children, or girls and boys playing football or with dolls. This can also be done by very different educators who represent a variety of possible role models for children – like the female Turkish educator in my daughter's early childhood centre, who trained as a carpenter before training as an educator and who is therefore skilled at working with her hands. Whether children take on these differentiated gender images is something which we then no longer have any influence over.

Fourthly, educators must take the children's self-education process seriously and enable or initiate participation processes for children from four to five years of age. In this way, educators can pick up on children's questions or insecurities, such as "Can boys put on dresses?" or "Are girls cleverer than boys?" (another bias that was prevalent in one group of children) and talk with the children about these matters. However, educators can also motivate children to carry out gender research: for example, children could ask other children, educators and their parents questions such as: "Are there boys in the early childhood centre or at the swing park who like to wear dresses?" or "What girls are interested in hammers, saws and drills?", "What do educators think about dresses and tools?", "Are there perhaps different opinions on this?", and "Why is it like that?"

Fifthly, efforts must be made to employ more male educators in early childhood centres so that girls and boys can also learn up close about the different and diverse ways of being a man.

Let me say just one thing more in conclusion, even if the call for more male educators has now become popular in many European countries. Being a man is not an educational sign of quality in itself. Male educators, in exactly the same way as female educators, not only need gender competence, but also must be competent in gender-related self-reflection, and need to understand the role model character that being a man or a woman has, and act accordingly. In this spirit, more men, yes – as long as this does not mean that the men are responsible for playing football with the boys and the women are responsible for handicrafts.

I am very happy that I had the opportunity to present the first results of the Gender Loops project here today. Please take them as the preliminary results of a very young and very complex research topic. I hope that these results contribute to a broader gender educational practice in the future, and that other projects like Gender Loops will follow in the near future.

Part 4

SCHOOL PERIOD AND ADOLESCENCE: RECOGNISING AND REBELLING GENDER ROLES AND STEREOTYPES

ELIMINATING GENDER STEREOTYPING IN EDUCATION

Iphigénie Katsaridou
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ABSTRACT: *The Greek government gives the highest importance to any action designed to change attitudes towards gender stereotyping and the predominant vision of the role and responsibilities of girls and boys. It carries out special programmes particularly targeting male minors and adults. It is important to raise awareness of and train educators of both sexes at all levels of the educational system in issues relating to equality of opportunity.*

The "Sensitization [awareness training] of Educators and Interventional Action [affirmative action] programmes to promote gender equality" project is implemented by KETHI, an agency operating under the aegis of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality.

The following initiatives are planned for 2002–2008:

- *78 educational programmes for educators at province level.*
- *850 Interventional-Action Programmes.*
- *Each programme involves at least 5 schools.*
- *Total educator participation is an estimated 8,250.*
- *To date, 89,830 pupils and 2,645 schools have participated.*
- *The total budget for the project is 25,000,000 euros.*

Within the European Union, the only form that can be taken by education in citizenship – meaning recognition as an active member of a political community – is education in democracy. Not only is such education fundamental to all social cohesion, all mutual understanding, all intercultural dialogue and every caring, socially-responsible society, but it also helps to promote the principle of equality between women and men, and fosters the establishment of harmonious, peaceful relations between members of a given population and among peoples.

Furthermore, it provides a framework for defending and developing society and for the full emergence of a culture steeped in democratic values.

Democratic, participative and/or representative societies are based on partnership and the equal sharing of rights and responsibilities between women and men. Those societies must ensure balanced participation in all areas of life to all women and all men, and guarantee them their full civil rights. The representations of social-role attribution models conveyed in our societies shape citizens' behaviour and attitudes and, what is more, they are replicated in schools. Thus, eradicating formal discrimination will not suffice to ensure that the school system will foster de facto equality.

The social roles of each sex, thus stereotyped, restrict the scope for women and men to achieve their potential. For the framework of equality to evolve, positive, dynamic co-operation between the sexes is necessary. It is this cooperation which can lead to appropriate structural changes and, in the longer term, to a new, equitable sharing of rights and duties.

We are concerned at the fact that successful schooling for girls does not automatically ensure either smooth transition from school to the labour market or involvement in political and economic decision-making. We are aware of the educational system's responsibility in preparing school pupils/students of both sexes for active participation in the various aspects of democratic life (political, civic, social and cultural), at all levels (local, regional and national).

The attitudes of both women and men educators can contribute to perpetuating selection mechanisms based on the sex of candidates or, on the other hand, they can help society to evolve. Accordingly, it is essential to involve educators and students of both sexes, managerial personnel and the various actors of the educational process in promoting equality between women and men.

Hence the importance of raising the awareness of and training women and men educators at all levels in the educational system in the issues involved in gender equality. For at school, when constructing the identity of boys and girls, informal aspects (personal experiences) have as much impact as the formal aspects. The values of justice and involvement, which are necessary both for a genuine, active exercise of democratic citizenship, and for instituting a genuine partnership between women and men in private and public life, must be inculcated in pupils from the earliest age.

In Greece, the legislation is clear-cut regarding stereotyping; in practice however, where equality is concerned, behaviour patterns are sometimes still lagging behind legislation. As in many other countries, gender stereotyping underlies active discrimination at all levels of everyday life. Accordingly, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality is actively at work in curbing the impact of such attitudes. The four main headings of the 2004–2008 gender-equality action plan feature provisions designed to reduce gender stereotyping and to change attitudes towards its acceptability.

The government places the highest importance on any action designed to reduce the impact of gender stereotyping and of predominant perceptions concerning the roles and responsibilities of women, girls and boys – particularly in the family and, on a wider front, in society. Thus, special programmes have developed, with a particular focus on male minors and adults.

The Research Centre for Gender Equality is an agency operating under the aegis of and with funding from the General Secretariat for Gender Equality; it is tasked with supporting government policies and programmes in the political, economic and societal spheres. A nationwide project is currently being set up, designed to foster educator awareness of this issue. Among the aims of this project, entitled *"Sensitization [awareness training] of Educators of Secondary Public Education and Interventional Programmes for the Promotion of Gender Equality"* is the promotion of gender equality in secondary education and in the first stage of vocational training. It is deployed in all of Greece's 13 regions.

The "Sensitization [awareness training] of Educators of Secondary Public Education and Interventional Programmes for the Promotion of Gender Equality" project falls within priority axis 4 of EPAEK (operational programme) II ("Measures to improve the accessibility and status of women in [access of women to an their status in] the labour market"); it is co-financed, with 80 % contributed by the European Social Fund (ESF), and 20 % by the Public Investment Programme.

The Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) is responsible for and the ultimate beneficiary of the project, which is being carried out in collaboration with the Vocational Guidance Department of the Ministry of National Education. It is aimed at promoting gender equality in secondary education and in initial vocational training. It targets educators in the general and technical educational streams of public sector schools and in initial vocational training. It introduces a problem-solving approach into the educational process through the implementation of Interventional Action Programmes.

The project also targets male educators, who are expected to gain from the involvement in these training programmes. They must control and modify their own perceptions of the respective roles and responsibilities of the two sexes, in order thereupon to establish their own educational programme so as to change their perceptions where necessary (particularly in the general and technical educational streams and in initial vocational training).

It is essential, through educational programmes, to raise awareness among women and men educators to enable them to identify stereotyping and disparities in the educational system, so that they can then institute dialogue on a scientific basis and introduce best practices within the school syllabus.

The following actions had been planned for the period 2002–2008:

- 78 educational programmes for educators at province level (13 programmes per year). Total participation is an estimated 8,250 educators from the general

and technical secondary-education schools and from the public-sector Initial Vocational Training schools which are responsible for implementing the Interventional Action Programmes.
- 850 Interventional-Action Programmes. Each programme involves at least 5 schools, represented by one or two educators. It should be noted that during the school year 2006–2007, the number of schools required to form a pool was reduced from 5 to 3 in the case of inaccessible island and mountain regions where remoteness of schools from each other precludes communication and collaboration.

The educational and Interventional-Action programmes are implemented through the following:

1. technical and financial support from KETHI, which manages and is the ultimate beneficiary of the project managed by the Centre's team
2. support and scientific supervision by gender-equality experts who are members of the project's scientific committee
3. the involvement of women and men teachers pending appointment to a post who work on KETHI's behalf training teachers in secondary education and in Initial Vocational Training Institutes. The KETHI training staff are responsible for implementing the educational and Interventional Action programmes at provincial level
4. the involvement of secondary-school teacher trainers who are members of the Department of Consultative Professional Guidance and Educational Activities of the Ministry of National Education: managers of health-care, youth counselling and environmental-education facilities, vocational guidance counsellors, specialists at Vocational Guidance Centres and Vocational-Guidance educator-counsellors.

The project's ultimate objective is to promote gender equality among students of both sexes in secondary education and in Initial Vocational Training institutes through activities fostering a critical faculty, teamworking and collaborative creativity with the aims of:

- recognising gender discrimination in the educational system, analyse their own practices and behaviour patterns and those of their teachers
- critically appraising schoolbooks, syllabus design and content, and media, and the way they represent the sexes
- becoming aware of the patriarchal structures of society and their role, which are currently unfavourable to women
- understanding the differences in training and in personality between the sexes at school and in the family
- becoming aware of their status as citizens and being able to recognize and promote gender equality as a vital component of democracy

- choosing their studies and job while casting aside the stereotypes that perpetuate vertical and horizontal segregation in professional life

The parents of students of both sexes and the schools and institutions are the project's indirect beneficiaries, since, once familiarised with the issue of equality, they can then train young people on a footing of equality, with the exclusion of gender stereotyping and segregation. Thus, the development policy hinges on equality of opportunity between women and men.

Since the start of the project, 850 school pools have been formed with the participation of 3,602 schools, 6,695 educators (of whom 34 % are men and 66 % women) and 89,830 students (of whom 47 % are boys and 53 % girls). It should be noted that during the 2003–2004 school year, the men educators' participation rate was 25 %, in 2004–2005 it was 36 % and in 2005–2006, 43 %. This increase reflects the increased interest of men educators in, and their increased sensitivity to issues of equality.

During the 2006–2007 school year, 190 Interventional Action Programmes were implemented, and in 2007–2008, there were 160 Interventional Action Programmes.

Moreover, there are plans to distribute educational material and literature to the educators and institutions concerned. The material includes:

1. manuals containing awareness-training exercises and practical exercises designed to promote gender equality,
2. educational kits presenting traditional and modern occupations and the skills required to enable women to better adapt to the labour market,
3. tools and instructions, methods of teaching and organising Interventional Action programmes,
4. Brochures for informing and fostering awareness among educators.

The total budget for the project is 25,000,000 euros.

The Gender Equality Research Centre (KETHI) is also the coordinator for the "Equal Partners – re-assessing the role of men in professional and private life", within the framework of the Fifth Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities instituted by the European Commission. This project is also being developed in Greece with particular emphasis on targeting pre-school children, adolescents, men and fathers. As a group targeted by the scheme, men and fathers will receive information on gender equality issues, with opportunities to discuss ways of reconciling professional and family obligations, and seeking to redefine their perception of the father's role.

Other projects are also in progress:

The General Secretariat for Gender Equality is also developing a project entitled "Interventional Actions in favour of women" in public vocational-training schools and initial vocational training institutes.

The total budget is €1,285,000.

The project's main aim is to eliminate discrimination and professional segregation between the two sexes in technical education.

Under this project, 764 libraries at the educational institutions concerned, throughout the country, have been stocked with books referring to gender equality, thanks to a bibliographical study on material in existence nationally and internationally. An on-line link has also been established among the libraries and public institutions in vocational and technical education, to the specialist library at the General Secretariat for Gender Equality of the Ministry of the Interior, for enabling students and educators to inform themselves on and develop awareness of gender issues.

Furthermore, KETHI, in cooperation with the General Secretariat for Gender Equality, is implementing the programme entitled "Observatory for monitoring and evaluating gender-equality policy actions at all levels in education and initial vocational training". This programme uses a comprehensive range of teaching aids, adapted to each level in the educational system, to explain how and why gender stereotyping influences educational and vocational choices and daily behaviour-patterns.

The total budget is €950,000.

Nevertheless, it will be a long and arduous haul before progress begins to make itself felt in this area. We have every confidence that, in the coming years, not only will Equality at the outset in education become the norm, but we shall also see some tangible signs of Equality of progress and, in particular, of Equality in results.

COUNTERACTING GENDER STEREOTYPES – FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT: *In this presentation, I focus on three main themes. Firstly, I discuss on a general level what gender stereotypes are and how they work, and why is it so important to try to challenge them in young people's lives. I also discuss the concept of intersectionality briefly, in order to show that gender stereotypes do not affect all young people within gender groups in the same way. Other dimensions of social difference also have to be taken into account in trying to challenge stereotypical ideas of gender stereotypes. Secondly, I present an overview of the successes and failures of various kinds of gender equality programmes that have been implemented in schools in recent decades, based on a review of literature.*

In the end, I draw some conclusions and point to some possible directions for future inquiry and gender policy implementations. My main recommendation is to implement long-term measures for increasing the overall gender sensitivity of professionals, such as educators and youth workers, dealing with young people. Another central argument is that any particular programme or method for challenging gender stereotypes is not suitable for all locations and purposes. All gender equality programmes in institutions for young people should take local differences and needs into account, and the people involved should be motivated to participate – otherwise they will not succeed.

To start with, a closer look at gender stereotypes is needed. What are they exactly? And how do they work? Understanding this is necessary before it is possible to think about their elimination.

Discussion on gender stereotypes was lively in the 1980s, but has been relatively slow in the past years. The interest in stereotypes has been renewed recently, how-

ever, as proved by recent reports (see e.g. Teräs et al. 2005, Salmenkangas 2005). A new look into gender stereotypes is necessary, informed by previous experiences of gender reform and by new gender theories. Gender equality needs to be seen as an active process which may be redefined over time (See Kenway et al. 1998).

Gender stereotypes can be defined as expectations and characterisations that are linked to people solely based on their being male or female, regardless of their individual qualities (Anundi 2005, 139–140). Further, they can be defined as perceptions or images that exaggerate differences between genders. Often there is an evaluative aspect. Stereotypes are usually based on a small and unrepresentative sample, rather than any systematic form of inquiry (see Salmenkangas 2005). Often, gender stereotypes are polarised perceptions. For example, "Men are from Mars and women are from Venus" – i.e. men are thought to be aggressive, whereas women are considered as docile and emotional by nature. Some gender stereotypes are benevolent, such as "women are good at things requiring attention to detail". However, evaluations of individuals based on stereotypes are uni-dimensional, and their abilities may be partially overlooked. Gender stereotypes create erroneous assumptions that all men/women are similar, and that an individual woman or man is only a representative of her/his gender. A certain gender-associated characteristic may be seen as the most defining factor in a person, and used to explain everything she/he does (Salmenkangas 2005, 17).

Gender role stereotypes are based on beliefs regarding the suitability of various roles for men and women. Stereotypes have been used throughout history to regulate women's and men's behaviour. This is even seen in today's schools, where certain subjects are seen as feminine and others as masculine, and girls and boys are expected to choose them and to perform differently in them just by virtue of their gender (Anundi 2005, 139–140.) Gender stereotypes may also act as lenses through which girls' and boys' behaviour is viewed, so that even similar behaviours can be interpreted differently when conducted by a girl or a boy. Gender stereotypes are particularly harmful for young people who are making plans for their future and related choices about their education. Stereotypes may lead girls and boys to drop subjects and interests which are not seen as gender appropriate, even if they would find them interesting as individuals. This is a loss for them on a personal level, but also on the social level, as promising people do not follow their inclinations, and may even become underachievers, or end up trying various types of education. Educators and other professionals working with young people reproduce gender stereotypes as well, although they may not even be aware of their stereotypical thinking. We all have stereotypes and preconceived notions of others; we just may not be aware of them. The first step in eliminating stereotypes is to become conscious of their influence on our thinking patterns and behaviour (Salmenkangas 2005).

As there is a male bias in the society – men are the norm, and women the exception – girls and women have suffered more from gender stereotypes, particularly in

spheres of life that have been seen as the domain of men, including politics, technology and finance. Gender stereotypes have made it difficult for women to enter, let alone become successful in these fields. Of course boys and men also have to challenge stereotypes when they want to work within e.g. nursing or child care.

Gender stereotypes are manifold, and they function on different levels. Some gender stereotypes are ingrained in powerful cultural narratives that are repeated in stories, films and other media products. They appeal to our inner psychological structures, which are formed in an interaction with the historical and cultural environments in which we live. In this sense they can be somehow counteracted, even if it is very difficult. As Kenway et al. (1998, xiii) put it, "Gender is deeply and often unconsciously ingrained within people's psyches and behaviour, and also deeply inscribed within school cultures and education systems." Gender stereotypes are constantly activated in lay and professional discourses of gender, and challenging them has often proved difficult and slow. Gender stereotypes may represent partial truths, which is one of the reasons why they are so hard to resist (Salmenkangas 2005). While the gender perceptions of former societies in history may have been functional – even if too restrictive – for maintaining the social order at that particular time in history, it is clear that gender stereotypes from previous time periods are no longer functional; rather, they are dysfunctional both for individuals and for society.

An intersectional perspective on gender stereotypes

While overall gender stereotypes often affect all girls and boys, there are also differences within gender groups. Here I would like to introduce the concept of intersectionality, which has been adopted in gender studies in recent years (see e.g. Collins 1998; de los Reyes & Mulinari 2005; McCall 2005). In brief, intersectional analysis can be defined as an inspection of how age, gender and class as social hierarchies together construct each other, instead of looking at them as separate systems of subordination. From an intersectional point of view, the dimensions of inequality are always intertwined in people's lives and cannot be separated. The influence of gender stereotypes differs, based on a person's placement on an axis of social difference.

Stereotypical definitions of black and white women differ from each other, similarly as those of working-class women from those of middle-class women, and so on. Therefore, a mere focus on gender may distort the view of what is possible for particular disadvantaged groups within gender groups. For example, in Kenway et al.'s (1998) study of gender reform programmes in Australian schools, some working-class girls were seduced by the feminist slogans of gender programmes into believing in their options in society. However, they found that all routes were not open to them, as they lacked many forms of institutional, financial and personal support which middle-class girls had (Kenway et al. 1998; cf. Aapola et al. 2005, 68–69).

Counteracting gender stereotypes in young people's schooling and youth work

There are numerous examples of different gender programmes trying to overcome gender stereotypes in schooling. While an extensive overview is not possible in such a limited space, I will stay on a general level and use review reports from Finland and Australia. The results from various reviews indicate that there are several problems in educational attempts to overcome gender stereotypes.

One of the obvious facts is that the focus in educational gender programmes attempting to challenge traditional gender roles and to question outmoded stereotypes has been too much on changing girls and their attitudes towards mathematics or other related topics. The measures taken have included various types of educational and vocational projects, as well as counselling. Girls have been targeted with courses in technical skills and work placements within the technology industry, and women who already work in the field have visited schools as female role models. The programmes have also tried to change the attitudes of teachers and to develop pedagogical methods (Brunila 2005, 71–72). But, as Brunila (2005) points out, there are serious problems with this approach. Boys are usually not targeted in gender-equality projects, and they are not expected to change in the same way as girls. This approach also places the responsibility of gender equality on the shoulders of individual girls who should enter previously male-dominated fields such as technology, whereas technology itself is taken as self-evident and neutral. However, the problem does not lie in individual women, so it cannot be expected that a gradual increase of women in technology would automatically bring gender equality (Teräs 2005, 14; Brunila 2005, 71–72.) In order to attain a more permanent change, the aim should be to change the environment in which girls make their choices, and the cultures and structures of the fields they are to enter.

Another type of critique concerns the way Finnish schooling has, for the most part, tried to overcome traditional gender roles by adopting a gender-neutral approach, where gender issues have not been addressed openly. In Elina Lahelma's (1992) groundbreaking study on comprehensive schooling, gender equality had been modified into gender neutrality, whereby school students were seen as abstract pupils, stripped of their gender, social class and ethnicity, and who would all learn in the same way. This approach has, however, not been successful in advancing gender equality. Although there are no more gender-divided school subjects, with the exception of P.E., old gender divisions still continue. While "girls' needlecraft" and "boys' handicraft" have been renamed as "textile work" and "technical work", they still tend to be chosen along the old gender division lines (see Lehtonen 2003, 79–89). It is clear gender reform requires a more active approach.

One of the first and most extensive reviews of educational gender reform was conducted by Jane Kenway and her colleagues (Kenway et al. 1998) in Australia. They carefully reviewed 60 schools with various types of gender programmes,

seeking to challenge unequal gender settlements (Kenway et al. 1998, 206). The gender programmes included, among others, single-sex classes, visits, drama, curriculum development, changing textbooks and student action plans. The researchers explored how various types of actions related to gender reform in schools were – or were not – having an effect, and why people supported them or not. According to the researchers, there is often a gap between the aims of gender reform and what happens in practice (Kenway et al. 1998, 2).

Kenway and her colleagues (1998) argue that students have to be taken seriously even in their criticisms if they are to be involved in the gender reform process. They also warn that if "gender reform mobilises anxiety, guilt, shame and a sense of powerlessness and injustice in students, it is likely to be ineffective" (Kenway et al. 1998, 163). They go on to say that gender reform practices often infantilise students, which is frustrating for them, as they already often feel powerless and treated unjustly at school (Kenway et al. 1998, 204). They also noticed that some gender reformers had very dated views of gender, failing to see how gender had been redefined and become more uncertain in recent decades. If outdated gender relations and identities are to be challenged, schools have to take a critical look at their practices and principles. Kenway et al. (1998) suggest that a "view from below", that is, from a school level, and from the students' and teachers' experiences, is vital when trying to implement gender reform in schools. It is important that local and school differences and needs are taken into account (Kenway et al. 1998, 206).

The most successful schools in gender reform were open to new ideas and welcomed intellectual exchange "from below" and from the outside, and change was seen as a positive challenge (Kenway et al. 1998). They encouraged differences, but not those built on dominances. On the other hand, the schools which failed at gender reform were insular and actively supported hierarchical versions of power and masculinity, where the needs of males were considered more important than those of females. Kenway et al. (1998, 199–200) concluded that schools need to address larger issues of power when implementing gender programs, otherwise they will likely fail. Even this is not enough. Kenway et al. (1998, 207) also noted that questioning gender arrangements was sometimes experienced as disruptive, particularly for those who had invested heavily in particular types of masculinity or femininity. Therefore, the emotions of participants have to be taken into account when attempting gender reform. People (students, teachers and other personnel) who are taking part in the programmes want them to feel enjoyable and to have a sense of agency. Girls and boys, women and men may also have very different emotions regarding any of the dimensions of gender reform, and what works for girls (or some girls) may not work for boys (or some boys) (Kenway et al. 1998, 163).

In addition to schooling, where young people spend a good part of their time, many of them also frequent youth clubs and/or are involved in different kinds of youth programmes during their leisure time. On the surface, youth work has

treated its customers and agents gender neutrally, but gender and sexuality are always present in the everyday life of youth work in various environments (Anttonen – Herranen 2007, 3). Below the surface, youth work has in fact tended to focus on boys, and to formulate its activities on the basis of boys' interests. Girls have often felt excluded. Over time this problem has become ever more prevalent, and various solutions to increase gender equality in youth work have been created. My examples are from Finland.

One of the most famous examples of gender-sensitive youth work in Finland is "Tyttöjen talo" (Girls' House), which was opened in Helsinki a few years ago. It was formulated according to a Swedish model. There are groups for various types of girls, and a range of activities. Girls are offered tools to critique traditional stereotypes and to overcome gendered barriers in their lives. The girl-only space has also made it possible for many immigrant (Muslim) girls to take part in the activities, whose families would not allow them to frequent mixed-sex youth houses. Similar girl-only spaces have been opened in other Finnish towns as well.

In eastern Finland, there was recently a ground-breaking project aiming to increase awareness of the meanings of gender in youth work, using the concept of gender sensitivity. Gender sensitivity in youth work may mean many things, but most importantly, social empowerment and support for a young person's development of a positive gender identity. It includes working towards offering various possibilities to grow into a young person with a sense of self-worth in an equal social environment (Anttonen – Herranen 2007, 4). The youth workers involved in gender-sensitive methods have carefully considered the implications of gender in their work (Anttonen – Herranen 2007). Gender-sensitivity means, among other things, that youth workers have tried to become aware of their own stereotypes, values and attitudes regarding gender. In their work with young people, they try to remain aware of the gender aspect, as well as to encourage young people in their individual pursuits and to challenge sexism. The most useful methods within the gender-sensitive project included media education, classes in personal safety and sex education (Anttonen – Herranen 2007). It has also been argued (see Punnonen 2006, ref. Anttonen 2007) that it is not possible to conduct a credible gender-sensitive approach in youth work unless the work community itself also acts towards creating an equal environment.

Gender sensitivity means applying a gender perspective to all levels, spheres and actions of the society. According to Varpu Punnonen (2006, ref. Anttonen 2007) gender sensitivity can be defined as an ability to recognise differences between men and women, for example in their needs and in their ways of communicating, as well as an ability to listen to and observe the differences between men and women in various contexts. It includes recognising values and attitudes linked to gender and rendering them visible. Gender sensitivity has been considered as a precondition for true gender equality. It is part of a gender mainstreaming process that has been going on in Finnish civil administration for some years,

aiming to make visible the gender aspect in all types of public institutions and local government, and creating gender-equal environments.

To end, I want to stress that today's young people are often acutely aware of forms of sexism and gender play. Young people also do not like to have the things they do and value criticised by adults (See Kenway et al. 1998). That is why constant discussion with young people is necessary when trying to involve them in eliminating old gender stereotypes or any other type of gender reform.

Conclusions

Eliminating or counteracting gender stereotypes in the lives of young people requires:

- a broad range of long-term measures in all spheres of culture, and by a like-minded collective, many actors, not just isolated small projects here and there;
- involving young (and even older) people on a personal level in a way that makes them feel agency, and does not mobilise shame, guilt and anxiety;
- understanding broad structures and mechanisms of power, and challenges to hegemonic views from "below";
- time and discussion with young people and those around them on a local level, in order to motivate them. Simple orders from above are not likely to be effective if the local community does not feel it is worthwhile. Local differences should be taken into account;
- commitment from both genders, not just women. It is important to get men to participate as well;
- knowledge about gender stereotypes and how they work within a particular field/sphere/institution – e.g. media education is important in becoming aware of gender stereotypes and how they work, in order not to be too affected by them;
- intersectional analysis, i.e. attention to differences within gender groups in relation to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, etc., as gender stereotypes affect groups differently.

Policy recommendations

- Including gender sensitivity courses and gender studies in teacher education and youth worker training
- Conducting a gender mainstreaming process in all official institutions involved in young people's schooling and leisure time

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SOCIALIZATION PRACTICES AND STEREOTYPES IN THE FRAME OF SPORTS ACTIVITY

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ABSTRACT: *Sport is an area of general culture, where social relations of power and privileges are reflected and herewith different gender conceptions. There are still many prejudices present in sport, which are being successfully maintained, because in order to prove them the data is used that was already gathered in the context of a particular concept, as a stereotype. A series of physical, social, emotional and gender distinctions are based on what is an appropriate behaviour for a particular gender, what is the "ego" of masculinity and femininity. By maintaining the assessments that deal with physical ability and physical behaviour, sport provides a suitable arena for the "teaching" of masculinity and femininity. Traditional theoretical approaches in many social science surveys maintain the gender-related prejudices, and in physiological research biological reasons for female inferiority (statements that in a non-sport context would not have any value) remain one of the main arguments for formal regulation of girls' sport activity in schools. The existing sport education of girls still reproduces the mode of thinking that makes girls physically inferior. And just the opposite, the sport education of boys produces the ideology, which supports the culture of "manliness" with the emphasis on strength, robustness or physical dominance.*

Introduction

Sport is an area of general culture, where, as in other areas, social relations of power and privileges are reflected. That is why there are still many prejudices present in sport, which mostly refer to gender conception. They are being successfully maintained, because to prove them the data is used that was already gathered in the context of a particular concept. We can talk about a series of physical, social,

emotional and gender distinctions, which are based on what is an appropriate behaviour for a particular gender, what is the "ego" of masculinity and femininity.

Gender-related prejudices are maintained by traditional theoretical approaches in many social science surveys, and in physiological research biological reasons for female inferiority (statements that in a non-sport context would not have any value) remain one of the main arguments for formal regulation of girls' sport activity in schools.

There are parallels in classification of women and men's sport activities. Most activities in the world, defined as types of sport, are actually more about testing the physical strength and endurance, and less about testing the kinaesthetic abilities, mobility, coordination and other motor abilities. Men as a group defined by gender surpass women as a whole in relation to strength and endurance, even though in some areas the results are really close. This way men can maintain the illusion of athletic superiority by referring to these characteristics as discovered achievements of an ideal athlete. On the other hand, in the sense of illusion women can define dance and figure skating as their ideal...

Very indicative to this issue is the approach, which Dewar (1991) characterises as categorical. He thinks that the main issue of difference between men and women is in their abilities and behaviour. In a sports sense this means that we try to explain sports achievements in the sense of biological factors and socialization. We try to present the "facts" in the forms that convince us that they are speaking by themselves. The difference between the genders is highlighted as the difference in generic characteristics and is not presented through social and historically created patterns of social relations. This assumption regarding the nature of relations between the genders is problematic, because it leads to the fact that a person's behaviour is considered separately from social and historical circumstances of that person's life. It is assumed that women have to change their behaviour and socialization if they want to achieve equality or narrow the gap that exists between them and men.

Separate and mixed groups

Even today the experts cannot reach an agreement regarding the joint exercises of boys and girls. The fact is that in the groups of equal representation of pupils of both genders issues arise regarding their level of participation and confidence level. In such groups both genders should equally participate in the process of exercising, however the practice shows that the girls are less active. Usually the boys control the group, and tolerate the "gentler" gender during the exercises as long as their participation (contribution) is within certain limits. When this is not the case, the boys lose the control over themselves. This was also determined by Connell (1987), when he was observing mixed groups during group games (ball games). The boys simply did not want to pass the ball to the girls, which they also

admitted without shame. He reported that the boys strive to make decisions, are louder and require more attention from the teacher.

Many teachers expressed the belief that at the age of 11 the girls have much less developed motor skills (especially coordination) for various ball games. In their opinion the cause was that the girls in many cases were not encouraged to acquire the information regarding the ball game. Or even on the contrary, they accused previous teachers because they taught them to "throw and catch the ball like girls".

D. Kirk warns of the great variance within the same gender and between the genders. The dispute occurred because the basic game pattern of boys was aggressive behaviour. Even participation in the coeducational class did not change this. The survey showed that it was naïve to expect that the coeducational class would change the traditional relations between the genders, and concluded that the effort in coeducational programmes was ineffective (Kirk, 1990).

Therefore, differently designed sport education with regard to the gender can be explained with the help of natural, biological (physical) differences. However stereotypes are also present. We cannot attribute the different approach to girls and boys in sport education only to biological but also to cultural and psychological processes.

The results (Muhvič, 2007) of the frequency of engagement in sport with regard to the gender show that there are differences between male and female pupils relating to the frequency of sport activity, because female pupils are engaged in sport most frequently 1–3 times a week (47.30 %), and male pupils most frequently every day (36.90 %).

The data of the survey, which was conducted on a broader population of male and female pupils between the ages of 8 to 14, showed that during the summer holidays male pupils are more active in sport then female pupils (Strel, Kovač and Jurak, 2004).

The survey by Strel, Kovaš and Jurak (2004) provided data regarding the types of sport, in which the pupils are engaged during the summer holidays. Male pupils mostly engage in team sports, while female pupils engage in individual sports with the emphasis on fitness, and less in sports for which greater physical and muscular ability is characteristic. The most frequent types of sport are swimming (20.44 %), soccer (17.85 %), cycling (15.91 %), rollerblading (8.60 %), and basketball (7.94 %).

The survey (Muhvič, 2007) shows that male pupils mostly engage in soccer (37.30 %), then basketball (14.50 %) and cycling (10.80 %). Male pupils rather engage in team sports and thus deepen their friendship relations and combine the time they spend for sport with spending time with their friends, because for them having fun and socialising are the most important reasons for engaging in sport. For female pupils less aggressive types of sport are characteristic, like dancing (22.60 %), cycling (9.70 %) and rollerblading (9.70 %). The chosen types

of sport may be individual or group, so that they take advantage of the time and spend it for socialising and relaxation.

The results showed that the main reasons of male pupils for engaging in sport is having fun (answer average 4.38), socialising with friends (4.07), keeping fit (3.84), and a healthy lifestyle and relaxation (3.82), while most of female pupils engage in sport because of a healthy lifestyle and relaxation (4.18), keeping fit (4.02), having fun (4.02) and care for a beautiful body (3.77).

The survey by Strel, Kovač and Jurak (2004) showed that the main reason of male pupils for engaging in sport is a healthy lifestyle, keeping fit, skills development and having fun. The reasons of female pupils are similar, first is a healthy lifestyle, then keeping fit, skills development and, the fourth reason is to spend the time by doing something.

Views and positions of the pupils

We have many prejudices in sport to deal with. These prejudices are successfully maintained because certain concepts were created as strong thinking patterns (with superficial argumentation).

When talking about physical activity of girls many people still think of it with a negative attitude. Not only older people think that sport is not "appropriate" for women, but also children (even girls themselves). The created pattern of sport activities, which are supposed to be "appropriate" for the female or male gender, of many people is subjected to the stereotypes. The opinions of the pupils, which replied to the questions in the opinion poll questionnaire of the survey concerned, are not just their experience, thoughts and views, but assumed patterns of different groups to which an individual belongs (family, school). Undoubtedly school plays a certain role in the pupils' replies, however for the most part the replies are judgements formed at the level of conviction already in the early youth. This is so much more important because we know that precisely the positive attitude towards sport education of children in the early youth and sport education in practice is of decisive importance for the full development of child's physical abilities and, above all, for their behaviour patterns.

From this aspect, the analysis in the introductory part of the primary school sport education curriculum (*Učni načrt za športno vzgojo*, 1998 – *Sport Education Curriculum*) is also interesting, since it shows that searching for the elements of gender differentiation in statutory material is quite demanding, because gender differentiation of pupils is written in a much concealed manner. For example the assumption of a general premise: *to consider diversity of pupils*. It can quickly happen that a teacher considers under this diversity also the gender diversity, defined by the society, e.g. for the girls, who are "softer" than boys, dancing activities and a milder approach are more suitable, whereas for the boys sport games and stricter discipline are more appropriate. Therefore the teacher, con-

vinced that he/she considers the biological gender differences, actually embodies social prejudices.

In the knowledge standard analysis in the third triad of the nine-year primary school we detected the existence of gender differentiation during practical classes of athletics, rhythmic gymnastics and ball games.

Surveys show that parents treat differently boys and girls, even though they believe that their reactions to both are the same. Thus the children are subjected to selective treatment already in the earliest years because of the prejudices of their parents. Parents with a positive attitude towards sport mostly direct all their children to sport activity (Doupona Topič, 2004). A girl, who engaged in sport in early years, years later has developed motor skills at a much higher level than her peers. Sport activity of girls is very much influenced by the sport pattern of the family, into which she was borne, and the family is strongly influenced by its social background.

At first sight the fact that the girls use living space and practice sport in different ways does not seem problematic. It becomes a concern when we assume that different forms and types of sport enable different experience and different skills.

Conclusion

For the most part boys have higher possibilities and access to sport than girls. Among the youth there are also more inactive girls than boys. School and other sports grounds are intended mainly for boys, like for example the soccer field. Therefore in planning and management of facilities it would be also necessary to think about personal needs of women in sport.

It would be necessary to encourage girls, who want to engage in sport and believe that it is fun, interesting and good for them, and also to make those who are of opposite opinion enthusiastic about it. We are supposed to live with this belief also later in life, when we are older, and not just during the educational process when sport education is mandatory.

That is why it is necessary to be familiar with the physical, social and mental development of girls, who are even more sensitive during the puberty. It is the time when sport may become an insignificant factor in their life. Because many girls in this period are concerned with their outer appearance, sport could be the one that would help their body shape as well as their self-confidence and dealing with everyday stress.

An important role in development of girls is also played by their parents and teachers, especially sport teachers, who should encourage the girls who reject sport. And those, who have a desire to practice sport, have to be additionally encouraged and supported.

Also sports organizations themselves have to strive to increase the participation of girls in extracurricular sport activities. It is necessary to enable the girls

to strengthen their self-confidence with their own will and desire for sport, based on which they should have the possibility to choose among all types of sport.

It would be necessary to study the local possibilities for certain sports, determine the level of girls' participation in them, and study the possibility of a greater interest in them. Therefore it would be required to prepare the programmes, which would increase the participation of women in sport and which would point to a healthy lifestyle through sport.

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CONTRIBUTION OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM TO THE SLOVENIAN EU PRESIDENCY CONFERENCE ON GENDER EQUALITY

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ABSTRACT: *Gender stereotypes are among the main elements that prevent the achievement of gender equality, due to the strong impact they have on the formation of grounds for discrimination and due to the impact they have on the development of prejudices that contribute to the specific understanding and perception of what is considered the male and female identity or role. Despite the immense impact they have on the lives of all women and men, gender stereotypes often remain unnoticed as they are deeply embedded in what are considered as "cultural or traditional norms" in various societies.*

The European Youth Forum (YFJ) identifies gender equality as a necessary precondition for the achievement of social progress and social justice, and is therefore strongly committed to working on overcoming gender stereotypes and gender-specific patterns of being as a way towards a gender-equal world. The YFJ believes that a similar commitment is necessary from all actors at all levels of society.

Independently established by youth organisations, the European Youth Forum (YFJ) is a European platform made up of 95 national youth councils and international non-governmental youth organisations, which are federations of youth organisations in themselves. It brings together tens of millions of young people from all over Europe, organised in order to represent their common interests.

As the representative platform of youth organisations from across Europe, the European Youth Forum is greatly aware of the immense impact gender inequalities have on the lives of young women and men in Europe. The historical, cultural, traditional, political and societal circumstances that have led girls and young women to be discriminated against, disadvantaged, under-represented and underpaid on the basis of nothing else than their sex, represent a reality that the YFJ is trying to change so as to ensure the enjoyment of human rights

is widely guaranteed and discrimination on the basis of sex is eliminated at all levels of society and in all spheres of living.

The YFJ identifies gender equality as a necessary precondition for the achievement of social progress and social justice, and is therefore strongly committed to working for a gender-equal world.

Yet, for the achievement of a gender-equal world and gender-equal Europe, there is a long way to go. There are many challenges that still prevent this state from coming into being, thus requiring critical consideration of the causes of gender inequality, development of a deeper understanding of the ways and contexts in which gender inequalities occur, and analysis of the impact gender inequalities have on the individual and on society as whole. These are the necessary steps to take in ensuring the broad engagement of governments, stakeholders and individuals in all fields into this long-term vision.

Gender stereotypes are among the main elements that prevent the achievement of gender equality, due to the strong impact they have on the formation of grounds for discrimination and due to the impact they have on the development of prejudices that contribute to the specific understanding and perception of what is considered the male and female identity or role. Gender stereotypes also contribute to the development of negative perceptions about non-heterosexual orientations, and they also contribute to gender identity's being considered as exclusively masculine or feminine, without leaving any space for other gender identities and expressions. Despite their impact, gender stereotypes often remain unnoticed as they are deeply embedded in what are considered "cultural or traditional norms" in various societies.

One might ask, how do gender stereotypes affect young people and where do young people experience them?

Gender stereotypes appear or develop in a variety of ways and settings, which will be briefly elaborated below with education, social participation and the media being taken as examples.

Gender stereotypes contribute to how young people feel about themselves and their genders, and what they assign as expectations regarding them and their future development.

When we speak about the period of adolescence, the space where young people experience gender stereotypes most directly is in education – thus in schools and universities.

Education also represents one of the most relevant aspects to observe in analysing gender inequalities in general, as many of the challenges related to gender identity arise from there, and are then consequently transferred into society. This transmission enables them to be maintained as the norm under which gender relations operate or further develop.

Schools are the first organised form of socialisation for boys and girls. The school period is the time when boys and girls get to meet other identities and

develop their own. Schools greatly contribute to the development of an understanding of one's own positioning and role in society. If only schools were gender sensitive, the school period could be a process free of biases and pre-determined ideas of who is who, giving the opportunity to boys and girls to freely develop their understanding of themselves and the rest of the world.

Unfortunately this is not the case. Schools are one of the strongest instances of socialisation into gender-specific patterns for boys and girls.

The process of gendered socialisation in schools develops around two main categories: structural and social.

The structural dimension of socialisation and identity development is related to school structures, curriculum, schoolbooks and teaching. These often derive from a hetero-normative and gender-stereotypical perception of the world, making it hard for both boys and girls to feel that it is usual not to fit into the norms those structural elements set forward. This can lead young women and young men who don't fit the "norm" into a persistent exclusion that has an impact on their mental health, in education and in life in general.

The social category mostly refers to the relations among the students themselves and the behaviour they are expected to follow in school and society, but not only this. It is also related to the way students and school staff are taught to relate to each other, which is mostly on the basis of sex and not on basis of their personalities. The different socialisation of women and men contributes to reinforcing disadvantages for women in particular.

When combining the structural and social causes, conclusions can be easily drawn on where the gender-specific career choices or patterns of further education derive from. The old stereotypes relating to what are considered appropriate professions for women and men remain present as a result. Educational institutions have a great responsibility in being attentive to the education and training needs especially of young women, who are the ones most affected by this situation, as a way of breaking traditions of fields of domination by one sex or the other, which further come to be reflected in the labour market and thus in the earning capacities of women and men.

There is another fascinating part about education, and that is the fact that education is empowering young women and men differently in what is considered developing skills for active participation in society. This is explicitly visible in the methodologies and informal tendencies of participation present in classrooms. Additionally, the fact that women's participation in the decision-making structures of educational institutions is still lacking has an impact on the examples and role models young women can identify in education. The stereotypical view of what is considered leadership or decision making contributes to the prevailing image of political participation oriented towards men, which can further affect the confidence, motivation and opportunities of young women to get engaged in political or social life in general.

In this regard, the media is another factor that, next to education, contributes to developing stereotypical ideas of gender roles or performances. The media is not yet sensitive to the question of equal representation of women and men. One example for consideration is that, despite the fact that women comprise up to 52 % of the world's population, they make up only 21 % of news subjects in the media. Even if, as explained above, many norms are deeply rooted and reaffirmed by either cultural or religious traditions, they are further enhanced by the popular culture, consumerism and sexism that the media promotes as well. Young people become victims of gender-stereotyping cultures and representations.

Looking at the variety of aspects relating to gender stereotypes, it can be said that they are a very complex phenomenon with strong consequences. But what is to be done in order to rebel against them?

Primarily it is important to enable young women and men to be able to recognise and identify gender stereotypes. Specific work with them on issues relating to gender stereotyping in the period of adolescence is therefore necessary. Yet it is not enough. By developing the understanding of young people, awareness is achieved among one group, even if it is the group which would contribute the most to making a difference in future gender relations; but a deeper social transformation has not yet been achieved. The latter requires civil dialogue and engagement for gender equality by different actors at all levels, following a strong vision of gender equality as one of the means for achieving social justice.

Following from there, the YFJ believes that measures need to be urgently taken at the European and national institutional level towards breaking gender-stereotypical developments. The YFJ therefore calls on EU ministers for social affairs and gender equality to:

- Take as a reference the CoE Committee of Ministers recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 for the development and implementation of national and education gender mainstreaming strategies as an essential element in achieving wide gender sensitivity and specific focus on gender issues;
- Revise and evaluate the structural and social components of education in relation to gender equality, as a necessary step to take prior to the introduction of gender mainstreaming strategies;
- Monitor gender relations in education through reports and research;
- Develop gender-sensitive teacher training and gender sensitivity training for teachers at all levels of education;
- Support schemes for young people in all fields of education, particularly those dominated by one sex;
- Develop specific programmes for engagement in overcoming gender role division, through non-formal, formal and informal education;
- Commit to the Beijing platform action plan for gender equality, adding a focus on this year's UN implementation review on financing for gender equality by the allocation of sufficient funding for work in the field;

- Empower young women through specific training programmes created expressly for such purpose on a variety of levels;
- Work with boys and young men on overcoming gender-specific patterns of behaviour and career choices through education;
- Introduce gender-sensitive sexual education, enabling young women and men to be able to obtain information about their bodies, sexual identities and orientations;
- Recognise the role of civil society organisations and especially youth organisations towards the breaking of gender stereotypes in this life-stage due to the opportunity for engagement in work on a peer-to-peer basis; and
- Support campaigns for the elimination of stereotypes in the media.

The YFJ believes that the step that is being taken by the EU ministers and the Slovenian Presidency in the organisation of this conference and in analysing this dimension of gender equality issues is a very important one, both for its specificity and for the root elements approach it takes towards gender inequalities. The YFJ hopes that the conclusions drawn here would effectively contribute to acting against gender stereotypes through policy and programme responses, because work for gender equality is the responsibility of everyone and must be reflected in all policy areas at all levels.

Part 5

ROUNDTABLE OF MINISTERS: GENDER STEREOTYPES AND HOW TO SURVIVE THEM?

Photo: © by UKOM / Gregor Wernig – Salomon 2000

Marjeta Cotman, Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

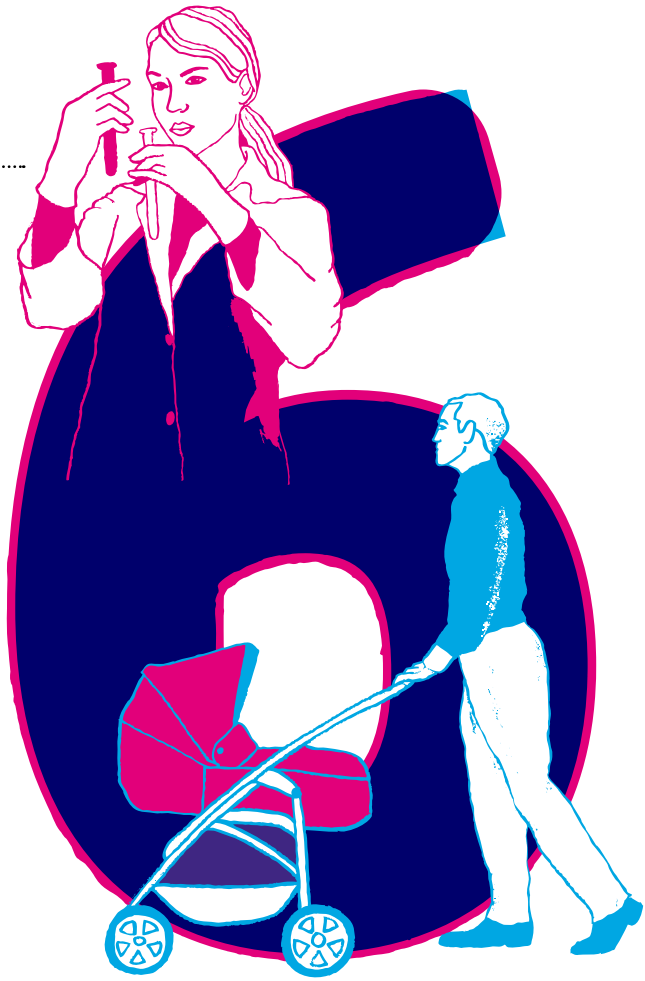
Marie Josée Jacobs, Minister for Equal Opportunities, Luxembourg

Seán Power, T.D., Minister of State for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Ireland

At the roundtable "Gender stereotypes and how to survive them" the ministers from Luxembourg, Ireland and Slovenia and the state secretary from Finland, responsible for gender equality, shared their personal and professional experience in relation to gender stereotypes. They discussed gendered socialisation and the effects gender stereotypes had on their lives from childhood, through the school years and on to their career choices and efforts to reconcile private and working life. The ministers also debated about possible ways for overcoming traditional gender roles and for challenging gender stereotypes, which remain a persistent obstacle to the achievement of gender equality.

Part 6

ADULTHOOD: LIVING WITH AND MANAGING GENDER STEREOTYPES



ADULTHOOD: LIVING AND MANAGING GENDER STEREOTYPES

Monika Ksieniewicz
Department for Women, Family and Counteracting Discrimination
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Poland

ABSTRACT: *Stereotypes are beliefs adopted in advance, concerning the characteristics of an individual, a group or an object and emphasising the fact of not taking into account the individual traits. Using stereotypes is so universal that we all do it. Adults generate and hand down stereotypes. Stereotypical clichés are universally known – almost any person stopped on the street could recite without thinking a list of characteristics of one of the sexes. However, the person certainly would not manage to put forth even one psychological or character trait characteristic exclusively, for example, to one sex. So why do we still reproduce these stereotypes?*

Even though social stereotypes most often concern racial, ethnic, sexual and professional groups, they may concern all categorisations applicable to persons (classifying based on appearance, place of abode, etc.); hence in our locale there is a negative connotation to country dwellers. Categorisation has an adaptive function, because it helps people in coping with the world. In patriarchal cultures, children of both sexes are socialised differently. Children imitate not only authorities, but also characters from stories, fairytales, myths and the mass media. Let us not forget that children do not learn stereotypical behaviours on their own – they learn them from adults. A lot depends on how we, as teachers at school, public persons on television or simply parents, bring up children.

To defeat the enemy, we must know him first: understanding the stereotype

The word "stereotype" derives from Greek. *Stereos* – set, solid, and *typos* – print, model. This term comes from printing terminology, where it means a matrix or plate that is difficult to change when cast. In 1922, Walter Lippman in his work *Public Opinion* used the term "stereotype" for the first time. It is usually used in the social sciences; in culture, it means a set of universally recognised general beliefs concerning different kinds of characteristics of a group or class of people. It is a scheme, a pattern of characteristics of some social group.

In other words, stereotypes are beliefs adopted in advance, concerning characteristics of an individual, a group or an object, and emphasising the fact of not taking into account the individual traits.

The characteristics of a stereotype include the following:

- Social origin – they are handed down to an individual through upbringing by the environment, regardless of her or his personal experience; for example, a son brought up by a single mother hears from conservative politicians that "women should bring up children and not fulfil themselves professionally";
- Burdening – a category connected with stereotypes, including judgements adopted in advance or imposed evaluatively and negative or positive emotions; for example, "blessed motherhood" and post-natal depression, which concerns a huge number of women;
- Persistence of their existence, inflexibility, impossibility to verify them; for example, at present "stupid women" constitute the majority at European universities;
- Subjective certainty as for the correctness of the represented content and, at the same time, the inapplicability of the content of the image to reality; for example, "Poles steal";
- Exaggerated generalisation, a belief that the individuals covered by the stereotype are fundamentally the same; for example, "all gays lead a life of dissipation";
- And social divisions, for example, into supporters and opponents of professional activity for women.

Using stereotypes is so universal that we all do it. Adults generate and hand down stereotypes. Stereotypical clichés are universally known – almost any person stopped on the street could recite without thinking a list of characteristics of one of the sexes. However, the person certainly would not manage to put forth even one psychological or character trait characteristic exclusively, for example, to one sex. So why do we still reproduce them?

Most often stereotypes perform an adaptive function. They help in understanding complicated processes ruling the social world, reducing uncertainty and providing a sense of security.

Even though social stereotypes most often concern racial, ethnic, sexual and

professional groups, they may concern all categorisations applicable to persons (classifying based on appearance, place of abode, etc.); hence in our locale there is a negative connotation to country dwellers. Categorisation has an adaptive function because it helps people in coping with the world. If one has an established view on the characteristics of members of a given group, she or he does not have to start each time the entire process of getting to know a given individual in all her or his individuality. In spite of the fact that, after opening the EU borders, many Poles left for the United Kingdom and there they are respected as workers, for example, in Germany even today there is a lingering stereotype that "Poles steal and they are layabouts".

Stereotypes are rooted in language. Language at the same time is very vivid, so it can serve to fight against stereotypes as well as to deepen them, e.g. it is possible to say in a politically correct way *an Afro-American*, neutrally *a black person* and contemptuously *a nigger*.

One of the most interesting ideas for fighting against prejudice based on stereotypes is a project called "Gallery of Tolerance", where one may "rent" a gay, Jew, Roma or disabled person and spend a few hours with her or him, talk, see how this person lives, get to know her or his dreams, and in a way "acclimatise" to the unknown which causes fear, rejection without reflection, and, ultimately, prejudice.

Stereotypes also perform a justifying role: they justify our behaviour and the social system or behaviour of a social group with which we identify ourselves, e.g. women/men – justifying inequality or the lack of justice. For example, at the beginning of the 1990s, Henryk Domański, a professor of sociology, in his work *Zadowolony niewolnik* put forward a thesis that inequality of women and men in the labour market was objective, because its elimination would lead to a breakdown in the system of work in Poland, and the transition economy was based on this inequality!

As a rule, desirable characteristics are attributed to men and form the set of competences, and characteristics attributed to women form the emotional and expressive set. Such stereotypes may be found in school books, children's books and language styles; they result in sexual division of classes at schools and in adult life – in the difference in earnings of women and men, trafficking in women, etc. Stereotypes also have a normative character – they describe expectations towards women and men, for example "every woman wants to be a mother" or "technology is for men".

At one time, stereotypes were a part of the so-called scientific knowledge. In 1903, for the first time in history, Maria Curie-Skłodowska received the Nobel Prize for discovering radioactive elements. At the same time, a neurologist from Leipzig, Julius Möbius, tried to prove the lesser intellectual abilities of women based on the size of their heads. A tailor he knew provided him with the head sizes of 600 eminent customers from the upper classes. Möbius recognised that the smaller capacity of a skull meant a worse brain.

The stereotyping process takes place on many planes at the same time, but above all in determined social and cultural conditions in the process of socialisation of boys and girls. Socialisation is a process of gaining identity and values, beliefs and attitudes, due to which an individual can function in the society. Socialisation (Latin *socialis*) means the whole of actions on the part of society (families, schools, environment) aimed at making a social being from an individual, i.e. enabling her or him to gain such qualifications and systems of values and to develop a personality so that the individual can become a competent member of this society and does not "stand out" from it.

In patriarchal culture, children of both sexes are socialised differently. The parents are the first who, often unconsciously, reconstruct existing gender roles, thus contributing to distinguishing behaviours and experiences acquired by boys and girls, e.g. in choosing such seemingly prosaic things as clothes or kinds of toys. In fact, first attempts at gender classification may be noticed already in the pregnancy period – a mother-to-be is constantly asked questions about the child's sex; at hospitals in some countries, right after birth children receive bands according to their sex. At hospitals, children are also described differently depending on sex, e.g. girls are more delicate and calmer, and boys are bigger and livelier; but in fact, the data usually indicate only a slight difference. Then mothers are also usually gentler to girls; they speak to them more affectionately than to boys, who are treated more harshly. Children have different toys and games, not to mention the colour of clothes – pink for girls and blue for boys. I wanted to write "for the fairer sex" to avoid using the word "girls" once again, but I caught myself on a thought originating from the stereotypical sayings: women should always care about their appearance and men are called "the sterner sex". But if women are called the fairer sex, why are they the ones who mainly care about their appearance? If they were beautiful by themselves, they would not have to attach such significance to their looks. It seems that the "beauty terror" described by N. Wolf is quite powerful, and the belief that a woman's value depends on her appearance is instilled in women very strongly.

Burdened with the experience gained at home, a boy and a girl go to school, which can strengthen the influence of the home environment, but can also influence a different formation of the child's identity. The teachers' behaviours, as well as the content they use, influence the process of sexual classification. American studies show that reading short stories about maverick women influences the views of children of both sexes, because it convinces them of the greater abilities of girls. At the same time, analysis of school books shows that the world presented in them is more sexist than the contemporary reality, and in many cases is completely alien to the majority of children, whose mothers are working.

Children imitate not only authorities, but also characters from stories, fairytales, myths and the mass media. As for the latter, they present an exceptionally deceitful world, preying on the defencelessness and innocence of a child. A

child receives these attacks without thinking, copying behaviours present on television or in films. Therefore, we have decided to utilise this medium for our own purposes.

Children did not learn it by themselves – a TV spot

In the TV spot, prepared as part of the Polish celebration of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All 2007, our aim was to make the target group aware of what discrimination is and how it manifests itself in social life. The target group includes of course the adult; the spot is transmitted after 10.00 pm on public television. Our point was to draw attention to the existence of harmful stereotypes and prejudice towards persons of different sex, nationality, race, ethnic origin or sexual orientation, as well as elderly persons. The commonness of stereotypes and mental clichés based on these is reflected in the words of my colleague, who is an educationalist and professionally deals with children's rights. When commenting on our spot, he said that by writing on the board "They did not learn it by themselves" instead of writing clearly "Children did not learn it by themselves," we deprive children of their subjectivity.

Our aim was also to make people sensitive to signs of discrimination towards the aforementioned groups. The audience may benefit from the spot by developing the sense that "I am a clever and independently thinking person, I do not use harmful stereotypes in my actions, because I respect every person irrespective of her or his race, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion or ability. I act according to the principle that the only measure of assessing a person is exclusively her or his humanity." The main message of the spot is a question: How would you feel in her or his place? The advertisement is serious and concrete – it was intended to be matter-of-fact and without unnecessary drama.

Let us not forget that children do not learn stereotypical behaviours on their own – they learn them from us, adults. A lot depends on how we, as teachers at school, public persons on television or simply parents, bring up children. It also depends on whether in the next thematic years the European Union will promote diversity and not only fight against the discrimination, common stereotypes and prejudice resulting from it. In Poland, the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All does not end with the year 2007. Ideas and principles of the year will be continued as part of future projects implemented by the Department for Women, Family and Counteracting Discrimination in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

LIVING WITH AND MANAGING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN ADULTHOOD: EMPLOYERS' POINT OF VIEW

Helen Hoffmann
European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises UEAPME

ABSTRACT: *This session will present the work of the European social partners (UEAPME, Business Europe, CEEP and ETUC) on promoting gender equality, in particular based on the Framework of Action on Gender Equality. Further, the company's perspective on managing gender stereotypes and measures addressing gender roles in the workplace will be considered. In addition, practical examples will showcase initiatives in different Member States to counteract the horizontal and vertical segregation of women in traditional sectors.*

UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing the interests of European crafts, trades, and small and medium-sized enterprises at the EU level. With more than 80 member organisations, e.g. national cross-sectoral SME federations, European branch federations and other associate members, UEAPME represents more than 11 million enterprises with nearly 50 million employees.

Small and medium-sized enterprises are the backbone of the European economy, with 99 % of all companies in Europe being SMEs. They are the most important creators of new jobs and economic growth, and over 90 % are micro-enterprises with fewer than 10 employees.

As a recognised European social partner, UEAPME acts on behalf of crafts and SMEs in the European social dialogue and in discussions with EU institutions. In this capacity it negotiates and signs agreements, e.g. on telework

Joint work of European social partners on Gender Equality

The four interprofessional European social partners, consisting on the employers' side of BUSINESSEUROPE, CEEP (representing public employers) and UEAPME, as well as ETUC (as a trade union), have taken a very active role in promoting the important issue of gender equality.

To complement legislation, the European social partners agreed on a Framework

of Action on Gender Equality in 2005, focusing on practical measures to implement gender equality. National social partners were asked to take action during 2005 to 2010, according to the national situation, on the following four priorities: gender roles and the fight against stereotypes, work-life balance, promoting women in decision-making, and equal pay.

The Framework of Action also recommended starting at a very early age with avoiding and tackling gender stereotypes. The overall emphasis also lies on desegregation of the labour market to encourage women and men to move into non-traditional sectors.

There have been two follow-up reports[2] [3] since annual reporting on progress in the four priorities and the activities at European, national, cross-industry, sectoral and company levels began. Looking at trends in the Member States, there has been a greater number of educational programmes for teachers and pupils in schools, as well as an increase of career fairs or girls' days in enterprises, and more interactive information campaigns to encourage young people in non-traditional career paths. An evaluation report in 2010 will provide further analysis.

Managing gender stereotypes from a company perspective and addressing gender roles at the workplace

Depending on culture, society and sectors, different degrees of gender mix still prevail in Member States, with men often more represented in sectors such as the sciences, technology and construction, whilst women are still often found in female-dominated fields such as care and the public sector, culture and education.

From a company perspective, gender equality needs to be taken very seriously. With the current demographic challenge and the lack of skilled workers, it is imperative to achieve a higher participation of women in the labour market, especially in sectors of strong economic growth, such as the knowledge economy and services. In addition, young women are often more highly skilled than men.

A diverse workforce with a balanced representation of women and men in male- or female-dominated sectors is also a key factor for enhancing productivity. There are, of course, also benefits involved for the company in having a balanced workforce, leading to increased attractiveness as an employer, enhanced staff motivation and presenting a positive image in the local community and wider region. It also provides a good tool to tackle the gender pay gap resulting from gender segregation.

Promoting a gender mix can be constructively aided by the employer's cooperation with education and guidance bodies. Equal recruitment measures are also

2 http://www.ueapme.com/docs/joint_position/Fram_of_actions_gender_1st_report_final.pdf

3 2 http://www.ueapme.com/docs/joint_position/2007/0711_2nd_report_SP_gender_equality.pdf

essential, ensuring that job titles and descriptions are worded in a gender-neutral way attracting both men and women equally, without male or female values dominating. It certainly takes a mix of approaches with national awareness-raising campaigns and, at the corporate level, providing individual measures for employees to reconcile professional, private and family life.

There is a difference in what larger and smaller companies can provide. Smaller enterprises may have more limited financial resources to utilise, but at the same time in a micro-enterprise there is usually less hierarchy, meaning in practice that there are more direct contacts at the ground level between entrepreneurs and workers, and that the manager knows the employees better, which facilitates finding more flexible ways of working and individual solutions. Clearly the workplace needs to be adapted for both men and women individually in ergonomic terms to avoid health and safety problems, and from the outset it needs to be equipped taking specific aspects into consideration.

Practical examples of counteracting horizontal and vertical labour market segregation in SMEs and craft enterprises in the field of vocational education and training and entrepreneurship in Member States

Germany: "Who is the best in the country?"

In 2007 the German Association for Motor Trade and Repairs organised its first national competition with the title "Who is the best in the country?" searching for the best young female apprentice in the motor mechanics sector. Currently only 2 % of all mechatronics apprentices are female. With the increasing importance of cognitive skills and less physical emphasis, the association is aiming to show career opportunities within this male-dominated profession and sector.

The selection procedure involved asking the country's ten best female mechatronics apprentices to carry out the typical daily tasks of a mechatronic. An informational campaign aimed at motivating and encouraging high performance among female apprentices also created high visibility. A further incentive and linkage was provided, as the competition winner also became the ambassador for the motor mechanics trade at Girls' Day 2008.

France: Framework agreement

In January 2007 a Framework agreement was signed at the highest political level between the French Minister for Social Cohesion and Equality and the Association representing craftsmen and SMEs in the construction sector (CAPEB). This agreement shows a real commitment to the work floor. It is aimed at counteracting stereotypes in the public that devalorise construction sector jobs by underlining the positive aspects of the professions involved.

Similar to the motor mechanics sector in Germany, the French construction sector has at present a low female workforce of only 10 %. The need for skilled workers means that the sector is opening itself more and encouraging access to women. The agreement involves seven articles outlining the different measures envisaged. This includes, for example, the support of the agreement by initial vocational education and training establishments.

Further, another essential tool is communication through CAPEB's bi-monthly newsletter, which contains information on related events and is sent out to the whole of the association's network, down to individual crafts enterprises in the sector. Awareness raising within CAPEB affiliated bodies and beyond is achieved by organising national study days and meetings on the subject.

An expert committee, including ministry officials, CAPEB members and other experts, is in charge of evaluating and implementing the agreement. It meets on an annual basis. Initially the agreement was signed for three years, and the committee will decide on its renewal thereafter.

Italy: Womens' Talent (Il talento delle donne)

The Womens' Talent initiative was organised by the Italian National Crafts and SME Association (CNA) to encourage and support female entrepreneurship. The emphasis is on female entrepreneurs and daughters in key roles in SMEs and craft enterprises, who need particular support regarding the generational handover of businesses.

The goal was therefore to enhance management skills and strengthen women's self-employment by optimising the availability of specific support products. In this context seminars and training courses are held on business practices, HR and positive actions for equal opportunities within the company. Overall it facilitates the exchange of experience between senior and junior entrepreneurs, and aims to give a structured business transfer and personal training plan with a gender perspective.

Further information on this gender-focused project, as well as others covering ethnicity, disability and age can be found in the UEAPME compendium[4] of good practices of diversity and non-discrimination in European crafts, SMEs and their organisations. The publication of the compendium was funded by the European Year of Equal Opportunities 2007.

Some measures could help to improve the situation, including:

- Continuous work by European and national social partners on gender roles, and implementation of initiatives to fight against stereotypes by desegregating the labour market, as one of four priorities (Framework of Action on Gender Equality);

4 http://www.ueapme.com/docs/compendium/compendium_print.pdf

- Promoting practical guidance on gender-neutral recruitment policy and unbiased gender policies in the workplace (e.g. similar to the EU brochure "Diversity at Work: 8 Steps for SMEs", promoting diversity measures in the workplace more widely);
- Fostering tailor-made measures for the reconciliation of professional, private and family life at company level to support employees.

Conclusion

The elimination of gender stereotypes necessitates a shared responsibility involving the whole of society – employers and employees, as well as education and training establishments – to change the ingrained culture and mindset. As mentioned in the European Framework of Action on Gender Equality, it needs to start from a very early age. Schools and training establishments are significant in providing guidance and supporting unbiased career orientations. On the employers' side, gender-neutral recruitment plays an important role, as well as practical work-life balance measures in the workplace. As widely discussed, it also needs a sustained effort in disseminating information at the European, national, regional, local and entrepreneurial level.

SELECTED FINDINGS OF THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE SOCIO-SCIENTIFIC BASIC RESEARCH STUDY "WAYS TO EQUALITY OF TREATMENT – TODAY AND TOMORROW"*

Tanja Merkle
Sinus Sociovision GmbH, Germany

ABSTRACT: *In all educational, professional and age categories, as well as in all social milieus, equality between men and women represents an (in principle) accepted social norm and is perceived as a socially and (more or less) personally relevant topic. Yet in spite of all verbal openness, the deep structures of attitudes and behaviour patterns reveal in part considerable resistance. De facto, there seem to be several deep rifts running through German society, manifesting a pluralism which challenges gender equality policy to do the cultural splits.*

In spite of all differences as to the attitudes towards equality of treatment – it is a very broad spectrum – and in spite of its perception as a political versus an individualised task in German society, the Sinus study "Ways to Equality of Treatment – Today and Tomorrow" clearly reveals the core relevance of improved compatibility between family and job. Besides the participation of both partners in child education – the "new man" has proven to be a phantom so far – the issues of job re-entry and wage inequality play a major role in this context. But also day care and education policy represent important action fields which should be considered.

Yet when considering all possible measures, one needs to keep in mind that attitudes are subject to slow change only. A paradigm shift seems necessary; it has to become "normal" that fathers, just like mothers, can take care of child education. And it is important to grant freedom of choice – the possibility to decide either way.

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* *Authors of the study: Dr Carsten Wippermann, Katja Wippermann, Sinus Sociovision, Germany*

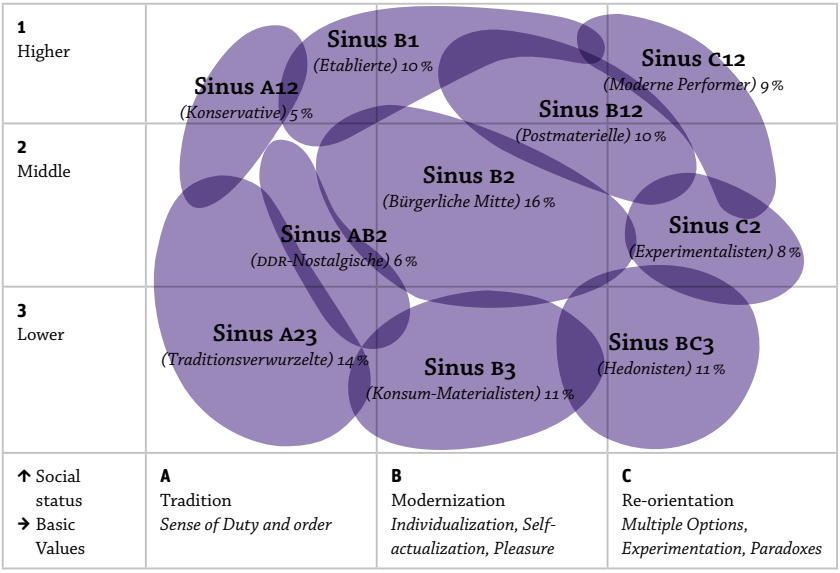
I Preliminary Remarks

What is Sinus Sociovision and what are Sinus-Milieus®?

Sinus Sociovision GmbH, founded in 1974 and a member of ADM (Arbeitskreis deutscher Markt- und Sozialforschungsinstitute e.V.), is a socio-scientific private sector company located in Heidelberg, Germany. For over thirty years, the institute has been doing socio-cultural research for public and private clients with a particular focus on value change, everyday life aesthetics, everyday life worlds (Sinus-Milieus®), and socio-cultural currents and trends, as well as future scenarios.

The *Sinus-Milieus®* are the result of more than 25 years of socio-scientific research. This Sinus Sociovision method of determining target groups takes its cue from an everyday-life analysis of our society. The Sinus-Milieus® group together people who are similar in terms of their attitude to life and ways of living. Basic values serve as input for analysis, along with everyday attitudes towards work, family, leisure, money and consumption. In other words, the milieus draw the human being and his/her entire social environment and everyday-life system

The Sinus-Milieus® in Germany 2007
Social Status and basic Values



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of reference into the field of vision, thus offering more information and better decision-making support than traditional target group approaches.

Traditional segmentation according to socio-demographic features or social class is now far from adequate when it comes to getting to know one's "clientele". Socio-demographic twins can, sometimes surprisingly and with unpleasant consequences, prove to represent entirely different target groups. These days, a sense of social belonging depends less on class-specific features and more on shared aspects of lifestyle and how these are perceived. Formal communalities and a comparable social status may be coupled with quite different lifestyles and basic values. Only a holistic observation of the individual leads to realistic descriptions of everyday reality, to target groups that really exist.

The Sinus model primarily takes into account the dimension of basic values, lifestyles and aesthetic preferences, but also refers to the dimension of social status. Contrary to lifestyle typologies that do a relatively quick job of classifying changing surface phenomena, the milieu model of Sinus focuses more on registering the underlying structures of social differentiation. It is nevertheless not a rigid system but moves in tune with social change, with which it is constantly brought into line via model updates.

The position of the milieus in German society, plotted according to social status and basic values, is visualised on the following chart: the higher up the respective milieu in this chart, the higher the level of education, income and occupational group of its members; the further to the right it stretches, the less traditional their basic values. Within this "strategic map" it is not only possible to plot products, brands, media, etc., but it can also be used for developing strategies in politics, for political parties, churches, foundations, NGOs, etc.[2]

The designations used for the milieus in our model follow a classification system which is valid across national borders and which divides the class axis (social status) and value axis (basic values) into three sections each. Thus, for example, Sinus A12 represents a life world with a traditional basic orientation (value section A) and with a middle-to-upper social status (class sections 1 and 2).

The milieu names, springing from sociological research tradition (e.g. "Konservative"), cannot, when it comes down to it, adequately characterise a life world – because they inevitably highlight only a certain aspect and quickly get overtaken by social change, and because discriminatory connotations can't always be avoided. In our international system of designation, therefore, these names serve a merely illustrative purpose.

2 For instance: Federal Press Office; Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth; Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety; Federal Ministry of Education and Research; Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture; Federal Agency for Civic Education; Federal Office of Health (Switzerland); German Conference of Catholic Bishops; German Caritas; Konrad-Adenauer Foundation; Bertelsmann Foundation, etc.

The Sinus-Milieus® 2007: brief description

Society's Leading Milieus		
Sinus B1 *(Etablierte)*	10 %	The self-confident establishment: success ethics, feasibility mentality and highly exclusive tastes
Sinus B12 *(Postmaterielle)*	10 %	The enlightened, post-68 Milieu: a basically liberal attitude, post-material values and intellectual interests
Sinus C12 *(Moderne Performer)*	9 %	The young, unconventional top performers: living life to the full – both at work and play, multi-optionality, flexibility and multimedia enthusiasm
Traditional Milieus		
Sinus A12 *(Konservative)*	5 %	The old German educated classes: conservative critique of modern culture, humanist sense of duty and cultivated manners
Sinus A23 *(Traditionsverwurzelte)*	14%	The security- and order-loving wartime generation: rooted in the petty bourgeois world or traditional blue-collar culture
Sinus AB2 *(DDR-Nostalgische)*	6 %	The resigned losers of German reunification: clinging to Prussian virtues and old-socialist notions of justice and solidarity
Mainstream Milieus		
Sinus B2 *(Bürgerliche Mitte)*	16 %	The status-oriented modern mainstream: looking to establish themselves professionally and socially, seeking a sheltered and harmonious life
Sinus B3 *(Konsum-Materialisten)*	11 %	The markedly materialistic lower class: want to keep up with the consumer standards of the broad middle classes in an attempt to compensate for social disadvantages
Hedonistic Milieus		
Sinus C2 *(Experimentalisten)*	8 %	The extremely individualist Bohemian world: unchecked spontaneity, living in contradiction, self-image as the lifestyle avant-garde
Sinus BC3 *(Hedonisten)*	11 %	The fun-oriented, modern lower class/lower-middle class: disregard for convention and behavioural expectations of the achievement-oriented society

II The Qualitative and Quantitative Socio-scientific Basic Research Study "Ways to Equality of Treatment – Today and Tomorrow"

2.1 Task description

In 2007, Sinus Sociovision realised a qualitative and quantitative basic research study dealing with the equality of treatment in Germany against the background of the Sinus-Milieus®. This study was conducted on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth; the universe was the German-speaking resident population aged 18+. In order to be able to approach and assess the research topic in a comprehensive and holistic way, the design of the study was based on a special methodology which dovetailed qualitative and quantitative research.

1) Qualitative ethno-methodological side of the research:

In 20 creative workshops (10 groups featuring male, 10 groups featuring female respondents; each group discussion lasting approximately 3 hours), typical representatives of one milieu at a time coming from different regions were interviewed.[3] In addition, Sinus Sociovision conducted 40 narrative one-to-one interviews with typical representatives of all milieus (men and women in equal shares, each interview lasting approx. 2 hours). These individual interviews had the same main focus as the creative workshops, but an additional biographical part was included to cover the subjective reconstruction and assessment of the individual course of life. All qualitative data were analysed by means of socio-scientific hermeneutics.[4]

2) Quantitative-representative side of the research:

Three thousand individual interviews representative of the total population were conducted, which included sections on the topic of equality. The universe again was the German-speaking resident population aged 18+. The sample was drawn according to the ADM master sample in all regions of Germany.[5]

In the following, some core findings of that study will be presented. However, this summary is not exhaustive. Instead, on the basis of a few selected milieus, the segment- or milieu-specific perceptions as well as the need gaps perceived by the respondents will be pointed out, and the documentation will be rounded off by a look at possible action fields which could be relevant in the context of overcoming gender stereotypes.

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3 The documentation, videotapes and transcribed texts, as well as the materials developed in the different groups, were analysed by an interdisciplinary team consisting of sociologists, psychologists and semiologists at Sinus Sociovision.

4 Methodological background: grounded theory (Glaser/Strauss), triangulation (Denzin), reconstructing hermeneutics of ethno-methodology (Seoffner/Hitzler/Honer).

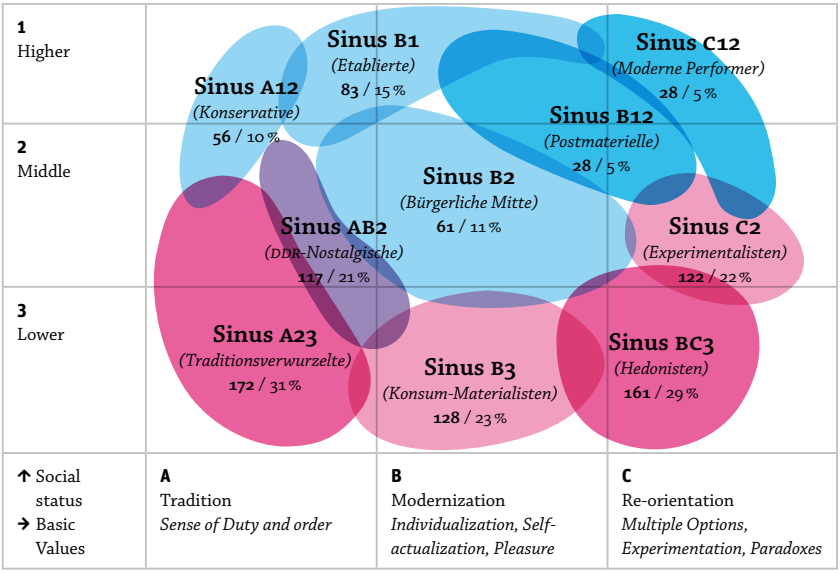
5 Subsequent to the interviews, the data collected via a standardised questionnaire were recorded in database systems (SAS and SPSS) and analysed and interpreted using different statistical methods (frequency tabulation; statistical measure of coherence; multivariate analyses via factor, correspondence and cluster analyses; linear and non-linear regression analyses, etc.).

2.2 Selected findings of the study

2.2.1 The semantic environment of "equality of treatment"

The representative survey (scope: n=3,000 respondents) revealed that 18 % of the respondents were clueless about the term "equality of treatment" and couldn't associate anything with it. As expected, the awareness of the term as well as the diversity of the semantic environment differentiated depending on level of education as well as socio-cultural aspects. The higher the level of modernisation, the lower the nescience, and the lowest nescience was found among *Postmaterielle* and *Moderne Performer*.

> *What do you associate with the term "equality of treatment"?*
> *—"I have no clue"*



Ø = 18 %

- distinctly over-represented
- over-represented
- average
- under-represented
- distinctly under-represented

Legend:

%	share in the Milieu
index	share in the Milieu in comparison to the population:
<100	share in the Milieu is below-average
100	share in the Milieu corresponds to the share in the population
>100	share in the Milieu si above average

Source: Sinus Sociovision 2007 / base = 3,000 cases; population aged 18+

Whereas *Konservative* and *Etablierte* first and foremost associate rather abstract juristic conceptions with the term,[6] touching on the gender perspective only briefly and considering it as one aspect among many (foreigners, handicapped people, minorities, etc.), *Postmaterielle* and *Moderne Performer* approach the issue in a totally different way. *Postmaterielle*, for instance, has very precise associations relating to particular spheres (educational system, labour market, profession, employment protection, family policy, family support, etc.) and place less emphasis on legal equality in principle than on the precise possibilities of access and equal opportunities for women.

2.2.2 Perception of equality of treatment as a socially/personally relevant topic

The political relevance of the topic "equality of treatment" was confirmed in the course of the survey: 34 % of the respondents believe the topic to be "very important" for society, while 77 % regard it as "important". However, it is essential to distinguish between political relevance and personal interest in the topic. Here, 64 % of the population voice interest, 22 % even strong interest. This personal interest differs according to milieu affiliation – both as regards intensity and as regards aspects going along with it.

Analogous to the understanding of the term/the semantics of "equality of treatment", *Postmaterielle* takes the greatest stock in the topic. This is important, because *Postmaterielle* makes up one of society's leading milieus. The second-highest affinity is displayed by the *Moderne Performer*, a historically and socio-culturally young milieu featuring a comparatively low average age. This milieu will increase in volume within the next few years and will exercise considerable influence on the future development of society. Above-average interest is also found in the *Bürgerliche Mitte* – the biggest milieu in the socio-cultural and socio-demographic centre of German society. No or low personal interest in the topic "equality of treatment" is voiced by the milieus in the traditional segment (high average age), as well as by the modern milieus at the lower fringes of society – the current gender equality policy, its measures and its communication hardly get through to them.

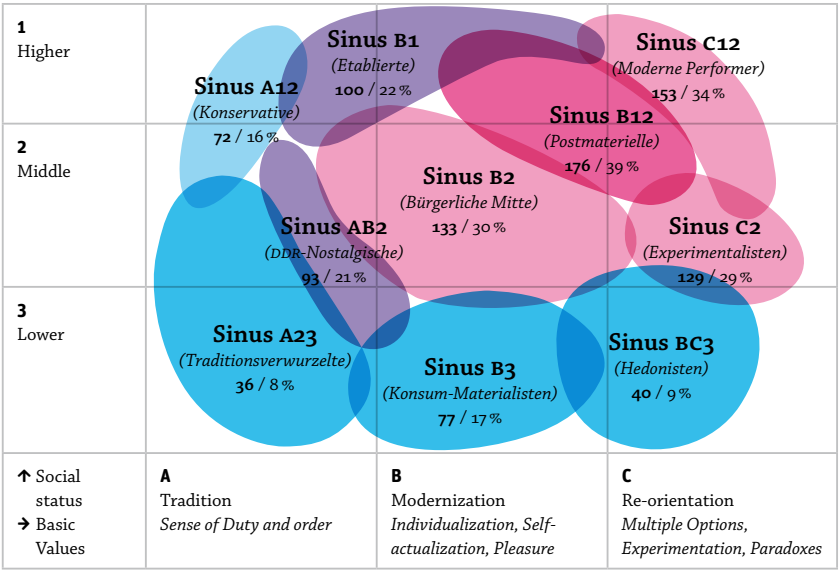
In the course of the qualitative ethno-methodological survey, it also became obvious that women approach the topic "equality of treatment" with strong emotionality – their perspective is focused primarily on the perception of concrete situations (job, everyday life of the family, etc.) and has its sights on obstacles. Men, however, express interest and commitment, but are anxious to document their worldly-wise point of view of the topic.

6 In the sense of Article 3 of the Basic Constitutional Law: equal rights for men and women/the law is no respecter of persons/no discrimination against people regardless of nationality or gender (e.g. when it comes to salary).

2.2.3 Social desirability of equality of treatment – and cultural plurality all the same

In all educational, professional and age categories, as well as in all social milieus, equality between men and women represents an (in principle) accepted social norm. In historical retrospect, all segments assess the consequences of the emancipation movement positively (yet not the stylistics and the aims of the feminist movement of the '60s and '70s). It can be regarded as an achievement of the women's movement – and of politics – that equality of treatment has reached the status of something that is socially desirable. There isn't a single quantitatively relevant or qualitatively influential group of people wanting to fall behind the milestones

Interest in the Topic "Equal Treatment of Men and Women" —"I'm very interested" (Milieu Foci)



Ø = 22 %

- distinctly over-represented
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- distinctly under-represented

Legend:

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Source: Sinus Sociovision 2007 / base = 3,000 cases; population aged 18+

reached. Nobody (excepting a few marginalised individuals) is wishing to go back to traditional-hierarchic role models which are set in stone.

Yet in spite of all social desirability and verbal openness, the deep structures of attitudes and behavioural patterns partly reveal considerable resistance which is voiced off-the-record to like-minded people only. The question to which lengths equality of treatment should (still) go discloses distinct cracks in society. The more precisely the issue "equality of treatment" is broached, the more evident the divergence of opinions, everyday practice and visions becomes. Primarily, the alleged agreement on equality of treatment proves superficial. De facto, there seem to be several deep rifts running through German society, manifesting a pluralism which challenges gender equality policy to do the cultural splits.

2.2.4 The spectrum of equality of treatment in everyday life

2.2.4.1 Traditional milieus (basic orientation A): Konservative and Traditionsverwurzelte[7]

In the traditional segment (*Konservative*, *Traditionsverwurzelte*), people are holding on to the classic role allocation of male (= breadwinner, main earner, head of the family) and woman (= mother, household, "minister of the interior", possibly earning an additional income working part-time – provided that she doesn't neglect her primary duties that way).

The normative worldview of this segment features the close link-up of moral judgements and functional reasoning, as well as a romantic-naturalistic justification; a paradigmatic perspective of an organic (intact, harmonious) society prevails in which each man or woman has his/her traditional, "natural" place. Therefore, role patterns are an integral part of one's social identity as well as of one's predetermined gender identity.

People in this segment are very sensitive to the equality of treatment policy and interpret any active-modern policy as an assault upon the moral-functional groundwork of a rightful and good society. To them, the drivers of this "moral decline" are those people who selfishly put their self-actualisation above everything else and who aren't ready to subordinate their personal needs to the family (representing the nucleus of society).

In consequence, they plead with vehemence and fight passionately against any further expansion of day care places. This is motivated primarily by the concern that new structures won't simply grant the individual options (freedom of choice), but that they will predetermine a certain behaviour: in the case of a day care place for every child, mothers might be pushed or (im)morally tempted to go back to work early (too early for the child). Education could be delegated to

7 The milieu of DDR-*Nostalgische*, which is a traditional milieu as well, can't be taken into consideration in the framework of this report.

public institutions that way, which from the point of view of this segment should be avoided: child-rearing by the mother is always the best option.

Men in this segment adopt an even more critical, morally and politically disapproving attitude towards any gender equality policy than the women do.

2.2.4.2 Modern milieus (basic orientation B): Postmaterielle, Bürgerliche Mitte[8]

Equal rights and gender equality represent a positive development for people in this segment, which they approve of, consider indispensable for the future and perceive as an enrichment in life – both private and professional. However, the time of a provoking, moralising and militant feminist movement is over. There isn't a homogenous, solidary group of "women" opposing "men" (any longer). Fairness and pragmatism dominate orientations in partnership.

"Equality of treatment" therefore constitutes a social norm and vision in partnership, but – due to external circumstances – isn't really practiced in everyday life (yet). People in this segment don't fight each other, but rather the structures: low flexibility of companies, and high expectations on personal flexibility and mobility: working hours and places, part-time job, re-entry into professional life, child care, etc. Thus, the creation of adequate general conditions and infrastructures is regarded as a core issue, and sympathy for the current equality of treatment policy of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth is high. Particularly the women in this segment (some of them together with their partners) are under the impression that up till now they have had to work hard and individually for equality of treatment, and that they are achieving fragmentary success only.

In light of the pressure of the economic system, which coerces the individual into higher performance, flexibility and mobility, the people of this segment experience family as a dependent variable which is increasingly difficult to organise. For the younger couples working in ambitious jobs – and for women in particular – the reconcilability of family and professional life is scarcely given. Any illness of the child or any other unpredictable situation produces (economic and moral) pressure at work and leads to impairment of their competencies, responsibilities and chances in the company. They are looked upon as less flexible, less "deployable", less determined and (mentally) distracted. So, the tendency to perceive it as more appealing to get ahead than to put up with the consequences of starting a family (career slump, being out of a job for any length of time) is in high gear in this target group.

At the same time, fathers are given a hard time to develop and practice the new father image. On the one hand, they are quite aware of the fact that is scarcely up

8 Other modern milieus (*Etablierte*) as well as milieus of the lower classes which are assigned to basic orientation B (*Konsum-Materialisten* and *Hedonisten* – the latter touching both basic orientation B [modernity] and basic orientation C [re-orientation]) can't be taken into consideration in this report.

to date or "correct" to leave all the work in the family to the woman, and that in terms of gender equality they should participate in it as well (wish). On the other hand, the image of the active, equally participating father proves to be hardly compatible with the demands in everyday work life (reality) and the subcutaneously existing normative conception that fathers are indispensable in core time – and that the children will be taken care of by the mother (anyhow).

The aforementioned aspects suggest that from the point of view of the modern milieus, equality of treatment policies have a holistic mission with a strong focus on job and family policy. In addition to moral acceptance of the understood gainful employment of women, it also should provide for implementable compatibility of family and occupation. So, one of the challenges implied is to break open the institutionalised rituals and (in fact) rational-functional arguments of companies – e.g. regarding the re-entry of women after extended parental leave. From the point of view of the respondents, this will be required as long as job and family are considered alternatives.

In addition, there are dragged-in routines in the area of education, which assume and stabilise the traditional male breadwinner model without questioning: in case a school organises a "healthy breakfast"[9] or an excursion or festivity, it goes without saying that the parents are expected to actively participate and contribute to it. This again causes legitimation problems at work, because these events usually take place at times when most parents are working.[10]

From the point of view of the people in the modern milieus, the traditional role allocation is reproducing itself in such everyday occurrences.

So, how do they deal with this reproduction of traditional role allocations and the area of conflict as regards family and occupation? People from the milieus of *Postmaterielle* and *Bürgerlichen Mitte* react in very different ways:

Postmaterielle quarrel with the rigid infrastructures and complain that in comparison to other countries (e.g. in Scandinavia) Germany is a "developing nation" in terms of equality of treatment. Particularly the women are striving to break open rigid relationship patterns and are trying to prevent a relapse into traditional role models. In fact, they have made a point of their social-political protest and their striving for genuine gender equality.

The expectations of Postmaterielle include a labour market policy signal to the effect that the active role of a father can be realised not only on paper, but in reality, i.e. that it is really possible for both partners to participate in child care.

9 The parents' association organises groceries for a "healthy breakfast" at school. The task of the parents is to prepare this breakfast, i.e. to fix sandwiches, clean, peel and slice fruits and vegetables, etc. The food is sold for small amounts of money during recess; if it leaves a profit margin, the money will be spent for the children.

10 This means that employed people have to take a day off for it. As a general rule, it is the mother who does it, because here the normative image of a good mother takes effect – she wants to be there for her child, and in secret she feels guilty for working anyhow ("uncaring mother"). No matter how she decides, she will feel that she has made the "wrong" decision.

The willingness to work part-time or to take extended parental leave is particularly high among men of this milieu.[11] Up till now, however, they have experienced a massive structural inconsiderateness by the economic system vis-à-vis family issues and needs, which far too often leads to "either-or" decisions on the part of the women. Therefore, structural changes and improvements to the legal framework (family-friendly staffing and time policy[12]) appear indispensable.

The *Bürgerliche Mitte* perceives attentively, yet passive-receptively, that equal rights and gender equality are a progressive trend in society and they react to this – assumedly unstoppable and socially desired – development with moderate adaptation. They feel an increasing pressure to acquire a taste for it and to find a moderate middle course which will be accepted by and practiced in their circle of friends as well (mainstream).

This milieu feels impelled to live up to all expectations. Especially the mothers find themselves in a permanent inner conflict, which has been amplified and aggravated because of the education policy (PISA and G8). With great effort they try to "keep up" and to encourage and promote their child by manifold offers appropriate for (small) children. In order to provide the child with optimal chances and a "competitive edge" right from the start via comprehensive supervision of schooling issues,[13] they abandon the option of personal gainful employment – thus consolidating the traditional role allocation. On the other hand, the child's activities require financing, which means the need for a second income – the one of the mother.

Doing the splits between the perceived demand to be there for the child only (to be a "good mother") and the necessity to contribute to the family income ("to keep up"), as well as the feeling that being a "housewife and mother only" who quite obviously can't reconcile family and occupation increasingly causes social discreditation, which means tremendous strain for the men and women of this milieu.

The milieu knows that the classic male breadwinner model has no stake in the future. And still, men in this milieu latently fear that the stronger participation of women in professional life will lead to the gradual decline of a liveable and likeable family model. They lack imagination for how a model of gender equality could look and how it could be implemented. The expansion of home offices, however, constitutes a conceivable and desired option in this milieu.

11 Twenty-nine percent of the men in the milieu are willing to reduce their regular working hours, i.e. to work less than 35 hours per week. Base: men working full-time, n = 804 cases. For the purpose of comparison, only 16 % of the male *Moderne Performer* are willing to reduce their working time.

12 Flexibility of the employee as well as the employer as to working hours and places (e.g. more part-time jobs and home offices).

13 E.g. intensive tutoring, private study groups, diverse commitments at school.

2.2.4.3 Postmodern milieus (basic orientation C): Moderne Performer[14]

In the postmodern segment, equality of treatment primarily means privatisation of equal treatment. Faith in the significance and effectiveness of political measures is far lower than in the modern segment.

For the milieus featuring postmodern basic orientations, the institutions, organisations and media which emanated from the feminist movement bear no current societal reference, are irrelevant for individual professional and private everyday life, and are insignificant for their gender identity. People in this segment esteem the achievements and the historical necessity – but they neither perceive a perspective nor a function for the present and the future. Raised and socialised during and after the women's movement of the '70s and '80s, they profit from hard-won rights and general conditions they don't have to fight for any longer and experience these as a matter of course.

The *Moderne Performer* displays a flexible, non-brooding and pragmatic view of life. It is typical of them to individually adapt to situations and phases of life time and again.

"Playing" with traditional and modern roles, which are tried out for usefulness and experience value, represents a core feature of this milieu. Unlike people in the modern segment, a *Moderne Performer* doesn't always ask him- or herself whether the distribution of tasks practiced follows a traditional role pattern which should be overcome. They take it for granted that they are above traditional role allocations.

"Typically male" and "typically female" don't constitute rigid categories in terms of sorting and world-view, but variable options. Multi-optionality, moving off the beaten path and choosing between different options, are core issues. In partnerships, doing the chores is individualised. It is dependent on who has which preferences and who feels like or has the time to do certain things. If the man enjoys cooking more than the woman does, he will be in charge of fixing meals – and vice versa.

However, the topic of children constitutes a breach. Due to the rapid and innovative change in their highly qualified professions (e.g. ICT, medicine, law, marketing, etc.) and to the leading positions they hold, it seems hardly possible e.g. to go on parental leave for 2 months. Both the pressures of the market and the in-house competition argue against it. Even a temporary reduction of one's working hours (e.g. 80 %) doesn't seem feasible from the point of view of this milieu – the demands on flexibility and mobility in a globalised economy impede it. From the company's point of view (which is adapted by the *Moderne Performer* without question), family almost means a "handicap". The pronounced "understanding" of the economic perspective of the company by this milieu results in the unwillingness of many men to jeopardise their career opportunities and their ambitions (e.g. by working part time or going on parental leave).

14 The milieu of *Experimentalisten* can't be taken into consideration in the framework of this report.

So, the partnership undergoes a re-traditionalisation when a child is born, because in spite of the pronounced career orientation of women as well , and in opposition to former beliefs, the woman will be the one staying at home and taking care of the child. However, women in this segment experience such a development as a temporary phase of life which isn't immutable. They still perceive themselves as equal partners, and even though they attend to their role of being a mother and housewife, they see themselves as competent businesswomen who simply don't live this role at present.

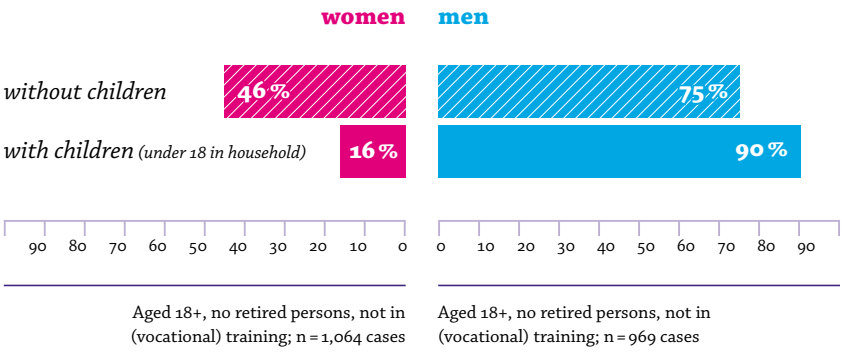
2.2.5 Future prospects

2.2.5.1 Important measures in the context of overcoming gender stereotypes – focus: men

The German population perceives the issues of "equal rights" and "gender equality", as well as the question of how far this is a political or individualised task, in different ways. There is a broad spectrum of attitudes towards equality of treatment in professional and private (everyday) life, just as there are distinct differences in the perception and assessment of it. The value orientations and lifestyles of people play a significant role in it – i.e. aspects which together with social status constitute the foundation of the milieu approach.

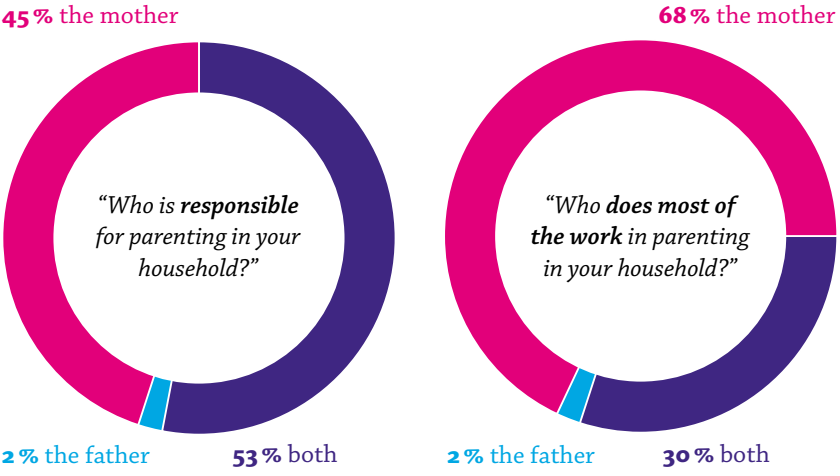
With a view to the perception of men, it can be stated that a) men approach the topic far less emotionally than women and display a rather worldly-wise perspective; yet at the same time b) most of them – particularly in the value sections modernisation (Postmaterielle and *Bürgerliche Mitte*) and re-orientation (*Moderne Performer*) – clearly know that hierarchical gender relations and the traditional role allocation "aren't good" and don't represent a future-proof model.

Working full-time (more than 34 hours per week)



Aged 18+, no retired persons, not in (vocational) training; n = 1,064 cases

Aged 18+, no retired persons, not in (vocational) training; n = 969 cases



Source: Sinus Sociovision 2007 / base = 502 cases; parents with children aged 0 to 17 living in their household

Men in these segments exhibit a basic willingness to change role models and role allocations, but they find themselves on the defensive particularly in reference to professional life. Just like women, they wish for an improved reconcilability of job and family (e.g. via the perception of economically active men as fathers, too; via a transition to flexible working hours and places [keyword: illness of the child] etc.).

At the same time, they fear that in case they really go on parental leave or reduce their working hours they will experience – as did their partners when they tried to return to their jobs – career drawbacks (jobs go to someone else, vacancies are filled by other people, chances of climbing the ladder are constrained, etc.) as well as lack of acceptance on the part of colleagues.[15]

The decision to keep on working full time – in spite of a (verbally expressed) openness towards part-time models – often doesn't imply a real decision process in the sense of careful consideration, but is quasi given (cf. diagram below). Therefore, the "new man" proves to be a phantom so far.

The financial aspect plays an extremely important role when it comes to deciding who will take care of the child postpartum. The fact that in many cases women earn less than men[16] contributes to the decision that the woman will parent the

15 Even though there is a gradual increase in social acceptance in general, this doesn't hold true for all professional fields.

16 The European Commission states in their report on the gender pay gap in July 2007 that the salary differentials amount to an average of 15 % in the EU and to 22 % in Germany.

child – even if many men feel equally "responsible" for it (cf. diagram below[17]). Even in case of identical occupations of equal value, there is a distinct gap in earnings (gender pay gap[18]) – despite the legal establishment of the principle of equal pay in the 1990s.

In the context of the challenge of contributing to a gradual overcoming of traditional role allocations by improving the compatibility of family and job – with child credit and other stimuli aiding the change of role patterns – there are further action fields turning up (e.g. in the range of day care or the education policy).

A quantitative and qualitative expansion of day care places, longer and at the same time flexible hours, as well as the introduction of all-day schools provide reliable circumstances and add to the relief of working parents (both practically and mentally), thus improving the compatibility of both areas of life.

Yet when considering all possible measures, one needs to keep in mind that attitudes are subject to slow change only. A paradigm shift seems necessary; it has to become "normal" that fathers, just like mothers, take care of child education. And it is important to grant freedom of choice – the possibility to decide either way.

2.2.5.2 International EU survey on equality of treatment

An international EU survey on equality of treatment, which shall be conducted by Sinus Sociovision in 2008, is supposed to analyse the topic "equality of treatment in everyday life" with emphasis on country specificities and European comparison.

To this end, the Sinus-Milieus® model of society provides a unique tool, since Sinus Sociovision has developed country-specific national milieu models for almost all Western, Central and Eastern European countries already. This provides both the opportunity of capturing country-specific particularities and of achieving a cross-national comparison.

So, the national milieu models offer a common frame of reference for comparisons among the Western member states and among the Eastern member states, as well as for a member states comparison in total.

By analysing the change in role models, gender-specific attitudes and factual behaviour patterns as to equality, as well as by comparing equality issues in cross-national perspective, political and communicative levers for equality of treatment strategies can be developed – both at the national and the trans-national level.

17 Source: Sinus Sociovision 2007, base n=502 cases; parents with children aged 0 to 17 living in their household.

18 As to the topic "equal pay", it is worth noting that in all 20 creative workshops conducted with men and women from all milieus, as well as in all 40 narrative interviews, the respondents themselves broached the issue of lower pay of women. A survey on "discrimination" conducted in fall 2007 featuring 20 focus groups recruited across all milieus produced the same findings: in Germany, wage inequality is synonymous for the lack of professional equality of women.

REPRODUCTION OF GENDER IN MEDIA CONTENT

Barbi Pilvre, MSc,
Tallinn University,
Estonia

ABSTRACT: *The gender system of a society, which defines the position of men and women and gender roles in the society, is quite a stable construction, being produced and reproduced continuously in our everyday practices. Socialisation goes on as a nearly imperceptible but steady process defining us as men and women in certain ways. The market, education, labour market, media, health care and judiciary, among other institutions, socialise us into "proper" persons, men and women, by setting norms and practices, rights and restrictions, images, stereotypes. How can we accomplish change here?*

Different interests meet and collide in these institutions, and questions of power arise. In the process of socialising adults to gender roles, patriarchal interests associate with market forces today. The media, including the advertising industry, is one of the key institutions here.

Developing critical media education starting in school and promoting media criticism which uncovers the mechanisms of producing gender images is one key measure to change the situation, helping to open up the eyes of consumers and citizens to distinguish between the reality covered by the media and media illusions. Legislation can support the process, restricting the use of certain images. The process is not easy, as some parties' (mainly commercial) interests may be affected.

Sex/gender system and socialisation as a process

When we talk about the elimination of gender stereotypes, we must keep in mind that these stereotypes are not random but defined by the sex/gender system of the society. The sex/gender system (described by Gayle Rubin in 1975) defines the position of men and women and gender roles in a society. It is quite a stable con-

struction, being produced and reproduced continuously in our everyday practices.

Men and women obtain their gender roles in the process of socialisation, which begins when the baby is born (or even earlier when the sex of the child is known, as parents prepare the room, buy clothes, toys, etc. according to the child's sex/gender). Beginning in the family and continuing at school, socialisation carries on throughout our lives. We are socialised through our everyday collective and individual practices, norms, order, rights and restrictions, choices, images. Seemingly free human beings, we really act in certain defined ways, which are gendered.

The market, education, labour market, media, health care and judiciary, among other institutions, socialise us into "proper" persons, men and women, by setting these norms. It is a nearly imperceptible but very steady process, defining us as men and women in certain ways.

Possibilities for change

How can we accomplish change here? We must change the whole system if our aim is to eliminate gender stereotypes.

A look back into history shows that the system *has* changed. There have been major changes in women's position in the 20th century, especially in obtaining civic rights: the right to vote, access to education, qualitative change in the position in the labour market.

In order to make change today, we should look at who has initiated these huge steps in the history of women. If we are starry-eyed, we might think that they have come true due to the women's movement, that women themselves wanted the change. Inspecting the world more sceptically, we notice that there have usually been enlightened male thinkers involved, seeing that women's situation was unfair. We are quite close to the truth if we accept that changing historical conditions, development of the economy, technology and social relations have been the basis of the change in women's position. Sad as it may seem, wars have had a major influence on women's position, permitting them to work and earn money in different jobs while men were away at war.

Today we are in a good position concerning social conditions and especially technology: IT has made it easier than ever for women to take different jobs, as computers do not put any special demands on the employee's sex.

We may have favourable conditions in society, but change in some fields is very slow. Gender stereotypes in the media are very reluctant to change, despite the changing position of women in the labour market and family.

Stereotypes and power

When we inspect the institutions which define our gender in the ongoing process of socialisation, we see that different interests meet and collide there.

We see a struggle for power, as nobody gives power away willingly. The production and circulation of media images can be understood better when they are seen in relation to the disposition of power in society. Stereotypes are not just sets of erroneous beliefs that can be changed by presenting and disseminating the "correct information" – stereotyping develops around the issue of power. Groups hold stereotypes of other groups with whom there is an actual or possible struggle about dominance and subordination. Stereotypes can encourage the belief that some groups deserve lower status, that their roles are natural and unchanging. The study of stereotypes thus involves the study of power relations that encourage the flourishing of the stereotypes and the disposition of power that maintains stereotypes through the production and circulation of images, narratives and information.

One essential aspect of stereotyping is that stereotypes seem to be natural, especially to those who do the stereotyping. Often stereotyping is accepted, even welcomed, by stereotyped groups as a form of self-definition. Powerful stereotyping makes the possibility of alternative self-definitions difficult to imagine; most stereotypes preserve the status quo.

The production of gender in the media goes on by constant repetition of certain textual and visual images and stereotypes. A single advertisement or a character in a TV programme cannot easily be discussed as a stereotype. Individual images are always part of a process of repetition, not exact repetition but *repetition plus difference*.

Due to biased portrayal from the patriarchal point of view, women's role repertoire in media content is much narrower than in real life. Themes belonging to the private sphere (home, relations, looks, children, care, empathy) are predominant in the representation of women in the media, despite the position of women in society and despite even the genre and type of media issue. Not only women's magazines produce stereotypes.

Symbolic annihilation of women in the media

Women are typically represented by group identity – gender, organisation membership – rather than by individual characteristics. Strange as it may seem, women themselves are actively participating in the reproduction of the existing gender order, as interviewees, authors and subjects of different media texts. Even outstanding politicians or top specialists often do not question the way they are interviewed or portrayed in the media, and thus they are unconsciously following gender patterns based on stereotypes, often showing them in a trivialising or negative context. It can be argued that women are gender blind: they do not see the hidden messages and patterns set in the ways of approach that journalists choose when writing about them. The reason for this gender blindness can be either a conscious choice to follow the accepted patterns and gender roles in the society, with all the constraints they bring along, including their influence on

women's political careers and public image, or it can also be the result of media illiteracy concerning the gender point of view.

Gaye Tuchman's (1978) classic statement goes: women are subject to "symbolic annihilation" through their condemnation, trivialisation and absence in the mass media.

Superwoman: a new stereotype?

Even portraying real women, the media is using different cultural stereotypes to "make it clear" for the reader. Women's magazines and advertisements very often repeat images from popular culture instead of reproducing real life: blonde, matriarch, madonna, whore, feminist demon, witch and wise woman are all known from different narratives of culture and reproduced in contemporary media. Media in this sense is intertextual, not only "covering" real life. We can demand more realistic images, but here we must pin our hopes on alternative media, as the commercial mainstream is very reluctant to change.

However, advertisements and popular magazines and TV have created and introduced some new non-traditional or even innovative images and icons in the last decade: Lara Croft and the warrior princess Xena, women police in different TV series (the German TV figure Bella Bock, Sweden's Anna Holt, the British series "Prime Suspect" starring Helen Mirren, etc.). The pop star Madonna is said to have opened a new era in depicting women's sexuality in the nineties.

The assertive, ambitious woman is no longer an oddity in the media, but has even herself become a new cultural stereotype – the superwoman. This follows the logic of the commercialisation process of the media. The media industry has realised that the independent woman with her own income has just as much potential for being a profitable consumer as the traditional homemaker.

Some of the media images stress the continuity of certain stereotypes, while others appear to be in shift. It is crucial to examine the extent and nature of such shifts. However, female sexuality is still big business in the media, either in more traditional forms or newly defined, in a more independent way, including hedonism and attention to one's well-being and success, but also in relation to the body and its care and nurture.

Patriarchy associates with market forces

We can blame patriarchal attitudes, which are mainly held by men, but it is better to keep in mind that there are also many women who gain from the stable and seemingly safe good old way of life.

In the process of socialisation of adults to gender roles, patriarchal interests today associate with market forces. It would be naïve to ignore market forces in our goal to eliminate gender stereotypes from the different fields of our society.

The media, including the advertising industry, is one of the key institutions here. The media produces and reproduces certain gender images and stereotypes because they sell. They are easy and understandable to everyone, to the mass market.

The media industry is a huge business today, and as part of the entertainment industry, it will not renounce its goldmine very easily.

We have to change the choices of the market to eliminate gender stereotypes in the media. How is this possible?

Education first, then legislation

A key tool in changing the choices of the market is developing critical media education starting in school. Promoting media criticism which uncovers the mechanisms of producing gender images is one measure to change the situation. We need media studies on the academic level, but that is not sufficient. Women's and consumer organisations, intellectuals and cultural critics have much work here to do. Accessible media criticism helps to open up the eyes of consumers and citizens to distinguish between the reality covered by the media and media illusions. Consumers must realise that the entertainment media today is very much about our fantasies and illusions; it is not reality.

Understanding the media as a market-driven industry makes one hesitant about how much the law of gender equality can change there. Legislation can support the process, prohibiting or restricting the use of certain images. Pornography is in this sense a very clear and easy case compared to the hidden sexism of women's magazines and advertisements. Sexism is much more difficult to uncover in the ordinary everyday use of language and visual images which we find in popular magazines, TV entertainment and even in mainstream media and news. It sometimes needs sophisticated discursive analysis to uncover the hidden meanings of the text or image.

It is very complicated to regulate the media by laws, as immediately the sensitive question of media censorship may be put up by the opposing side.

The process of eliminating media stereotypes in our society is not easy, as some parties' (mainly commercial) interests are affected.

Literature

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Part 7

CLOSING OF THE THEME

CLOSING SPEECH

Marjeta Cotman
Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

Dear Commissioner Špidla,
Dear Chairwoman Záborská, Director Pyke,
Dear guests, representatives of governments, academic and non-governmental organizations, media,
Dear ladies and gentlemen,

I'm very happy to have the opportunity to express few final thoughts at the end of today's conference. But first allow me to thank all participants for their in-depth contributions and willingness to share with us their valuable experience and views during the discussions.

Today we heard many interesting ideas and proposals. In the first panel survey we talked about the effect gender stereotypes have on girls and boys in their early childhood. We discussed the role of various socialization institutions and practices in reproduction of traditional gender roles and stereotypes, and showed a few successful examples for overcoming them, mostly through concrete policies, programmes and projects, intended to encourage gender equality. We also saw how important it is to combat the stereotypical beliefs and practices already in the earliest stage of life, since they can affect later choices, decisions and possibilities of men and women.

The second discussion highlighted the issue of traditional gender roles during the school period. Education and training, extracurricular activities like sport, and also culture and media keep transferring the gender stereotypes and influencing various gender-dependent expectations, beliefs, treatments and decisions of girls and boys or women and men. We became familiar with how policies and practices for elimination of stereotypes and encouragement of gender equality in education and training, culture and media can significantly contribute to decreasing the affect of gender stereotypes in further education, choices of occupation, and possibilities of women and men in private and public life. Performance assessments of gender equality programmes show that in the future we have to address the issue of sensitization of those, who are dealing with young people or significantly influence them, even more.

At the roundtable the ministers responsible for gender equality shared with

you our personal experience in dealing with gender stereotypes from early childhood, through the school period and to the professional career, and our attempts to harmonise family and professional life. Of course, especially interesting was how we personally dealt with the stereotypes in different stages of life and what we can learn from it.

The last panel survey was dedicated to gender stereotypes in adulthood. We looked for the answers to the question how traditional gender roles that we accepted in the childhood mark our public and private life. Special attention was paid to activities for elimination of gender stereotypes in the labour market and media, and also in other areas of life.

I'm glad that together we were successful in highlighting many aspects, which represent seemingly insurmountable obstacles on the path to true equality of women and men. I'm convinced that our work will bear fruit and contribute to the progress in gender equality and thereby faster development of a contemporary European society. After today I dare say that the elimination of gender stereotypes is Mission possible!

Thank you again for taking the time and contributing to the successful course of the conference.

Part 8

GENERAL INFO

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 30 January 2008
Brdo Congress Centre

OPENING SESSION

09.00 → 09.30 **Opening of the Conference**

- Marjeta Cotman, Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

Addresses

- Belinda Pyke, Director for Equality between Men/Women, Action against discrimination, Civil Society, European Commission
- Anna Záborská, Chairwoman, Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament

FIRST PLENARY SESSION

09.30 → 10.45 **Early Childhood and Pre-School Period: Toddling in the Gender Stereotyped World**

Gender stereotypes affect girls and boys already in their early childhood before they enter school. How do different socialisation institutions and practices contribute to the reproduction of traditional gender roles and stereotypes? How could we overcome the consequences of gendered attitudes and practices for later relations, decisions and possibilities of women and men?

Speakers

- Sofie Carsten Nielsen, Department for Gender Equality, Denmark
- Kirsti Kolthoff, European Women's Lobby
- Guðný Björk Eydal, University of Iceland, Iceland
- Jens Krabel, Gender Loops project, Germany

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

11.15 → 12.30 **School Period and Adolescence: Recognising and Rebelling Gender Roles And Stereotypes**

How do traditional gender roles influence schoolchildren and students? Discussion will evolve around policies and practices for eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality in education, training, culture and the media, thus reducing the influence of gender stereotypes on further education and career choices and opportunities for women and men.

Speakers

- Ifigenia Katsaridou, Research Center on Gender Equality Issues KETHI, Ministry of the Interior, General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Greece
- Sinikka Aapola-Kari, University of Helsinki, Faculty of Social Sciences, Finland
- Mojca Doupona Topič, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Sports, Slovenia
- Jovana Bazerkovska, European Youth Forum

THIRD PLENARY SESSION

14.00 → 15.15 **Roundtable of Ministers: Gender Stereotypes and How to Survive Them?**

In what ways have gender stereotypes affected the lives of our ministers responsible for gender equality? How could traditional gender roles and gender stereotypes, which remain a persistent obstacle to the achievement of gender equality, be overcome?

FOURTH PLENARY SESSION

15.45 → 17.00 **Adulthood: Living with and Managing Gender Stereotypes**

Traditional gender roles, which we have been taught to play in our childhood and youth, are reproduced later in our lives. How do we (have to) live and deal with them in our public and private life?

Speakers

- Monika Ksieniewicz, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Department for Women, Family and Counteracting Discrimination, Poland
- Helen Hoffmann, European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises UEAPME
- Tanja Merkle, Sinus Sociovision GmbH, Germany
- Barbi Pilvre, University of Tartu, journalist, Estonia

CLOSING SESSION

17.00 → 17.30 **Addresses**

- Belinda Pyke, Director for Equality between Men/Women, Action against discrimination, Civil Society, European Commission
- Elsa Pais, President of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality, Portugal
- Valérie Letard, State Secretary, France

Closing of the Conference

Marjeta Cotman, Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

SPEAKERS

Marjeta Cotman is the Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia. She graduated from Law in 1984. After working as financial clerk and inspector at a Municipality, she became a legal and administrative adviser of the Surveying and Mapping Authority. Later she worked as adviser to the Minister at the Ministry of Justice and Administration and was responsible for the field of conscientious objection to military service. She also held the position of Head of the Petition Department and a secretary of the Commission for Petitions at the National Assembly.

From 2003, until her appointment to the position of State Secretary at the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs in 2004, she worked as a misdemeanours judge. On 18 December 2006, she was appointed Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.

Belinda Pyke is the Director for Equality between Men/Women, Action against discrimination, Civil Society at the European Commission since January 2007. She is responsible for the EU's policy on gender equality, diversity and non-discrimination, integration of people with disabilities and civil society. She graduated from International Relations and holds postgraduate degrees in Sociology and MBA. Before she started her career in different cabinets and posts in the European Commission, she worked in the British Council.

Anna Záborská has been elected as a Member of the European Parliament in 2004 and is a Chairwoman of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. She graduated from Medical Faculty, holds a postgraduate certificate in otorhinolaryngology (ORL) and is specialised in paediatric ORL. During her political career she was a Member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic from 1998–2004 where, among other positions, she was the Chairwoman of the Committee on Health Care and a Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Sofie Carsten Nielsen holds master degrees in European Politics and Administration and in Political Science. She attended courses on communication and journalism. She began her career as project coordinator with the European Women's Lobby. She was a political consultant to Lone Dybkjaer, Member of the European Parliament who was member of the Women's Committee. Later she became Head of Unit of the Department of Gender Equality at Denmark's Ministry of Social Welfare. Currently, she is the Assistant Deputy Head of the Department of Gender Equality at the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Kirsti Kolthoff began to work for equality between men and women in 1967 when she had been elected to a position in the Trade Union for Bank Employees. She used to work in the Foreign Affairs Department of one of the biggest business banks in Sweden and later in Sweden's Financial Sector Union. She participated in international work at European level in Eurocadres and at global levels in UNI. Early retirement in 2003 allowed her to devote more of her time to commitments in relation to equality issues.

Since 1983 she has been an active member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – WILPF, which has a consultative status in the UN and members in some 40 countries throughout the world. She played an active role in building a Swedish Women Coordination and promoting the inclusion of Swedish women in the European labour market after Sweden joined the EU. Currently, she is a board member of the Swedish Women's Lobby and President of the EWL – European Women's Lobby. She is also involved in the organisation Operation 1325 working with the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325:2000 nationally and internationally. She continues to work for organisations as a volunteer and as part time consultant in Communication, Conflict resolution and Creativity from Women's perspective.

Guðný Björk Eydal, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Department of Social Work, the University of Iceland. Her main research topics include the welfare state and policies on families and children, in particular childcare policies. Among recent publications are articles on the development of childcare policies in the Nordic countries, on children and the Nordic welfare states and on Icelandic family policy. She currently participates in Nordic research network on childhood studies, Nordic network on Family Social Work, Nordic Centre of Excellence in Welfare Research: REASSESS and the research project

Reassessing the Icelandic Welfare State at the Research Center for Social Studies (RCSS). Guðný Björk Eydal is the director of the research project *Child Care and Labor Market Participation of Parents of Children under 3* at the Social Science Research Institute, University of Iceland.

Jens Krabel graduated from Political Science and is employed at Dissens e.V., a non-profit NGO which aims to foster gender democracy and to reduce gender hierarchies. Since 1994 he has been involved in theoretical and practical work in the fields of gender-sensitive educational work and gender mainstreaming. A major objective of his work is to combine theory and practice in order to develop new and productive education strategies to foster gender equality of boys and girls and men and women. His work combines project management, education, training, consulting and research. From the results of his work he published two books and several articles. He is currently coordinating the European Leonardo Da Vinci project "Gender Loops – Gender Mainstreaming strategies in vocational training institutions for educators and early childhood education institutions".

Iphigenie Katsaridou is the General Director of the Research Centre for Gender Issues (KETHI), which is organised at the General Secretariat for Gender Equality in the Greek Ministry of the Interior. During her employment in the General Secretariat for Equality of the Ministry of Interior and Public Decentralization, she was responsible for public relations with the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the United Nations. As a representative of the General Secretariat for Equality in the EU Network for Equality between Boys and Girls in Education she participated in the organization of conferences and seminars on gender sensitization issues. She participated in the Committee for Equality Issues and the Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe in relation to Positive Actions for Women and to Gender Mainstreaming in Education. She is a member of the national representation for the Status of Women, the Advisory Committee for Gender Equality of the European Commission and the Greek National representative group in CEDAW – UN in New York. In 2006 she became Vice president of the CDEG of the Council of Europe.

Sinikka Aapola-Kari, PhD, is a Docent and Coordinator at the Department of Sociology of the University of Helsinki. She is a sociologist and youth researcher with a long-term interest in girls, young women and gender questions. She has studied girls' friendship cultures, gendered discourses of adolescence as well as media representations of young people, to name a few examples. In 2005, she published an international book on girls and young women called "Young Femininity. Girls, Power and Social Change" together with a Canadian and Australian colleague (Aapola, Gonick & Harris, by Palgrave). She has lectured in sociology and women's studies at the University of Helsinki since the mid-1990's. She has also advised in projects related to youth work with girls. Already in 1994, she wrote a book called 'Avoidance and Resistance' on how women coped with sexism in their lives, together with a Finnish colleague. She has been active in various feminist women's groups and organizations in Finland since the mid-1980's.

Mojca Doupona Topič, PhD, works as an assistant professor for the field of the sociology of sport and a head of Department for Sociology and History of Sport at the Faculty of Sport of the University of Ljubljana. Her research work comprises the field of the sociology of sport, but she also dedicates herself above all to her research of the sociological aspects of female sport, i.e. to the gender differences in sport. She actively participated in 40 international congresses. She is author of 35 scientific articles and 12 chapters in scientific monographs, and also a co-author of four university textbooks. In 2004 she published a scientific book entitled Women and Sport. From 1998, she is a president of the working group for women and sport in the Olympic Committee of Slovenia. In the international space, she is – from 1998 as well – also co-ordinator for Slovenia for the European Women and Sport Group (EWS).

Jovana Bazerkovska is a Bureau Member of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) responsible for the portfolio Equality, Gender Equality and Human Rights, Global Education and Global Youth Work Development in Euro-Med and Middle East. Chair of the YFJ working group on Gender Equality, supporting the YFJ Bureau in the development of a YFJ Policy paper "Achieving equality between women and men"; YFJ Gender neutral language policy; Internal guidelines for achieving equality between women and men in YFJ; and a Gender equality handbook for Youth organisations . Other experiences include work on gender mainstreaming policies in education during the mandate of Secretary General of OBESSU (Organising Bureau of the European School Student Unions) in the period 2004–2007. At present doing MA in Equality and Diversity at the London Metropolitan University and the particular focus of study includes women's rights, next to issues of migration, asylum seeking and refugee rights.

Monika Ksieniewicz was an academic researcher at the Department of Philosophy at Maria Curie Skłodowska University since 1996 and wrote a doctoral interdisciplinary dissertation about gender and culture, and received her diploma in 2006. She taught ethic, history of philosophy and philosophy of culture. She received various national and international scholarships. Since 2006, she is working as a gender mainstreaming senior specialist, coordinator of international cooperation in the Department for Women, Family and Counteracting Discrimination at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. She is a member of various international

working groups and advisory committees on gender equality and national expert on gender mainstreaming.

Helen Hoffmann recently joined the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises UEAPME as an advisor for social affairs, as well as for education and training and in particular for gender issues. She is also a member of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities of the European Commission. She previously worked at the British Embassy in Berlin covering Social Affairs and Education. She studied in England and France and graduated from the University of Sussex with a BA Hons degree in History with European Studies and French.

Tanja Merkle is a senior researcher and consultant at the Sinus Sociovision in Heidelberg, Germany. She studied sociology, political science and educational science in Paris, Heidelberg (Germany) and Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium) and holds a Master's degree. After several years of working in a private consulting company and in the printing and graphic arts industry, she turned to market and social research in 2000. At the Sinus Sociovision, she supports the team "Social & Institutions" specializing in research and consultancy in the fields of politics, education, environment, media and health care. She has been involved in studies on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth comprising research in the field of equality of treatment, job re-entry, wage inequality, gender mainstreaming, and men. She is a member of the Professional Organization of German Market and Social Researchers.

Barbi Pilvre is an editorials editor, columnist and critic at the Estonian weekly Eesti Ekspress and a lecturer at Tartu University. Her research area is construction of gender in media texts, she has academic publications on gender and media organization and men´s and women´s images on TV. She, with her colleagues, has compiled an Estonian version of an internationally produced media research tool "Screening Gender". She is also the author of a collection of essays, named "Format", 2003, dealing with several issues of the changing Estonian society, social stratification, Estonian mentality, media. She has been one of the spokespersons of gender issues in Estonia from the early 1990s. She was nominated Journalist of the Year 2007 by Estonian Union of Journalists. Her major project in 2007 was a pilot issue of a men's journal "Jobu" ("Whipped"), dealing with the issues of changing norms of masculinity.

Marie-Josée Jacobs obtained a diploma in nursing and in nursing-anaesthesiology. She worked in this field until her nomination to the post of a minister. While practising her profession, she started a political and union career. Three times she had been elected Deputy in the Northern district constituency and became municipal councilor of Luxembourg City in 1987. In 1992, she became Minister of Agriculture, Viticulture and Rural Development, as well as Minister Delegate for Culture and participated actively in the organisation of Luxembourg, European Year of Culture. In 1995, she was appointed Minister for Family, Minister for the Advancement of Women, Minister for the Handicapped and Disabled. From 1999 until 2004 she was the Minister for Family, Social Solidarity and Youth and Minister for the Advancement of Women. She has been Minister for Family and Integration, Minister for Equal Opportunities since 2004.

Seán Power was appointed Minister of State of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform with responsibility for Equality Issues on 20 June 2007. Prior to that, he had been Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children. He was first elected to the Dáil (the Lower House of Parliament) in 1989 and was Assistant Government Whip in 1993. He has served on the following committees: Environment and Local Government; European Affairs; Public Enterprise and Transport.

Stefan Ingvar Johansson is State Secretary of the Ministry of Education in Finland. Prior to current position he was State Secretary at the Ministry of Environment from January until April 2007. He has been Secretary General of the Swedish Parliamentary Group from 1999 to 2001. He holds a degree in Administrative and Political Science.

Valérie Letard is a social worker by profession. At the beginning of her professional career, she participated in the implementation of a new social action plan in the Council of saint Amand les Eaux (Nord). She continued her work in the field of social policy and held several notable positions in the administration of the town of Valenciennes. She was elected to the French Senate in 2001. Since 2007, she has been State Secretary responsible for Solidarity to the French Minister for Labour, Labour Relations, the Family and Solidarity. Recently, she has been elected President of the metropolitan area of Valenciennes.

Elsa Pais is President of the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality in Portugal. She holds a Master's degree in Sociology and is a doctoral candidate in domestic violence affairs at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at the University Nova of Lisbon. She is a National Focal Point of the Council of Europe's Campaign to Combat Violence against Women, including Domestic Violence, Permanent Portuguese Delegate in Daphne Program of the European Commission, and Representative of Portugal in the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming, Member of the Social and Economic Council and Member of the National Council to HIV/AIDS Infection. From 2000 to 2002 she has been President of the Portuguese Institute of Drugs and Drug Addiction.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Aengus Casey	Ireland	Department Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Agata Nieboj	Poland	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
Aida Zemaityte	Lithuania	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
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Aleksandra Klinar Blaznik	Slovenia	Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
Alenka Zver	France	CLEF
Aleš Kramer	Slovenia	Slovenian Student Union
Andriana Achilleos	Cyprus	Women's Committee
Anjuta Bubnov – Škoberne	Slovenia	Faculty of Law
Anna Wołosik	Poland	The "Towards the Girls" Association
Anna Záborská	European Parliament	Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
Anne Galand	Norway	Ministry of Children and Equality
Anneke Tjalma	The Netherlands	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
Antti Närhinen	Finland	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
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APPENDIX:
COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON ELIMINATING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN SOCIETY[1]

Whereas:

1. Gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union enshrined in the EC Treaty, as well as one of the Community's objectives; equality between women and men is promoted through a dual approach combining gender mainstreaming and specific measures, including positive action;

2. The European Council of 23–24 March 2006 adopted a European Pact for Gender Equality, encouraging action at Member State and Union level, inter alia to combat gender stereotypes in the labour market, in particular those related to the sex-segregated labour market and education;

3. The elimination of gender stereotypes in education, training and culture, on the labour market and in the media is a priority area of the Commission's Roadmap for equality between women and men, 2006–2010[2];

4. The Commission's Report on equality between women and men – 2008[3] identifies the need for the Member States, in collaboration with the social partners and civil society, to strengthen efforts to tackle stereotypes in education, employment and the media and to advance the role of men in promoting gender equality;

5. The stereotyping of women, and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media, is one of the critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action;

6. Gender-based prejudices and stereotypes help to perpetuate a gender-segregated educational system resulting in a gender-segregated labour market, as well as a gender pay gap and economic inequality between women and men.

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1 Adopted by the EPSCO Council, 9 June 2008, Doc. 9671/08

2 Doc. 7034/06.

3 Doc. 5710/08.

Persistent gender stereotypes cause human resources to be wasted and thus prevent the EU from achieving its full competitive potential; they therefore represent a serious obstacle to achieving the goals of the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs;

7. On 15 May 2007, Germany, Portugal and Slovenia signed a Trio Presidency Declaration on the promotion of gender equality in the European Union, identifying the elimination of gender stereotypes as the connecting theme of the gender equality work undertaken by the Trio Presidency;

8. The challenges faced by women and especially by men in response to changing gender role models was one of the key issues addressed at the Informal Meeting of Ministers for Gender Equality and Family Affairs under the German Presidency on 15–16 May 2007;

9. A European expert conference on "Entrepreneurship and Employability – Gender Stereotypes" was organised by the Portuguese Presidency on 3 October 2007;

10. On 30 January 2008, the Slovenian EU Presidency organised a Europe-wide conference entitled "Elimination of Gender Stereotypes – Mission (Im)Possible?".

The Council of the European Union recognises that:

1. 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 economy;

2. Gender roles are taught and encouraged from a very young age and strongly influence the desires, interests and aspirations of girls/women and boys/men in private and public life;

3. In order to improve the status of women and promote gender equality, gender stereotypes that shape the identities of girls and boys have to be tackled from early childhood, paying special attention to the structures and mechanisms that reproduce and reinforce traditional gender roles and stereotypes;

4. The media, including the advertising industry, contributes to the reproduction of culturally transmitted stereotypes and images of women and men.

It is therefore necessary to develop critical media education in schools and, while taking into account the freedom of expression of the media, to establish a dialogue with the media about the harmful effects of negative gender stereotypes on the self-perception of young people and on their perception of gender roles and relations in society. However, the media as a whole can also play a crucial role in combating gender stereotypes and in promoting the non-discriminatory and realistic portrayal of girls/women and boys/men in society;

5. Initiatives are urgently needed to encourage young women and men to act independently and without prejudice when choosing between available education and training pathways and to explore non-traditional education fields and occupations;

6. The social partners and enterprises both play an important role in guaranteeing equal opportunities for women and men in recruitment, work, vocational training, promotion and reconciliation policies, and in efforts to eliminate the gender pay gap and to advance the employment of women and men in sectors and occupations where they are under-represented.

Encourages:

1. The development of policies and programmes for eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality in education curricula and practices from an early age, including gender-sensitive and gender-reflective awareness-training for teachers and kindergarten teachers, pre-school and school children and students, as well as general awareness-raising, including for parents;

2. The European Institute for Gender Equality and the different national gender equality bodies to promote research, studies and analysis to further examine the effect that gender stereotypes have on efforts to achieve real gender equality, as well as the impact of gender equality, gender inequality and stereotypes on the well-being of society as a whole and on the competitiveness and performance of the economic system;

3. The Member States to promote gender-sensitive, empowering educational and training processes and teaching materials by, inter alia, reviewing and revising, as appropriate, school curricula, formal and informal educational and training materials and teacher-training programmes, including those dealing with career orientation, and to encourage and support girls' and boys' interest and involvement in non-traditional fields and occupations.

Calls on the Member States and the European Commission:

1. To reinforce the effective implementation and monitoring of their gender mainstreaming strategies and the promotion of specific actions to eliminate gender stereotypes in education and culture, training, vocational guidance, and on the labour market;

2. To strengthen the gender perspective and to promote the elimination of gender stereotypes in youth policies and programmes at all levels, including in the elaboration of a new framework of cooperation in the field of youth at the Community level, in particular, in the context of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs, as well as in connection with the promotion of education, training, mobility, employment, health, sport, the reconciliation of work, family and private life, and active citizenship, including public and political participation;

3. To use fully all appropriate funds, including the Structural Funds and the Progress Programme[4], for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming and for facilitating access by women and men to non-traditional education fields and occupations, as well as to decision-making positions;

4. To continue and strengthen active cooperation with the social partners and other stakeholders in order to reduce gender segregation and gender gaps on the labour market, including by taking concrete actions to eliminate the gender pay gap and improving the recognition of the value of work in jobs and sectors predominantly occupied by women;

5. To promote, through appropriate institutions, awareness-raising campaigns and the exchange of good practices on combating gender stereotypes and the advancement of the realistic and non-discriminatory portrayal of girls/women and boys/men in the media.

4 Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – Progress (OJ L 315, 15.11.2006, p. 1).

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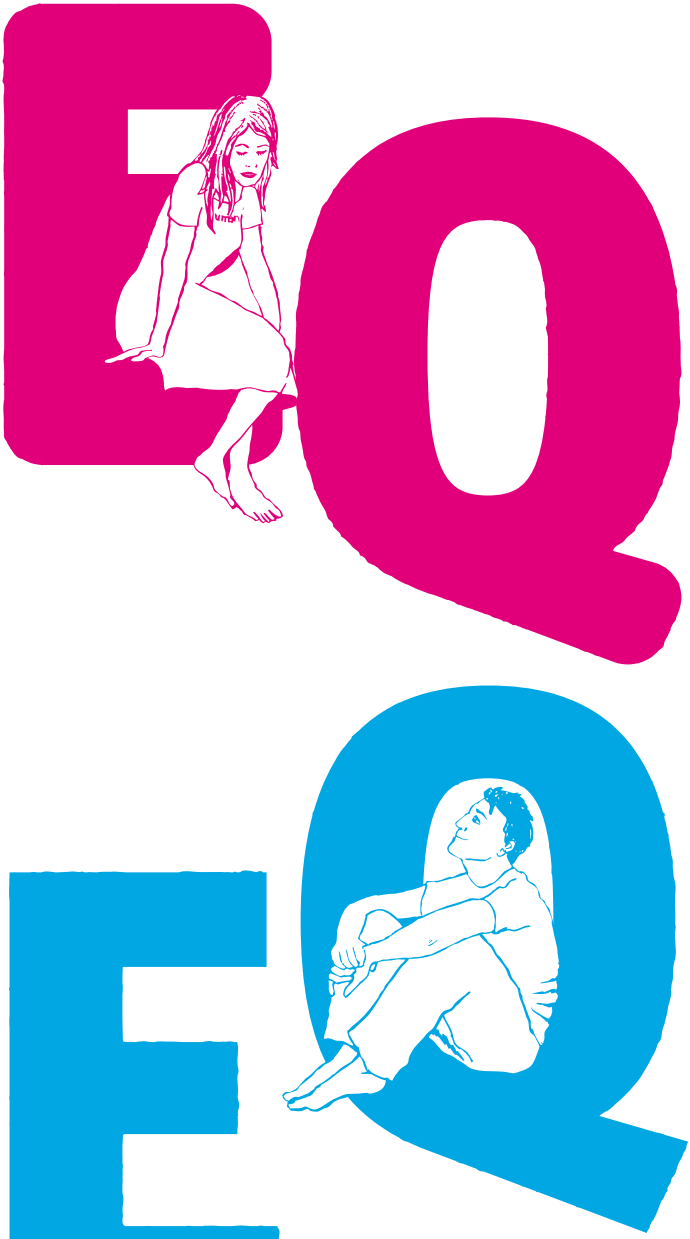
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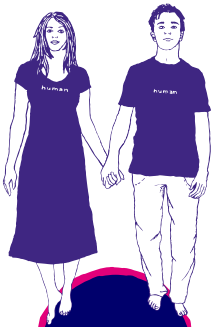

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