

GENDER - FAMILY, EDUCATION, WORK AND WELLBEING

Perspectives and Realities from Young People | Berlin (DE) – 5 days , 9-13/3/2020

Report

On 9-13 March, young participants from the partnership met in Berlin in the framework of the “Gender Project”. They **learned about the wide world of gender** and exchanged about their own **experiences, challenges, wishes, hopes, concerns and questions** on the topic.

For the project’s outcomes to **reflect youth’s own voice, they also drafted comic-strips on gender** based on their discussions, in order to inspire the project’s **upcoming comic-book**. This will help youth workers across Europe addressing this topic with young people: they will get the perfect “conversation-starter”, totally relevant to youth because made by young people, and accessible thanks to an easy-to-read format!

Two partners were prevented from joining the seminar due to official measures in Greece (IEKEP) and Sweden (Skelleftea Kommun) in the context of rising uncertainty across Europe in regard to the coronavirus. Despite these challenging times, the seminar was a success, with a nice and productive atmosphere in Berlin, parallel work in Athens and Skelleftea and some “online bridges” between these throughout the week (Facebook group, Skype)!



Summary of the Training Days

Activities: Exploring the „Gender Jungle“

Gender is a complex and vast topic: to navigate this “Gender Jungle”, young participants went through a progressive programme inviting them to focus on different areas of life every day.

“I really liked the fact we went deeper in so many different subjects related to gender”

On the first day, after some introductions, ice-breakers and name games, the week’s topic was introduced to build a common understanding of it. To do so, participants started with their own **perceptions of gender and gradually built upon these to get to a common definition**. In the end, they managed to “map” all crucial aspects, from the individual to the societal levels, power relations, identity and discrimination, inequalities etc.



On the second day, the group had a look at the week’s first topic: **“So Cliché!”**. They shared about gender roles and expectations, and the many stereotypes sustaining these. Conclusion: **all over Europe, these clichés can vary in intensity but overall remain the same!** In the afternoon, it was time to talk about some **“Toys’ Stories”**: starting from a personal viewpoint, their own toys as children, participants reflected on **how toys and games can play a role in teaching gender roles to kids ... or how they can, if handled properly, open equal horizons to everybody!**



The third day was dedicated to **“LGBTQI+ Rights & Discrimination – Where do we stand?”**. A visit of Berlin’s first queer youth centre was unfortunately cancelled due to rising uncertainty in regard to the coronavirus pandemic: participants were therefore free to Berlin visit at their own pace, and some could keep the planned focus by visiting the *Schwules Museum*, a museum exhibiting LGBT life in Berlin!

Later the group continued to explore this topic. First, thanks to young people from CMO STAMM (NL), participants could learn about the complexity of **gender as a spectrum**, beyond the binary women/men: they now understand better **how diverse gender identity and sexual orientations can be**, and why “LGBTQI” alone can’t cover it all ... hence the “+”! Finally the group went through an activity prepared by Skelleftea’s youth (SE) even if

they could not join themselves: thanks to them, participants debated what it means to **live in heteronormative societies, reflected on assumptions** in regard to gender and how you can't really know of somebody's identity or orientation with a simple look.



On the fourth day, the group went **"Back to School!"** to reflect on another area of life playing a crucial role in regard to gender. Participants discussed what, in their experience, was **"wrong" at school gender-wise: sexual education** (e.g. none or lacking, covering heterosexual sex only and leaving everybody else at risk), **discrimination and prejudices among peers, teachers behaving differently** with girls and boys ... Then they imagined ways to fix these issues, like unique uniforms where these are mandatory, to avoid compulsory skirts for girls for instance.



The last theme looked **further in a young person's life: the workplace**. Participants stepped into new shoes in a **roleplay game** inviting them to imagine, for instance, how difficult it is to be a woman in a traditionally "male job" (e.g. police, engineering and such) or a man in a traditionally "female job" (e.g. nanny, nurse etc). Debates covered many other aspects of gender on the workplace: **sexual harassment, the gender pay gap, the difficult balance between private and work lives** among many others.



On the final day, the "Creative Workshops" turning all these learning outcomes and personal impressions into comic-strips were finalised (details below!). Then it was time for some conclusions, evaluations ... and good-byes!

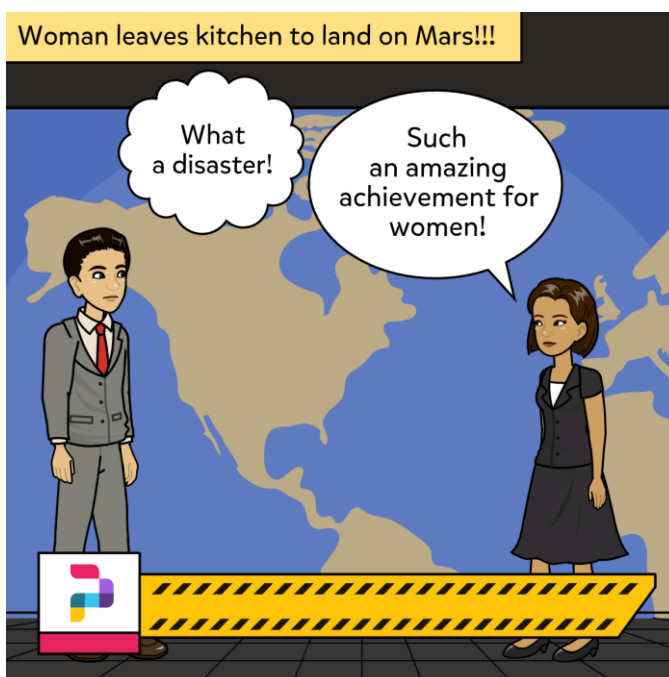
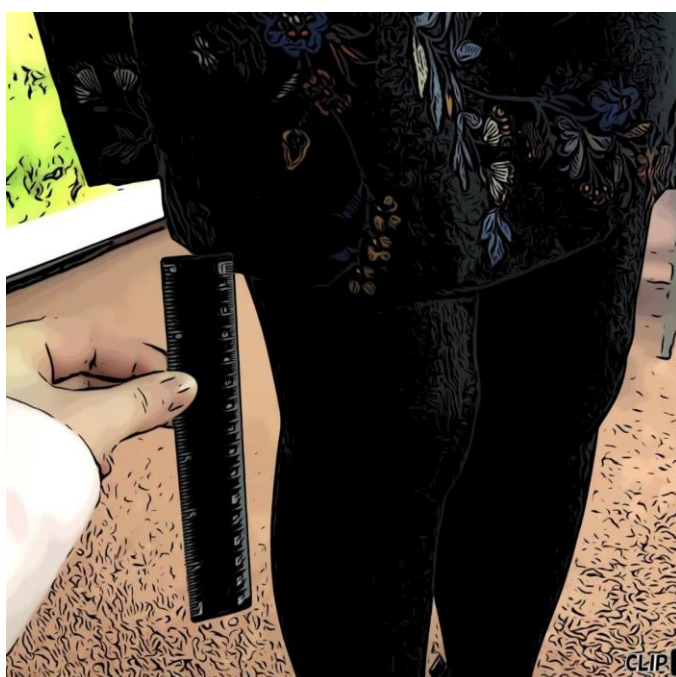
Creative Workshop: "Please, Draw me a sheep gender!"

Beyond learning, sharing and debating on gender, its meanings and realities for participants, the seminar aimed at **letting these representatives of a diverse youth express themselves on gender** through creative means!

Daily Creative Workshops were organised and built upon the inspiration brought by the activities. The participants were guided and supported by youth workers to **turn their ideas (perspectives, opinions, ideas, feelings, impressions, hopes, questions, proposals ...)** into comic-strips.

Here are examples of their results: a mix of diverse, yet complementary ideas looking at different aspects of gender, which will later be **turned by the partnership into a comic-book!** This will give youth workers an adapted, accessible and attractive tool to dialogue with young people on gender, an essential aspect of their wellbeing.

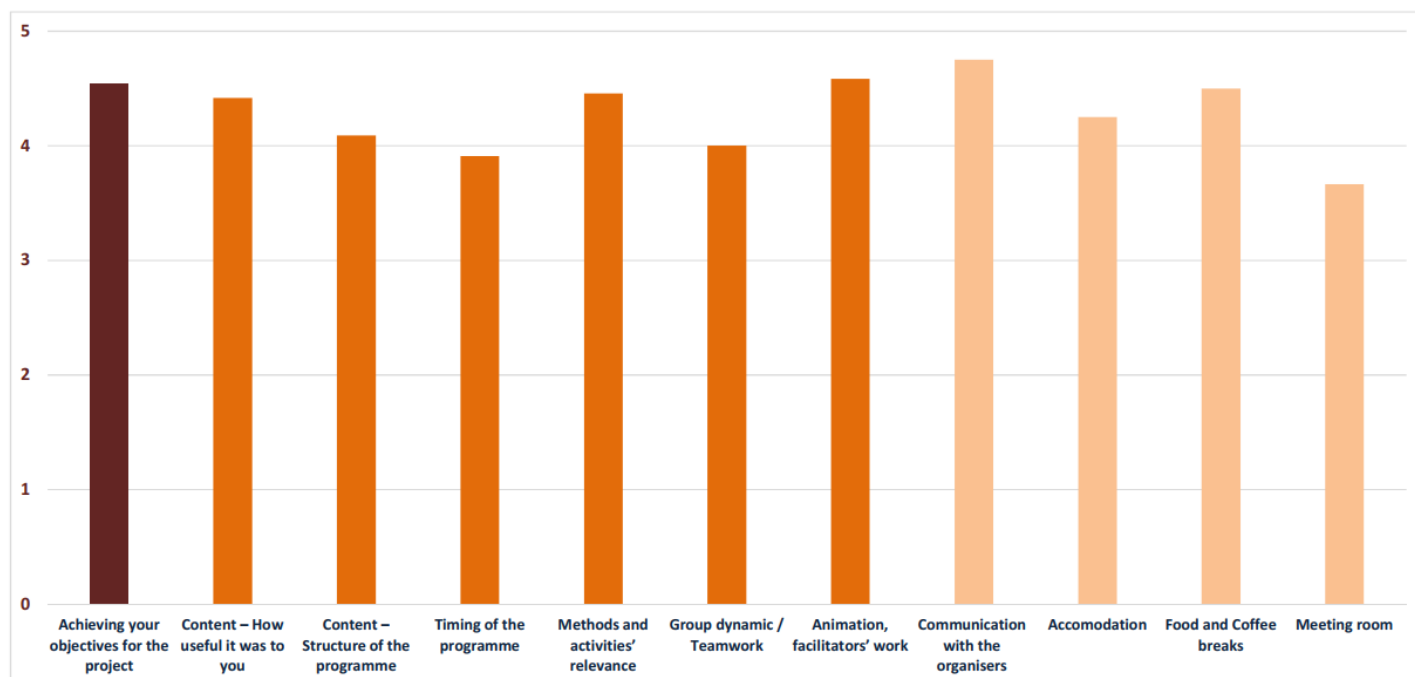
"I enjoyed the Creative Workshops, it was a very nice way to express my thoughts and feelings."



Annex 1 - Evaluation

With an **average satisfaction of 4.55 out of 5** (“Achieving your objectives for the project”), the training obviously met participants expectations! Among other positive outcomes, they also reported that the **content was very useful to them (4.42/5)**!

Below, you can find the average rates to all the evaluation’s topics.



Annex 2 - Programme

Day 1 - Monday 9 March	
(...) - 12:00	Arrivals
13:30 - 17:00	Setting the right context for the week: Objectives; Icebreaker; Rules (Activity based); "What's gender? Understanding different perspectives"
19:30 - 20:30	Intercultural Evening – Movie Night 1 Discovering and debating gender-related topics through popular TV shows, series and movies!
Day 2 - Tuesday 10 March	
9:00 - 12:00	Theme 1: "So Cliché!" Exploring and discussing gender expectations and traditional roles, as perceived by young participants.
13:30 - 15:30	Theme 2: "Toys' stories" Discussing the impact of games and toys in how children and teenagers learn gender roles, and how the family context plays a role in reproducing or fighting gender stereotypes at home.
16:00 - 18:00	Creative Workshop: "Please, Draw me a sheep gender!" Participants summed up experiences, feelings, questions, concerns, hopes ... and/or learning outcomes by drafting comic-strips with their preferred method (e.g. hand-drawn, comic-making apps or websites ...).
19:30 - 20:30	Intercultural Evening – Board Game Night! A board games evening was improvised to get to know each other and create a nice atmosphere!
Day 3 - Wednesday 11 March	
9:00 - 12:00	Visit of Berlin A planned visit at Lambda::bb, the first queer youth club in Berlin, was cancelled due to rising uncertainty in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. Participants were therefore free to visit Berlin at their own pace, focusing on their personal interests. Some who had never visited the city could discover its historical places, while others kept a focus on gender with the Schwules Museum, a museum exhibiting LGBT life in Berlin.
13:30 - 15:30	Theme 3: "LGBTQI Discrimination & Rights: Where do we stand?" Exploring the concept of gender as a spectrum, beyond the binary distinction men/women; Exchanging about the situation in regard to the social acceptance of identities, sexual orientations, self-expressions not conforming with traditional gender roles. By CMO STAMM & Skelleftea.
16:00 - 18:00	Creative Workshop: "Please, Draw me a sheep gender!" Participants summed up experiences, feelings, questions, concerns, hopes ... and/or learning outcomes by drafting comic-strips with their preferred method (e.g. hand-drawn, comic-making apps or websites ...).
19:30 - 20:30	Intercultural Evening – Movie Night 2 Discovering and debating gender-related topics, with a Dutch short movie presented by CMO STAMM, Anders ("Something about Alex", by Reinout Hellenthal).

Day 4 - Thursday 12 March	
9:00 - 12:00	<p>Theme 4: “Back to School!” <i>Exploring how the school environment promotes - or not! - gender equality and students’ wellbeing in that regard. We will look at formal education at all levels and in all aspects: classrooms, curricula, school books, career orientation, after school activities, bullying, peer-pressure ...</i></p>
13:30 - 15:30	<p>Theme 5: “A fireman, a policeman and an air hostess walk into a bar ...” <i>Discussing gender in the professional world, from career orientation to sexism and discrimination on the workplace and debating about the way forward to promote gender equality: “Same rules for all” vs “Positive Discrimination”.</i></p>
16:00 - 18:00	<p>Creative Workshop: “Please, Draw me a sheep gender!” <i>Participants summed up experiences, feelings, questions, concerns, hopes ... and/or learning outcomes by drafting comic-strips with their preferred method (e.g. hand-drawn, comic-making apps or websites ...).</i></p>
19:30 - (...)	<p>Free Time! <i>Last night on site, participants were free to enjoy Berlin by night ... and celebrate a successful meeting!</i></p>
Day 5 - Friday 13 March	
9:00 - 12:00	<p>Wrapping-up: “Please, Draw me a sheep gender!” <i>That’s the end, we squeezed every drop of creativity out of participants! It was time to fine-tune ideas and discuss the next steps: what to do with the drafts produced by participants to come up with a comic-book!</i></p> <p><i>Moreover, partners prevented from taking part in the seminar shared their results on Skype with Berlin’s group: they could not join the meeting because of coronavirus preventive measures, but they nonetheless produced draft comic-strips and discussed them with the rest of the group through a seminar 2.0!</i></p> <p>Conclusion: Evaluation of the week, Youthpass Ceremony <i>Time to celebrate a week of learning ... and for good byes!</i></p>
13:30 - (...)	<p><i>Departures</i></p>