AGES - ADDRESSING GENDER EQUALITY IN SCHOOLS

Review

AGES REVIEW

AGES: Addressing Gender Equality in Schools

Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Using Philosophy for Children and forum theatre to develop critical thinking and creating spaces to discuss gender

Project number: 2019-1-UK01-KA201-062068

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INTRODUCTION

The AGES project

The AGES project (Addressing Gender Equality in Schools) is designed to support teachers providing trainings and resources they need to engage children in creating safe spaces for dialogue around gender inequalities and gender discrimination. Partners from the UK, Hungary, Sweden and Italy shared their knowledge on the issue with each other and with teachers from the four countries creating an International network to support schools with methodologies and resources. Partners conducted studies on how 'gender' is dealt with at both country level (governmental) and a direct school understanding.

The methods we shared with around 400 teachers from the four countries were 'Philosophy for children' and 'Open spaces for dialogue and Enquiry' as a technique for supporting teachers to facilitate dialogic enquiry, followed by 'Forum theatre' to explore behaviour and social change.

The project is run by five partners from four countries: the Liverpool World Centre (UK), The Cavendish High Academy (UK), Anthropolis Association (HU), Östra scolan (SW) and Oxfam Italy (IT)

The Review

This review introduces the issue and showcases case studies from teachers in each country plus an overview of using dialogue and drama in schools. It will allow the reader to draw general application to classroom management and point them to find out more about how they can create safe spaces for dialogue around gender inequalities and gender discrimination. The review is designed to look at what is currently happening with the issues in schools both in terms of the governmental stance and case studies of what teachers in the groups are doing to tackle them.

This review is the first stage of a two-part process with the AGES project. This review is to give a perspective on what is currently happening in the four partner countries and some introductions to techniques that have a proven success, being dialogue and drama. Following this the 2021 AGES toolkit will include featured lesson plans and more practical suggestions of delivery in the classrooms.

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GENDER AND EDUCATION

"Promoting equal economic independence for women and men, closing the gender pay gap, advancing gender balance in decision making, ending gender based violence and promoting gender equality beyond the EU." [1]

This is how the EU defines gender equality. Gender equality is one of the top priorities of the Union, which is represented in its Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. The Strategy presents policy objectives and actions to make significant progress by 2025 towards a gender-equal Europe. The goal is a Union where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities to thrive, and can equally participate in and lead our European society. The Strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions, and intersectionality is a horizontal principle for its implementation. While the Strategy focuses on actions within the EU, it is coherent with the EU's external policy on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender equality is also a global priority for UNESCO[2] and inextricably linked to its efforts to promote the right to education and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 4 aims to 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' and SDG 5 to 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.' Poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence, and traditional attitudes about the status and role of women, are among the many obstacles that stand in the way of women and girls fully exercising their right to participate in, complete and benefit from education.

In the process of achieving gender equality in the EU and being able to promote it on a wider scale education has a major role. Teachers need methodological and theoretical support to deal with gender issues in schools. According to research studies, gender inequalities are reproduced in education from the earliest stages in multiple ways, including by the official curriculum; the hidden curriculum; teachers' ways of treating girls and boys differently based on their own gender stereotypes and convictions about the "proper" gender order in society; peer gender socialisation among children; and steering children towards gendered educational and career choices. These gendered educational practices reinforce gender inequalities in society in general, and through gendered patterns of achievement also career choices which may be disadvantageous for women, as well as the internalisation of male dominance and female submission in social relations, personal relations and in employment.[3]

According to the European Institute of Gender Equality mainstreaming gender equality in education and training policy remains crucial in countries where equal access to education is taken as a given, which is the case in the majority of EU Member States. Challenging gender prejudices and stereotypes throughout the education cycle, from primary school to lifelong learning, can reduce gender

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[1]https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

[2]https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-and-gender-equality

[3]Towards gender-sensitive education – A handbook for teachers and trainers.
https://gendersensed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/A-Handbook-for-Teacher-Trainers.pdf

imbalances in other spheres of life. For example, gender segregation in the labour market as a result of different educational and professional choices in schools and universities, both for pupils and teachers, is widespread. Gender-based violence and sexist language also occurs in educational settings. Therefore, it is essential that gender-based stereotypes are deconstructed and challenged in the areas of education and training. Gender stereotypes are also still present in teaching materials. Textbooks contain many stereotypes providing examples through gendered images diminishing the role of women. This is especially the case when men and women are depicted in professional contexts. Also linked to the issue of gender stereotypes is how to better mainstream gender in school curricula. In many cases, this is still left to the single interpretation of schools and teachers. The only way of integrating or mainstreaming gender issues into the curriculum should be directly through the teachers and the leadership of schools at an institutional level. However, one of the main problems remains how to motivate teachers and school leaders, and how to make this a normal part of the curriculum at each school level.[4]

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[4] https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/policy-areas/education

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FOUR COUNTRIES OF AGES PROJECT – STATISTICS
Hungary

What is the population in your country?	9.7 million
What is the population of people under the age of 18 in your country?	1.8 million
How many children are there in education in your country?	730.000 in elementary, 416.000 in secondary (preschool is not included in these data)
At what age does compulsory education finish in your country?	16 years
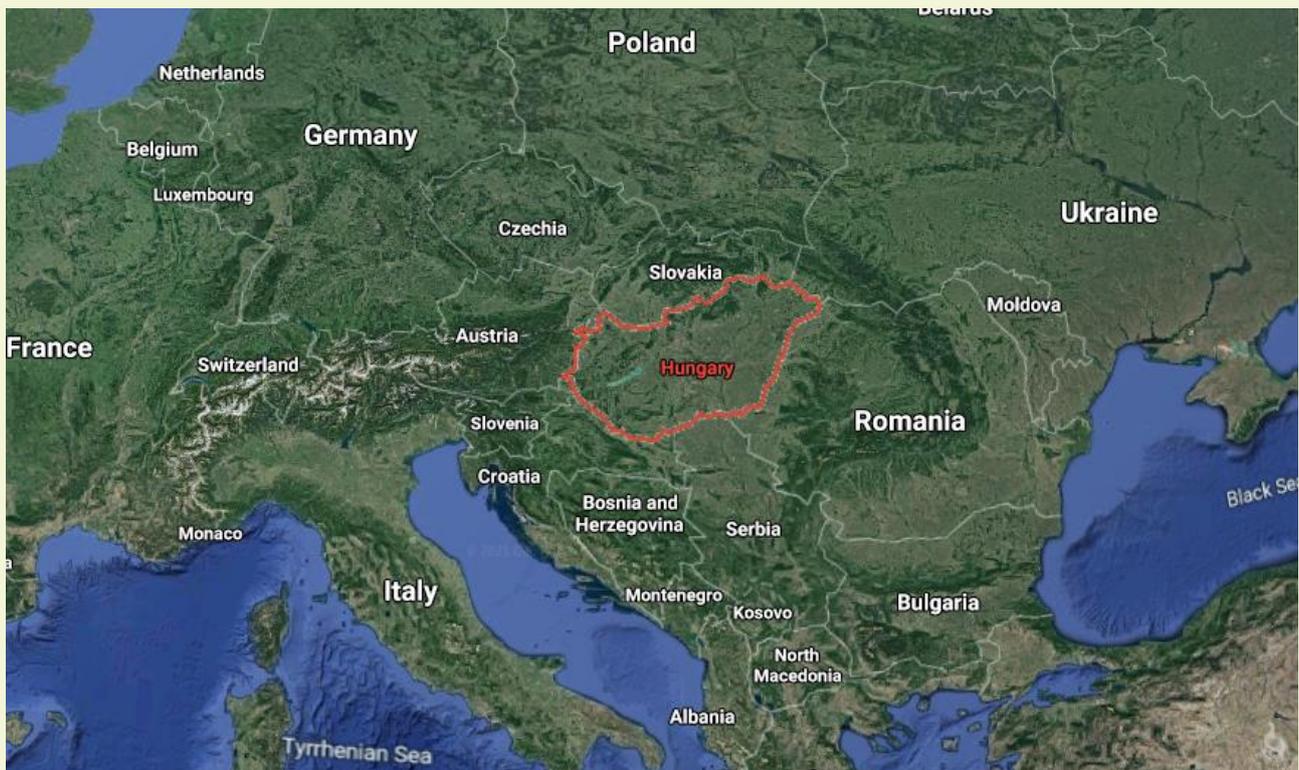
Figura 1 Google maps – Hungary

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Sweden

What is the population in your country?	10.3 million
What is the population of people under the age of 18 in your country?	1.8 million
How many children are there in education in your country?	1.5 million
At what age does compulsory education finish in your country?	16 years

Figura 3 Google Maps - Sweden

United Kingdom

What is the population in your country?	66.4 million
What is the population of people under the age of 18 in your country?	13.3 million
How many children are there in education in your country?	10,3 million (8,8 million in England, 468,838 in Wales, 693,251 in Scotland, 338,957 in Northern Ireland.)
At what age does compulsory education finish in your country?	16 years

Figura 4 Google Maps – UK

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Italy

What is the population in your country?	60.3 million
What is the population of people under the age of 18 in your country?	9.6 million
How many children are there in education in your country?	8.4 million
At what age does compulsory education finish in your country?	16 years

Figura 2 Google Maps – Italy

EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN THE FOUR PARTNER COUNTRIES

Hungary

Compulsory education begins with the obligatory pre-school year in kindergarten, usually at the age of 5. From age 6 to 16, school is mandatory for all Hungarians. Most children attend free State schools. Private schools charge fees but are subsidized by the state.

After finishing elementary school ('*általános iskola*') students can decide between three options: high school ('*gimnázium*'), vocational school ('*szakmunkásképző iskola*') or trade school ('*szakközépiskola*'). All Hungarians must complete 8 years of elementary school plus two more years in one of the above schools.

To study at a Hungarian university *('egyetem')* or college *('szakiskola / főiskola')* you need a certification of secondary education and have to take an entrance exam.

Sweden

Preschool

In Sweden, *förskola* (preschool) is provided by municipalities for children ages one to five. The amount of municipal subsidy for preschool depends on the child's age and whether the parents work, study, are unemployed or on parental leave for other children. Swedish preschool emphasises the importance of play in a child's development, with a curriculum aiming to ensure children's individual needs and interests. Gender-aware education is increasingly common, striving to provide children with the same opportunities in life regardless of gender.

Compulsory schooling

Swedish compulsory schooling consists of four stages: *förskoleklass* ('preschool year'), *lågstadiet* (years 1–3), *mellanstadiet* (years 4–6) and *högstadiet* (years 7–9). Children between ages six and thirteen are also offered out-of-school care before and after school hours. Compulsory education also includes *sameskolor* (Sami schools) for children of the indigenous Sami people.

Upper secondary school

Gymnasium (upper secondary school or high school, years 10–12) is optional. There are eighteen regular national programmes of three years to choose from, six of which are preparatory for higher education such as university, and twelve of which are vocational.

While entrance requirements vary between programmes, all of them demand students to have passing grades in Swedish, English and mathematics from their final year of compulsory schooling.In 2017, about 18 per cent of Swedish ninth-year students did not have the grades to qualify for a national programme; however, instead of national programmes, these students have five so-called introductory programmes to choose from. From these introductory programmes, students can then move on to a national programme. There are also upper secondary schools for people with intellectual disabilities

as well as programme variations targeting for example athletes. In 2017, roughly 90 percent of upper secondary students received a leaving qualification (diploma).

United Kingdom

Early Years Foundation Stage

3-4 years old – Early Years (nurseries); 4-5 years old – Reception (schools)

Primary Education

5-7 years old – Key Stage 1; 7-11 years old – Key Stage 2

Secondary Education

11-14 years old – Key Stage 3; 14-16 years old – Key Stage 4

The United Kingdom has devolved government with certain powers such as education being determined by regional Assemblies in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Department Of Education (for England). There are therefore differences across the four countries which constitute the UK. In order to avoid over complexity, the information provided below is for England which contains the largest population and the majority of schools within the UK.

Non Compulsory Education from Birth to Four Years Olds in the UK

Since 2010 all 3 and 4 year olds in England are entitled to 15 hours a week of universal funding for education and childcare. This was extended in 2017 to include an additional 15 hours (bringing the total to 30 hours per week) of funded education for those meeting the eligibility criteria associated with income and specified individual needs of the child. In 2018 this resulted in 94% of 3 and 4 year olds in England receiving free 15 hours of education or childcare a week and 82% acquired 30 hours of funded education and childcare a week. In addition 72% of 2year olds in England received 15 hours of funded education or childcare in 2018.

The department for Education has established the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework that sets out the standards for learning, development and care that all children from birth to five year should receive and that all schools and Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) registered early years providers must follow. This includes childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes.

Compulsory Education 5-16 Years Old

Compulsory education in England is divided into age phases termed Key Stages

Key Stage One - 5-7 year olds delivered in Infant and Primary Schools

Key Stage Two – 7-11 year olds delivered in Primary Schools

Key Stage Three – 11-14 year olds delivered in Secondary Schools

Key Stage Four – 14-16 year olds delivered in Secondary schools

Post Compulsory Sector- 16-18 year olds delivered in secondary schools, further Education Colleges and through Apprenticeships and training programmes

Types of Schools and settings providing compulsory education in England

Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools: Schools funded by the State and controlled by the local authority. They are required to teach the National Curriculum.

Academies: Schools funded directly by the State but are independent from the local Authority. They can select their own curriculum and do not need to teach the national Curriculum but should teach a broad and balanced Curriculum.

Free Schools: Schools that are new and have been established by local organizations. They are publically funded directly by the State and do not have to teach the National Curriculum but are expected to teach a broad and balanced curriculum.

Faith Schools: These are schools that are controlled or maintained (supported) by a religious faith e.g. Church of England, Roman Catholic, Baptists etc. They receive public funding and more usually teach the National Curriculum but will follow a Religious Education syllabus established by the faith.

Special Schools: These are schools that usually cover the primary and secondary age and support children with specific learning needs, physical needs or behavioural needs. Generally, but not exclusively funded by the State. They refer to the National Curriculum but also adapt and amend to meet the needs of the children and young people who attend. There are 1,256 Special Schools in the UK.

Pupil Referral Units: These are settings that can provide greater support than mainstream schools can provide but unlike Special Schools they are intended as long-term solutions. They cater for children who have been excluded permanently from their school, may have emotional and behavioural needs etc. There are 351 in the UK.

Grammar Schools: These are maintained secondary schools funded by the state but with selected pupils for entry to the school through an academic examination at the age of 11 years old.

Independent Schools: These are private fee-paying schools. They set their own curriculum and are independent from the state education sector.

Sixth Form: These are departments attached to secondary schools that offer 16-18 compulsory education in the form of Advance Level and BTechs qualification.

Further Education Colleges: These are state funded colleges that offer a wide variety of Advanced Level qualifications in academic disciplines and BTechs in vocational training

Italy

The Italian education system is organized as follows:

Integrated system, not mandatory, with a total duration of 6 years, divided into:

Childcare services, managed by local authorities, directly or through the stipulation of conventions, by other public or private bodies, which take in children between 3 and 36 months;

Preschool (kindergarten), which can be managed by the state, by local authorities, directly or through the stipulation of agreements, by other public bodies or by private individuals, which take in children between 3 and 6 years old;

First cycle of education, compulsory, lasting 8 years, divided into:

Primary school, lasting five years, for pupils from 6 to 11 years old;

First grade secondary school, lasting three years, for pupils from 11 to 14 years old;

Second cycle of education, divided into two types of pathways:

Second grade secondary school, lasting five years, for students who have successfully completed the first cycle of education. Schools offer high school courses, technical and vocational colleges for students aged 14 to 19 years;

Three-year and four-year vocational education and training (VET) courses of regional competence, always aimed at students who successfully completed the first cycle of education.

Higher education offered by Universities, institutions of Advanced Artistic, Musical and Coreutic Training (AFAM) and by Higher Technical Institutes (ITS) with different types of courses.

THE PARTNER COUNTRIES' RANK ON THE LATEST GENDER EQUALITY INDEX (2019) ITS CHANGES IN THE PAST 15 YEARS AND THE KEY FACTORS

Hungary

With 51.9 out of 100 points, Hungary ranks 27th in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Its score is 15.5 points lower than the EU's score. Between 2005 and 2017, Hungary's score increased by only 2.4 points (+ 1.1 points since 2015). Hungary is progressing towards gender equality at a slower pace than other Member States. Its rank has dropped two positions since 2005.

Hungary's scores are lower than the EU's scores in all domains. Gender inequalities are most pronounced in the domain of power (20.6 points) and time (54.3 points). The domain of health ranks highest (86.6 points), compared to other domains. Hungary's score in the domain of money (71.6 points) has improved the most since 2005 (+ 5.1 points). Progress has stalled in the domain of knowledge. In the domain of time, Hungary's score has sharply decreased (- 6.8 points).

Between 2005 and 2017, Hungary's Index score improved but remained significantly lower than the EU's score in the same period. Hungary's slower rate of improvement has led to an increasing gap with the EU over time.

Sweden

With 83.6 out of 100 points, Sweden ranks first in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Between 2005 and 2017, Sweden's score increased by 4.8 points (+ 1 point since 2015) and it is 16.2 points above the EU's score. Despite slower progress towards gender equality than other EU Member States, Sweden has maintained its rank since 2005.

Sweden's scores are the highest in the domains of health (94.7 points) and time (90.1 points). Gender inequalities are most pronounced in the domain of knowledge (73.8 points). Between 2005 and 2017, its scores improved in all domains. Greatest improvements are in the domains of power (+ 9.3 points) and knowledge (+ 5.7 points). Sweden's progress was slowest in the domains of time (+ 0.5 points) and money (+ 2.7 points).

United Kingdom

With 72.2 out of 100 points, the United Kingdom ranks fifth in the EU on the Gender Equality Index in 2019. Its score is 4.8 points higher than the EU's score.

previous years:

- 2017: 71.5
- 2015: 68.9
- 2013: 68.3
- 2005: 71.2

Between 2005-2017, UK score only increased by 1 point. UK is progressing at a slower pace than the rest of the EU states. UK has dropped by 1 position since 2005.

Highest scores of UK are in health (93.3) and money (81.6)

Inequalities most pronounced in power (56.5)

Between 2005-2017, scores decreased in knowledge (-5.4)

Italy

With 63.0 out of 100 points, Italy ranks 14th in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Its score is 4.4 points lower than the EU's score. Between 2005 and 2017, Italy's score increased by 13.8 points. Italy is progressing towards gender equality at a much faster pace than other EU Member States. Its rank has improved by 12 places since 2005.

Italy's scores are lower than the EU's scores in all domains, except the domain of health. Gender inequalities are most pronounced in the domains of power (47.6 points), time (59.3 points) and work (63.1 points). Italy has the lowest score of all EU Member States in the domain of work. Its highest score is in the domain of health (88.7 points). Since 2005, Italy's scores have improved the most in the domains of power (+ 31.5 points) and knowledge (+ 7.1 points). Challenges remain in the domain of time, where Italy's progress has stalled (- 0.8 points) since 2005.

Between 2005 and 2017, Italy's Index score remained lower than the EU's score. Italy's score has improved at a faster pace than the EU's score, reducing the gap between them over time.

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF THE FOUR PARTNER COUNTRIES

Hungary

As for the EU, gender equality remains a key target, and being an EU member, Hungary should have gender equality in focus and follow EU policies on this field. The Foundational Law of Hungary (= practically the constitution) guarantees equality between women and men and equal rights to everyone without differentiating based on sex/gender and other protected categories, such as race, skin colour, disability, language, religion, political views, origin, wealth, family background.

The picture is different, if we look at the practice: In 2010 the Orbán regime came into power and gradually introduced a so-called "illiberal democracy", resulting in the overwhelming dominance of the ruling party. This ruling party, Fidesz has centralized but not improved public services, including education, has gradually diminished power checks and balances, and has solidified its political and financial power. This regime is part of a global rise in right-wing populist-nationalist political movements. Its leaders are actively trying to reinstate a social system in which women are subordinated to men and the achievements of the struggle for gender equality are reversed.

Gender equality is legislatively regulated in the CXXV/2003 'Act on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equal Opportunities', where gender is one of the protected characteristics. The equality of women and men, and access to fundamental rights regardless of gender (among other categories) is declared in the Foundational Law of Hungary. Hungarian public education is regulated by the Act on National Public Education (CXC/2011). This document contains references to 'equal treatment' in general, but it does not refer to 'gender', 'gender equality' or 'equal opportunities'.

Apart from general gender equality legislation, Hungary is a hostile place in which to tackle gender inequality in education and other areas, at least on the level of policy-making. Gender equality as a 'core value' was included in the 2003 and 2007 versions of the National Core Curriculum, but not in the 2012 version. However, "familiarity with basic concepts of gender equality" was included among the 'key social and citizenship competences' in 2012. At the same time, 'education for family life' was included as a cross-curricular developmental goal, in line with the government's conservative family policies and agenda of returning to traditional gender roles and schemes of social organisation.

The Introduction of the Frame Curricula for primary and secondary schools introduced in 2012-2013 lacks any reference to gender equality. Social justice, discrimination, minorities, social and personal responsibility, supporting disadvantaged groups and social diversity are only referred to in very general terms. Gender-based discrimination and redress are not mentioned, and neither are gender stereotypes, domestic violence or school-based violence. Gender and women as a subject of study is minimal or completely lacking in most subject frame curricula, and the few instances where gender or related terms were originally included (specifically in the subjects Biology and Family Life Education) were erased by a Ministerial Decree introduced in 2017. This Decree is characteristic of the increasingly autocratic government, which has declared a discursive and institutional war on gender equality and gender studies. It aims to reinforce traditional heteronormative gender roles and family models and eradicate the visibility of gender and sexual diversity, the notion of gender as a socially constructed category and axis of inequality, and women's advancement in the public sphere.

Gender is most present in the frame curricula for primary school subjects Biology and Family Life Education, although in a clearly essentialist, reductionist and dichotomising way. In the Biology curriculum male and female (always in that order) behaviours, characteristics and sexual, intimate and social activities are framed as strictly biologically determined and clearly divided along a binary. Gender is reduced to 'gender roles', sexuality is primarily reproductive, diversity is not mentioned, and the ultimate role of womanhood is defined as reproduction and motherhood. The text implies an anti-abortionist stance through equating female sexuality with child rearing and prescribing a discussion of the dangers of abortion.

Family Life Education is a cross-curricular subject introduced in 2012, which is to be integrated into other school subjects throughout compulsory education. The following quote from its introduction is the essence of not only the whole text of the curriculum but also of the current governmental approach to gender and sexuality in education. Note the confusion of terms referring to sex and gender, the age-inappropriate and heteronormative positioning of marriage as the only desirable type of intimate relationship, and the complete invisibility of non-heterosexual sexuality and LGBTQI people. The sentence referring to genetic sex is repeated many times throughout the curriculum. It may be 'just' confused terminology meaning 'biological sex', but in a country with a fascist past and current political ideology trying to suppress and eliminate 'otherness' it is hard to avoid the association to eugenics, that is, the control over and cultivation of desirable heritable characteristics.

"[Family life education] aims to assist pupils from an early age in strengthening their sex/gender identity in accordance with their genetic sex, in learning about the fundamental differences between the sexes (sexual characteristics, brain functioning, communication, etc.), in the deconstruction of harmful stereotypes regarding male/father and female/mother roles, in the positive experiencing of biological, emotional and psychological changes during puberty, and in developing a fertility-conscious attitude, where the child appears as a gift. It aims to contribute to the success of partner seeking and partner choice. It is important that pupils learn about the forms of male-female relationships and the possibility of happiness/disillusionment that can be experienced in them, and that they develop a family-friendly perspective. They should become sufficiently prepared for mature, responsible, balanced, healthy sexuality based on a harmonious, happy committed relationship (marriage). In addition, they should acquire the knowledge necessary for a healthy sexual life. As a result of learning about the beauty of human conception and foetal development, they should understand that human life is a treasure from conception till natural death."

The unhappy alliance of anti-gender propaganda and autocratic governance also reached higher education in 2018: suddenly, gender studies MA programmes were banned in a Governmental Decree. Two universities had gender studies MA programmes in Hungary: Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) and Central European University (CEU). At CEU not only the Hungarian-accredited gender MA programme is closed down, but the whole university has been forced to move out of Hungary as part of a demagogic publicity campaign by the government against George Soros, the founder of the university. Gender studies are still available for university students in the form of individual courses and specialisation tracks in other degrees, but not as a degree subject in its own right.[5]

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[5] *Gender Equality in Secondary Schools in Europe: Case Studies from England, Hungary and Italy. – not yet published*

Sweden

In the Swedish Curriculum gender equality is highly emphasized and as an educator you are obliged to include gender perspectives in your everyday school work. Moreover, 'Agenda 2030' Goal number 5 stresses the importance of gender equality nationally as well as globally. This is also something Swedish schools should implement.

There is a long history of gender and sex education in Sweden. Compulsory sex education was introduced in Swedish schools in 1955. Since 2011 have terms such as sexuality, relationships, gender, gender equality and norms been included in several of the courses and subject syllabuses for compulsory and upper secondary school and adult education. This means that the responsibility for including sex education within the scope of multiple courses and subjects falls on several teachers.

United Kingdom

The Equality Act (2010) and its updates in 2014 give non-statutory advice for schools.

This includes that schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils. There are some exceptions such as in the case of single sex schools.

Also it is important that schools do not ensure that one sex is singled out for different or less favourable treatment given to other pupils.

Italy

In Italy, the latest information relating to gender issues in education can be found in the National Guidelines, law 107/2015, *Educate to respect: for gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination*. (MIUR, "Educare al rispetto: per la parità tra i sessi, la prevenzione della violenza di genere e di tutte le forme di discriminazione", *Linee Guida Nazionali*, legge 107/2015) This document is an important clarification of, paragraph 16 Article 1 of Law 107/2015. In it, reaffirming the values and principles supported by the Italian Constitution and other European documents in defence of the rights of all citizens and against gender-based violence, they offer practical indications for schools to intervene through teaching and the educational relationship and to contribute to spreading the culture of equality.[6]

In particular the points addressed in the guidelines are:

- Gender equality education and respect for differences
- The feminine and the masculine in language
- Prevention of violence against women
- Prevention of all forms of discrimination
- Tackling discrimination in the digital world
- Respect education at school

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[6] "La disParità di genere a scuola (Goal 5)"di Areta Sobieraj, Valentina Guerrini, Costanza Mattesini, Rivista dell'istruzione, n. 3/2019, Maggioli Editore

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS IN GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM DUE TO THE POLICY IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES?

Hungary

In Hungarian schools there is a range of subjects, programmes, curricular and extracurricular activities where there is space for dealing with issues of gender equality. Among school subjects, the most obvious are humanities and social science subjects (literature, history, social studies, philosophy, ethics/moral studies), but gendered content could also be integrated into economics, household studies, specific vocational subjects, and into the natural sciences. Physical education and sex education are special subjects where gender, the body and sexuality are *the* learning content, therefore they could be curricular spaces for tackling gender stereotypes, gender-based violence and gendered aspects of sexuality. However, the integration of gender issues into these subjects is not widespread and is not supported by the curriculum. Teachers' initiatives are typically individual in this area; gender-sensitive teaching content, approaches and methods are used by a handful of teachers per school at most, especially in grammar schools.

In Hungarian schools each class has a form tutor (or a form tutor pair) who is/are responsible for the class community and spend extra time with the class, in and out of school. There are tutor-group lessons every week, where a range of topics, educational and organisational questions and problems occurring in the class community are discussed. Form tutors have their own tutor-group curriculum. Topics of gender equality can be included in this curriculum, but similarly to subject teachers, form tutors initiate this individually, if they do so at all.

Issues of gender inequality can also be the topic for various school programmes, such as School Days, where typically presentations, discussions, exhibitions, plays and other cultural activities are organised. This is often done (especially in grammar schools) by inviting NGO experts in the given area.[7]

Sweden

The Swedish School curriculum states clearly:

"Education is to be designed in accordance with basic democratic values and human rights, such as the inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal dignity of all people, gender equality and solidarity between people."[8]

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[7] *Gender Equality in Secondary Schools in Europe: Case Studies from England, Hungary and Italy. – not yet published*
[8] (Education Act, 1 Chapter, 5 §)

However, there are some challenges to fulfil this. The Swedish School inspection also states in a recent report (2018):

The results show above all that there are variations in the view of the democracy mission, which in turn means that it is staged in a variety of ways in teaching. Citizens fostering elements are present in all lessons, even if they are not sufficiently carried out. The integrated democracy mission, gender equality as well as the students' involvement and participation needs to be clarified and reinforced in teaching, which places great demands on teachers competence, not least in terms of a critical and norm-critical attitude.

United Kingdom

Proportion of GCSE entries awarded a C/4 or higher in the United Kingdom between 2000 and 2019, by gender

https://www.statista.com/statistics/282484/gcse-pass-rate-in-uk-by-gender/

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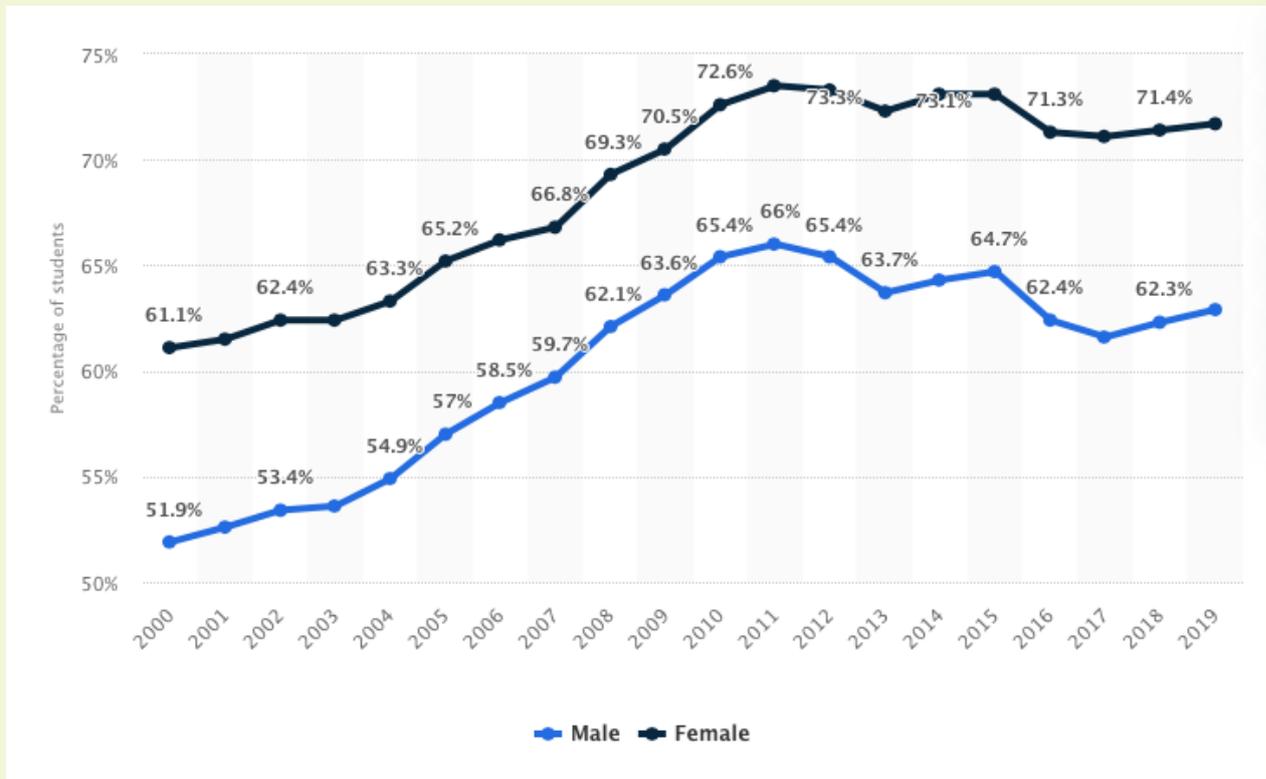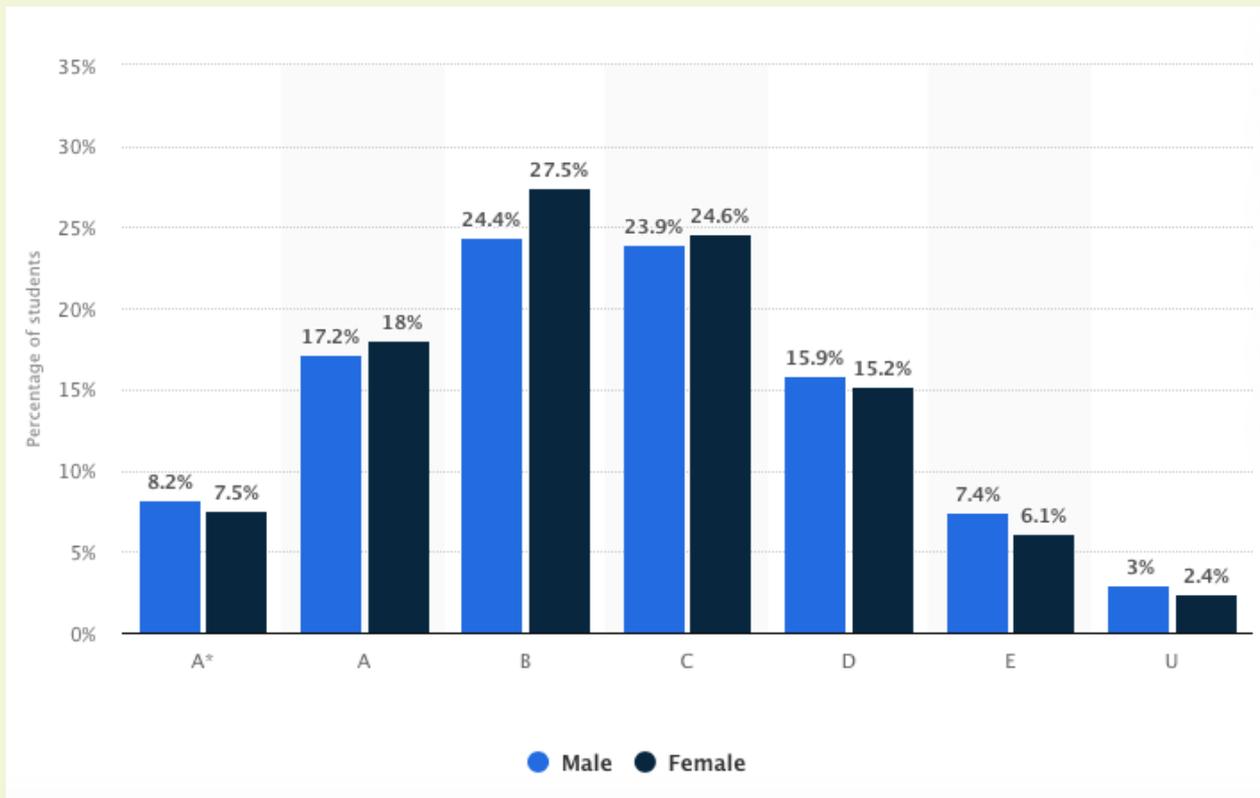
Italy

Gender inequalities in school are widespread, but they are often unnoticed. Children and young people spend much of their time in compulsory school, learning and giving meaning to gender roles and relationships, and negotiating power within and between different groups, whether or not this is part of the formal teaching programme. This is why education and teaching materials must be developed, "in order to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages, to eliminate prejudices and promote and contribute to the formation of conscious decision-making skills, communication and risk reduction for the development of relationships based on respect and based on gender equality and human rights".[9]

Today girls have equal access to all high school and university courses, graduate with higher grades, enroll more at university and graduate earlier: the percentage of 25-year-old women who finish a university course and obtain a second level degree is 23.6% against 15.3% of men[10]. Based on a superficial reading of the data, discrimination does not seem to exist.

The problem clearly emerges when the types of courses of study to which boys and girls enroll are analysed and the educational segregation becomes evident[11].

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[9] *I percorsi di studio e lavoro dei diplomati e dei laureati*, 2015, https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/190692
[10] C. Ottaviano, L. Mentasti, *Oltre i destini. Attraversamenti del femminile e del maschile*, Ediesse, Roma, 2015.
[11]Miur,Le carriere femminili nel settore universitario, 2016, http://ustat.miur.it/media/1091/notiziario_1_2016.pdf

Women remain over-represented in the linguistic disciplines and in those related to assistance and care while they are under-represented in scientific, mathematical, information technology and engineering careers.

In the academic sphere, for example, even if many women find space, few manage to overcome that invisible barrier - that "crystal ceiling" - which prevents them from reaching the top of their careers and the most problematic area remains that of scientific disciplines. In Italy, among the Italian university teachers of STEM disciplines, only 37.4% are women. Furthermore, if we look at the different roles, it is possible to observe that first level female teachers are only 18.3% while 33% are in the role of second level teachers, and 42.1% are permanent researchers[12].

The school itself, together with families and society, often contributes to reinforcing gender stereotypes and prejudice, rather than breaking them down. For example, a research conducted in Italy by Biemmi shows how, even when they are faced with unrestricted access to various fields of study and various careers, girls still "choose not to choose", diligently channelling themselves into those sectors that have been traditionally assigned to women. Biemmi concludes that the collective imagination influences the choice, nourished by the continuous messages of families and schools. The hidden curriculum, that is, all those "educational implicit" such as the ideals and values of teachers, language, methods of relating to the class, is permeated by implicit messages that often work against explicitly pursued educational objectives. Textbooks for primary school, for example, are still permeated with stereotyped contents and images both in reading passages and in the subjects, the language used both in society and in the school environment continues to re-propose the masculine for everyone, denying made visible to the other half of humankind, teacher training lacks specific attention to gender issues. There is a lack, at various levels (family, school, political-legislative), of awareness of the gender discrimination we live with on a daily basis (in language, advertising, domestic and professional roles) and which continue to influence the school and professional choices of young people.[13]

Some schools are real laboratories for the valorisation of differences, also of gender, that carry out projects related to equal opportunities in the educational offer. However, in the majority of cases, there is still a lack of training and a lack of sensitivity of the teaching staff to gender issues, which leads to a re-proposal at school level of gender, sexists and homophobes stereotypes.

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[12] "La disParità di genere a scuola (Goal 5)"di Areta Sobieraj, Valentina Guerrini, Costanza Mattesini, Rivista dell'istruzione, n. 3/2019, Maggioli Editore

[13] Free translation of TEMATICHE DI GENERE: Contribution: Irene Biemmi – University of Florence | Riccardo Guercio, Désirée Olianas – Nuovo Maschile | Carlotta Monti – Casa della Donna Pisa, Arcilesbica Pisa | Giulia Rosoni – AIED | Rossana Scaricabarozzi – Actionaid | Lorella Zanardo – Il corpo della donne, Nuovi occhi per I media. Facilitator: Giulia Rosoni. https://www.italiachecambia.org/visione-2040-tematiche-di-genere/)

SOME PERSONAL OPINIONS

Opinions on what would be necessary to be changed in the different countries to tackle gender inequalities. NOTE, THAT THE FOLLOWING ANSWERS DO NOT REPRESENT ANY OFFICIAL OPINIONS OF THE PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS.

Balazs Nagy (HU)

We need a new government for a real change in this field. Without a governmental support (or even against a governmental repression) only bottom up initials have some chance to make a change if any, these days in Hungary. Schools need support coming from outside of the former educational system, which could offer possibilities for NGOs, but due to the current socio-political context discussed above, most of the schools are reluctant or even adverse, when NGOs offer programmes or educational support in relation to gender and gender equality.

Mathias Demetriades (SW)

I do not think the policy itself or the different school curricula need to be changed or reformulated. There is indeed a very strong mandate for teaching gender equality for teachers since it is so strongly emphasized in our national and local policy documents. However, as the result indicates (question nr 8) all teachers need to take this mission seriously and implement it in their everyday teaching. Thus I would like to see the following improvements:

- More professional training on gender equality issues. Sharing best/next practise
- Increased emphasis on the national curriculum's notions on gender equality
- Less theme weeks and more integrated teachings on gender equality issues
- More interdisciplinary work on gender equality in Swedish schools.
- Daring to discuss controversial issues such as sex, feminism etc
- Promote a whole school approach, involving head teachers and all teachers and other staff in school.

Jason Ward (UK)

The UK does have some positives when thinking about Gender equality. There is still however a view that gender equality is a focus on women's and girl's attainment and placement in 'top jobs' and industry. There is lack of focus on allowing boys and men to choose career paths that may be described as 'feminine'.

The UK does have school curriculum subjects that look at gender, specifically the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education which is a school subject through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future. These skills and attributes help pupils to stay healthy, safe and prepare them for life and work in modern Britain.

Although these subjects are compulsory, the attitudes to these subjects in terms of importance is actually quite low meaning students do not take exams or obtain any qualification in this subject meaning there is no marking for learning. In order to act long lasting change Education must be key

and to do that we need to look at where in education they are learning this information and seeing if the teaching is effective to prepare future generations.

Anna Bartoli (IT)

Despite the fact that in recent years the attention, also in the media, to gender inequalities and violence against women and homophobic violence has grown significantly, the political, economic and social measures adopted so far have proved ineffective in ensuring gender equality, equal access to opportunities and full gender citizenship in Italy.

An additional critical element is the spread of sexism and homophobia through the anti-gender movements such as 'Manif por tous' and the Standing Sentinels (Sentinelle in piedi), or the Pro-Life Movement. This movements question, not only the possibility of change towards a society in which the LGBTIQ+ community finds instruments of guarantee and protection and greater political and social viability, but also the achievements of the 1970s in terms of the right to reproductive health and self-determination of women and they fight against the phantom "theory of gender", especially in schools.

It is fundamental to defend the rights already obtained, guaranteeing the secularity of the state, and continue to question and debate the predominant hetero-normed patriarchal culture, including male in the gender debate.

To do all this we need to start from education through the introduction of an equal educational model that pays attention not to convey stereotypes, starting from kindergarten.

It is necessary to introduce specific professional training for teachers, both men and women, which really does promote fairer educational models and make it possible to overcome gender stereotypes. Introducing sexual and emotional education, training programs on gender stereotypes and orientation, courses to combat gender-based violence and homo-lesbian-transphobic bullying in schools.

Still with regard to training, this should be extended to the public sector introducing compulsory training on gender issues for all operators working in the fields of social and health care, education, law enforcement, judiciary.

SUMMARY

Statistically the four countries can be divided into two groups: Hungary and Sweden on one hand, the United Kingdom and Italy on the other are very similar, if we only look at the pure demographic data. But if we take a closer look at the schooling systems of these countries, and how education deal with gender and related issues in the four partner countries, the picture is much more diverse. A north-south division appears, when we look through the gathered information in the first part of this review.: Sweden ranks first in the EU on the Gender Equality Index, the United Kingdom is 5th, Italy is 14th and Hungary is on the bottom of this list, the 27th.

Timewise, more or less all the four countries' education system has the same amount of time to have an affect on the subject of their activity: the student. Children (and young adults) spend at least 10 years in the system, which means the school has enough time to sensitize them, and give impetus (or a solid base) to the process of reaching gender equality in the societies of the EU. Despite the fact that (at the time of editing this review) all four countries are part of the EU, therefore they are all supposed to follow the EU's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, some of the partner countries seem to be reluctant to acknowledge their institutional responsibility in tackling gender based violence, and prejudice. A Swedish teacher has to embed gender and related issues into his/her everyday teaching practice, meanwhile a Hungarian teacher in some schools might risk getting into trouble (unofficially, of course), when using the term "gender" at school.

Probably a dedicated Hungarian teacher faces more difficulties if he/she wants to deal with gender and related issues in his/her teaching practice compared to teachers from other partnering countries, but explicit work on gender equality and stereotyping is largely the interest of only a few dedicated teachers even in the UK.[14]

We hope this review might support all of them to get a better picture, and support them in their everyday work.

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[14] H. Griffin: Gender Equality in Primary Schools, London 2018.

SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES AND CASE STUDIES

Hungary

Please give definitions of gender equality to you and your school.

Our school aims to ensure inclusive quality education, and we aim to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all our students.

Gender equality is one of the main topics in ethics classes, and form teachers put special emphasis on helping students understand its importance in every field of life.

Around 60% of our students are boys, but many of our outstanding students are girls. On the other hand, most of our teachers are female, although the number of male teachers in our institution is higher than the Hungarian average.

What initiatives have you or your school taken to tackle gender inequalities in school?

It has become a core topic in various subjects (ethics, form teachers' classes, media lessons, foreign languages, literature), and discussions are held to let students express their feelings, share their experiences, and learn about the topic.

In our annual students' day, it is a reappearing topic.

Does your school have any gender specific policies? (e.g. anti-bullying strategy with a gender section)

There is no clear gender-specific policy, it is implicitly part of the school strategy and school policies.

Case study

How did you address the topic of gender equality in your teaching practice? (Please, be as specific, as you can: age and number of students, methods used, etc.)

English lesson: sports (13-year-olds)

We watched a commercial that featured female Olympic champions. Students were asked to collect words and expressions to describe the women in the video, and then they discussed what qualities they needed and work they have done to achieve these results.

The idea that men sports are different naturally appeared and a lively discussion started, ending with the idea that whatever the gender is, stamina and hard work lead to success.

It was interesting and moving at the same time to see how boys listened to girls, and how the discussion developed from a teacher-lead exchange of ideas into a real discussion, where participants were listening to each other changing their minds at points.

It was difficult for some students to express their thoughts in a foreign language, but with some scaffolding and peer help, almost everyone managed to share their views.

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Ethics class: making our own decisions (14-year-olds)

Students looked at pairs of photos of different people in everyday situations (university, different jobs, different living conditions) and had to decide which path they would choose.

The original topic (making decisions and its consequences, focussing on education and job opportunities) slowly developed into a discussion about how different paths men and women take in their careers, and how they see their own opportunities as boys and girls. Most of them (boys and girls alike) also expressed their very strong views, that in many cases women need to work harder. They came up with examples from their own families or referred to famous people. Some girl students, however expressed fear that they would have to choose between family and career, which they felt is not fair.

Some boys, on the other hand, said that they found it hard to decide how to behave in certain situations (letting girls enter first, helping them in certain cases, but accepting them as equal partners in other cases).

What was your students/school reaction?

The students felt it was something they never actually talk or even think about. They felt the need to discuss it later.

In one English class they collected and watched videos on the topic (commercials, short films).

What do you believe causes gender inequalities in your country? Do you agree or disagree with the policy in your country?

One of the main reasons is the attitude to traditionally accepted roles, especially in smaller communities.

A very strong narrative of the government-controlled media does not help either.

I believe our country should work harder on forming attitudes, both on the level of laws and law enforcement and communication. Providing a feeling of security at home and in the communities should be the first step.

Family models are also influential, but at some point, peer influence becomes more influential. This is where schools and other organisations in education, even childcare services have a big role. We need to provide alternative narratives, knowledge, and the chance to let children talk about the topic and develop an attitude that can help make a change.

Educating children from a VERY young age would be essential.

Sweden

Please give definitions of gender equality to you and your school.

Every student gets help as soon as they are in the need of it.

It is of great importance that, when asking questions all over the class, you make sure that you give questions to equal number of boys and girls.

Boys as well as girls are welcome to the football ground.

What initiatives have you or your school taken to tackle gender inequalities in school?

Boys are often, of some reason more soundly than girls. Therefore, we are working hard in letting the girls get their voices clear.

We also are having weekly work with the children concerning their knowledge about themselves, who they are and what they think about themselves.

Does your school have any gender specific policies? (e.g. anti-bullying strategy with a gender section)

We are working with gender equality every day and in every class and with every group of children from the day they start in school.

Our curriculum states:

The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between women and men, and solidarity between people are the values that the school should represent and impart.

No one should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief system, transgender identity or its expression, sexual orientation, age or functional impairment or other degrading treatment. All such tendencies should be actively combated. Xenophobia and intolerance must be confronted with knowledge, open discussion and active measures.

The school should actively and consciously promote the equal rights and opportunities of pupils, regardless of gender. The school also has a responsibility to combat gender patterns that limit the pupils' learning, choices and development. How the school organizes education, how pupils are treated and what demands, and expectations are made of them all contribute to shaping their perceptions of what is female and what is male. The school should therefore organize education so that pupils meet and work together, and test and develop their abilities and interests, with the same opportunities and on equal terms, regardless of gender.

Case study
How did you address the topic of gender equality in your teaching practice? (Please, be as specific, as you can: age and number of students, methods used, etc.)

My pupils are in 5th grade. That (in Sweden) means that they today are 11 years old.

I often talk about this issue of gender equality together with the students in my class.

There are 24 children in my class.

Mostly, we are having open discussions and a policy of "give and take".

Now and then, I also give the students homework in watching a certain commercial on TV at home, and then we discuss it at school the day after.

What was your students/school reaction?

They absolutely like it.

They also become aware of the hidden messages in commercials of our time.

They are used to the open discussions we are having in our class every now and then.

What do you believe causes gender inequalities in your country? Do you agree or disagree with the policy in your country?

I think the Internet has a big deal in the issue.

Also films, TV-shows and commercials, are every day sending hidden messages that we as adults must deal with, or our children can become victims of opinions that the "free market" without any limits are putting inside our coming generations.

United Kingdom

Please give definitions of gender equality to you and your school.

Whilst thinking about our school as an individual school we thought it would beneficial to ask for opinions from the school community. Our knowledge of Gender equality is quite extensive due to past projects we have been part of.

Gender equality to us and our school means that all employees rights, responsibilities, job roles and opportunities should be equal and not determined on whether or not the employee of male or female. In relation to our school, both male and female students receive equal treatment and have the same access to all areas of learning and educational input. In other words students should not be discriminated against because of their gender. Gender equality plays an important role throughout the school for both staff and students creating healthier views.

To ensure that all students, irrespective of gender, have an equal footing and stance within the school. All views are taken into account without gender being an issue. Giving all students of either gender (either that to which they were born, or with which they identify) the same opportunities without prejudice. We feel that as a SEN school gender is not influenced by our school community, there is no prejudice towards female/male roles or activities. Many of our students feel that everything is accessible to them.

What initiatives have you or your school taken to tackle gender inequalities in school?

Our curriculum lends itself to being able to introduce new initiatives throughout the year. We have completed lessons and activities within PSHE, Citizenship & History within KS5,4&3 (Gender stereotypes, Jobs throughout time periods & Job roles, Barbie & Ken and Action-man, Advertising) We don't think other than the above we have planned or delivered anything specific, other than making my views on equality plain using 'teachable moments' as they arise in class.

Our school offers positive models with regard to gender equality. Students are expected to treat each other equally irrespective of sex and they are informed about different cultures /communities that allow for discussion around different views.

We do not think there are enough initiatives being used both in our school and the wider curriculum that links Gender equalities or other inequalities. Schools such as ours with SEND or a high proportion of students with disabilities are not considered to require a focus on gender inequalities on their

curriculum. The focus is on disabilities which can create inequalities amongst our young people and gender inequality is not thought to be relevant, which we completely disagree with.

Does your school have any gender specific policies? (e.g. anti-bullying strategy with a gender section)

The school has many different policies as bullet pointed below. Although these policies are present in school and accessible to the whole school community, we feel this is more of a legal requirement/tick boxing exercise and these are not utilised and many would not feel protected by these.

Single equality Act - this came into place in 2010 and brought together three individual policies being Race, Gender and disability into one policy. The act covers all the equality areas there being 7 in total: age, race, gender, disability, gender identity, religion/belief and sexual orientations.

Maternity and Paternity leave policies.

To provide a safe inclusive learning environment within school

Case study

How did you address the topic of gender equality in your teaching practice? (Please, be as specific, as you can: age and number of students, methods used, etc.)

Before school was disrupted by COVID-19 we had the opportunity to trial an initiative using our knowledge gained from a previous project. Our Post 14 students (14 - 19) have had the opportunity to explore Gender equality in greater depth. (One lesson per week for 8 weeks) We began with using Google forms and widgit software to assess students current knowledge which provided us with a baseline of students current knowledge of Gender and also gave us a starting point for a gender project. We quickly realised although we had a starting point for our gender project we would need to start by exploring exactly what gender is and use the deliver our project over a longer period of time.

We then adapted the gender project originally planned by adding more kinesthetic lessons to engage our students and provide them with opportunities to access the information in a variety of different ways. We decided to explore the concept of children's toys and explore the role of Barbie. The students were able to engage with this topic as previous knowledge and experience provided them with a starting point. From here we looked at Barbie's creation, lifestyle, gender stereotyping in advertisements and careers.

What was your students/school reaction?

We run the project with 38 students and the data gathered showed that 35/38 students upon completion had a basic understanding of the concept and influences of gender. Through the use of a theme students were able to begin to explore gender equality which promoted higher level thinking skills.

Delivering a small proportion of one of the adapted lessons to the other teachers was excellent. It gave not only a platform to show how excellent a Gender project could be when providing quality education for all. This also reduced the inequalities that we have found exist in other projects and also amongst our school community. The lessons we delivered generated lots of discussion about groups of young people that up until now have not been able to access specific topics but possibly would be able to

now using the methods above especially those students who are working below national expectations or those with a SEND.

What do you believe causes gender inequalities in your country? Do you agree or disagree with the policy in your country?

We believe the following contribute to the gender inequalities we face in our county:

Unequal pay

Women are promoted to higher positions less than men

Job roles due to potential pregnancy

Fear of negotiating pay and equal policies

Jobs for boys / girls

Media / Social Media / TV

We do not feel the policies are reflected within our everyday life.

Italy

Please give definitions of gender equality to you and your school.

Istituto Galileo Galilei, Cecina (five teachers gave answers, all female)

"A cross-cutting subject across many curriculum subjects and a specific educational field of intervention"

"Same possibilities"

"Educating for gender equality is definitely an important objective in order to raise girls and boys in a rights-conscious manner. In our school it has now become a goal for most teachers."

"We work a lot on this issue"

"Equal rights and no discrimination or gender prejudice"

What initiatives have you or your school taken to tackle gender inequalities in school?

Istituto Galileo Galilei, Cecina (five teachers gave answers, all female)

"Participation in various initiatives proposed also by external experts to raise awareness on the subject; inclusion of the subject in the curricular programmes of letter teachers; participation by some teachers in specific training."

"To study characters like Frida Kahlo"

"Usually, also through gender language, we try to educate boys and girls on a daily basis. Sometimes it is not necessary to carry out project activities, it is enough to change the point of view with respect

to the content we want to convey. However, on the occasion of November 25th and March 8th the school mobilizes with meetings in the main classroom to reflect a little bit. The classes most interested are the third ones. This year, for example, a Kurdish girl was invited who talked about Kurdistan women, and we also had meetings with women managers who told us about their work. Thanks to the equal opportunities table of the Province of Livorno we also hosted the association Aida - Short Film. She presented us a short film on a section of Italian History, a woman like many others who decides to fight sexual discrimination through education and awareness. Following there was a debate."

"demonstrations, meetings, etc."

"I don't know"

Does your school have any gender specific policies? (e.g. anti-bullying strategy with a gender section)

Istituto Galileo Galilei, Cecina (four teachers gave answers, all female)

"I don't know"

"I don't think that there are any specific policies of the Institute in this area at institute level; there are listening and psychological support desks but not"

"No, no specific actions have been planned even though we have the Fan Project and Bullying Project, both of which include a listening desk with the psychologist."

"Yes"

Case studies

How did you address the topic of gender equality in your teaching practice? (Please, be as specific, as you can: age and number of students, methods used, etc.)

Istituto Galileo Galilei, Cecina (four teachers gave answers, all female)

"I often turn to seventh and eighth grade students to make them observe the role of women in the course of history, specifically expanding the content dedicated to them; I dedicate specific readings to the theme taking inspiration from anthologies or current affairs articles; I make them reflect on the image of women and the models proposed through analysis of advertising messages; I propose videos or short films that highlight stimulating situations to open discussions on the subject; in geography I often dwell on the conditions of women in the world and the rights of girls and boys. I have had meetings with testimonials to encourage participation in the world of work and/or sport with a view to gender equality."

"Gender equality calendar - class 2nd (12-13 years) pupils 23

On the occasion of the Christmas market, to raise some money for the school trips of the boys and girls who cannot pay the participation fee, it was decided to make a calendar. The choice of the theme was immediate: Gender Equality. It was the subject of the three-year class project. We decided to make a grid on excell for the schedule of days which were then deliberately transcribed by hand. For each

month a specific topic was chosen, looking for a temporal relation where possible. For example, our Constitution came into force in January and so we introduced the topic with art. 3 in January., in March we explained why we celebrate Women's Day on March 8, in June the vote for women in Italy and so on. We self-financed the printing of the calendar thanks to the money left over from the Christmas market the previous year. The calendar was sold not only to the parents of the students, but also to teachers, caretakers and all the parents who came to school during the general reception during the Christmas period (free offer). The calendar has provoked great discussion, especially within families. The mothers put it in the spotlight just to talk about it during dinner time. Many of them thanked us because "it was just what we needed", "so the men will realize that we have rights too", "thanks to the calendar, the dads helped the mothers with their domestic chores". These are the comments reported by parents and pupils.

WORK STEPS

1) Realization of the grid with excel (on A3 sheets)

2) Handwriting of days

3) Thematic research on gender equality to be included for each month (on the internet or in books made available)

4) Creation of drawings related to the theme or images of the various female characters

5) Creation of theme frame for each calendar month

6) First calendar assembly

7) sent for printing to the printer (the colour photocopier at school was temporarily broken)

8) Print assembly and binding with spiral binding machine (already supplied by the school)

The work was carried out especially during the afternoon return in co-presence with the teachers of history, Italian and mathematics. For the drawings, the art education teacher was involved, for the grid construction, the teacher of ed. technique. Always present and collaborative teachers of backup. The work was carried out in small groups. Each group had to develop the two-month calendar. First they had to make a draft which was approved by the class and then implemented."

"In my subject it's easy to deal with the topic of sport and gender equality, especially with children in third classes (13/14 years old)"

"I regularly propose to the pupils music pieces by female composers. In order to make it normal for girls to consider a future musical career and for boys to see women in places considered purely male (composer, conductor)."

Oxfam Italy Education Officer

"Oxfam Italia was a partner of Future Youth School Forums project (2015-2018), an EU project that focused on People forced to Flee (Y2) and Gender Equality (Y3) through a specific methodology, the Forum one, tested through the project.

The topic of gender equality was addressed in the framework of the SDGs and especially of the SDG 5. The methodology's final stage is a Youth led Forum that collects all the different views and voices

of young people on the topic developed in 2 different courses: one targeting students who will actively take part in the forum and one targeting students who will organise the forum.

The whole school activities are mainly for teachers to implement in class with their students to prepare them to take part in the forum (and for students to self-study), while the workshops are for students who are going to organise the forums (adding the leadership and project/event management components).

They are all rooted in the non-formal education methodology and use as many methods as possible related to Global Citizenship Education so that the students can learn (also youth led knowledge), think (reflect critically and share views, opinion and experiences) and act.

The testing focusing on gender equality was implemented in Rome, Florence, Arezzo and in Casentino area (still in the province of Arezzo) with students aged 14-19. In total, it involved around 100 students as youth leaders, while the forums impacted many more students, as each school gathered them during their school assembly to take active part in the forum (approx. 50-100 people per 4 Forums).

Available resources:

https://fys-forums.eu/en/fys-toolkit/forum-curriculum

In particular:

Whole School Activities: Teacher Pack and Student Pack *https://fys-forums.eu/en/fys-toolkit/forum-curriculum/367-whole-school-classroom-activities*

The Equality Forum Workshops 1-7 *https://fys-forums.eu/en/fys-toolkit/forum-curriculum/374-gender-inequality-workshop-1-6"*

What was your students/school reaction?

Istituto Galileo Galilei, Cecina (two teachers gave answers, all female)

"They gladly followed the proposed solicitations and especially the girls showed great interest"

"Positive"

Oxfam Italy, Education Officer

"The schools welcomed the project in an open way, as they were focusing on gender equality as envisioned by SDG5 (leaving somehow out formally LGBTI+ issues). However, since we use methods that put the students at the centre, we let students explore the gender equality issues the way they preferred. They focused mainly on:

- *End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere*
- *Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation*
- *Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation*
- *Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life*

The project engaged youth leaders in an in-depth debate that also allowed students who were taking part in the Forum to participate actively through engaging and participatory activities. Teachers underlined that the topic had received a bigger interest than foreseen and had activated students that were rarely engaged in school curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Some students decided to explore the LGBTI+ issues and felt safe to share with the group of students, for the first time, their "coming out" as homosexual young people, sharing stories about their parents and friends reactions, the hate speech against them and they also asked for support. One student became very passionate about the topic and it helped her retrace an abuse she had suffered when she was a child. Many students have kept working on this topic and are now in their University years writing to our educators about how the project helped them have a more complete view on issues they study (as maternal and reproductive health, psychology, medicine in general and law).

We also disseminated the project with a North American University based in Florence, which gave us the opportunity to collect the students' view on this topic (i.e. they found talking about FGM too strong and preferred to keep the discussion on gender-based violence)."

What do you believe causes gender inequalities in your country? Do you agree or disagree with the policy in your country?

Istituto Galileo Galilei, Cecina (five teachers gave answers, all female)

"The causes in my opinion are deeply cultural, a legacy of models that have become unsustainable today. In my opinion, policies at national level do not protect women at all and do not aim to achieve the elimination of gender inequalities. In my opinion, this translates in particular in our country into an immense loss of "human resources" and opportunities for the construction of a more cohesive and united society."

"I think setting "pink quotas" isn't enough. Women need to manage more of the state's affairs."

"The antiquated culture that associates women's names with many proverbs or questionable sayings is unfortunately not yet overcome by everyone. The important thing is to educate since kindergarten to a deconstruction of stereotypes and to a gender equality in order to make all this not a project in itself but a habit (a dress to wear every day with naturalness). Unfortunately, despite the fact that there are articles in our Constitution that tend to guarantee gender equality, this does not actually happen politically. I do not agree with the activation of the pink quotas, on the one hand they allow a greater participation of women in political life, business and beyond, on the other hand they enclose the stereotypes and all the fragility already inherent in the name given (pink). There is still a long way to go. Unfortunately, this period of forced arrest given by Covid-19 will only highlight the non-equal policies implemented to protect women, which, as always, will be the weak side of the economic recovery. (Who will stay at home and watch the children who cannot go to school after the reopening of the factories? The mother or the father? Yes, the babysitter bonus has been given, but those who work know very well that it will not be enough to protect women and deliberately do not adopt the term families)"

"I do not agree with the policies adopted and I think Italy should do more."

"The media carry out an essential activity: there are television programmes, even conducted by women, which are degrading for the female gender, or in the commercials some products are aimed exclusively at one gender, discriminating against the other. The policies adopted at national level are

interesting. However, there are still too few examples of capable people in areas considered to be of the opposite gender."

Oxfam Italy, Education Officer

"I believe gender inequalities are deeply rooted in the patriarchal culture we are immersed in. Policies do not ensure gender equality under any point of view, we still have a long way to go. Luckily, young people are starting to better identify all the small daily words and acts that relate to gender inequality and through GCE projects – and their teachers – they are able to connect what happens in their daily life with the context and the policies, at local, national and international level.

TALKING ABOUT GENDER – WHY USE DIALOGUE

Using dialogue in the classroom has given a voice to children who otherwise did not have one. The use of children leading their own discussions and controlling its outcome has inspired children from all different ages, backgrounds, areas to believe that their opinion matters.

When discussing about gender with children we can see there is no one answer, one question or one direction the dialogue should go. Simply it's about the safe space to discuss these complex topics that reduces prejudices and enhances refection and learning. With dialogue in the classroom, there is a flow of refection and self-discovery for the pupils in the sessions and each session has the added value to help engage learners in reflecting on their behaviour or preconceptions.

Dialogue models

What we mean by dialogue is a culmination of different methodologies, theories and ideas. In the UK there is the main models, Philosophy for Children (P4C – Sapere[15]). P4C is a model for using dialogue in the classroom that have set structures to follow for dialogue. P4C is a model that comes with training that can be only run by SAPERE. Although this review focuses on dialogue as a whole some of the methods have been adapted from P4C.

 Although using spaces for dialogue in schools is not a therapy, there can be a therapeutic element of sharing and being listened to in the sessions that possibly these children may not have had in other parts of their lives. Therefore, caution is advising about the level of depth that is allowed when talking about the topics in this resource. When using dialogue in the classroom for any learner it is most important in creating a safe space. The more comfortable a pupil feels in a space the freer the dialogue will be. Finally make sure that anyone with a know gender identity that is unique to the other members of the class does not fall into an advocate role, as this can sometimes cause one sided arguments or even lead to children convincing others rather than open discussions.

Role of the teacher

The teacher uses the title of 'facilitator' that term is used to try to differentiate the role from the traditional one of the teacher as the fount of knowledge. Although it will always be some part of a teacher's role to impart knowledge. It will increasingly be their responsibility to assist others in processing the information they receive. The role of the 'facilitator' has the literal sense of easing others into appropriate practices such as questioning, reasoning, evaluating and generating alternative interpretations.

A prime step in this is to cultivate the social and emotional security that will enable members of the group to contribute their best to the enquiry. This almost always involves giving primacy to others, their ideas and their feeling's. In that sense, the role is similar to that of a chair or referee who is charged with seeing 'fair play'.

There is also the responsibility though, especially with children, to guide the group towards better ways of thinking together. This may involve such interventions as calling for clarification of examples,

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[15] Saper and P4C information can be found - https://www.sapere.org.uk/

or for reasons or conclusions etc. It may also, occasionally involve putting a question to the group that is designed to deepen or widen their thinking. It does not however give a facilitator license to push the enquiry into a particular direction just because it suits their own particular interest. It is the interests of the community that counts, though there is often a difficult balance to be achieved here in managing the needs of the particular group with those of the context and the curriculum. Sometimes a problem arises in the discussion and here it is important to ask the group how best to overcome that problem, thus gradually moving them to self –facilitation.

Strategies to extend and develop student thinking include:

- **Thinking time** – encouraging pauses for thought or some moments of quiet meditation on a topic. Remember to provide at least three seconds thinking time after you have asked a question and three seconds thinking time after a child gives an answer.
- **Think – pair –share** – allow individual thinking time about a question, invite discussions on the question with a partner, then open up for class discussion
- **Asking follow-ups** – ask children to extend or qualify what they said by asking questions that challenge their thinking such as 'Why?' 'Do you agree or disagree?' Can you say more? ' Can you give an example?' Describe how you arrived at that answer (See Questioning techniques)
- **Withhold judgement** – respond to student answers in a non-evaluative way e.g. a positive but neutral response such as 'Thank you', 'That's interesting', 'A-ha', I see.
- **Invite the whole group to respond** – encourage a response from the whole group by saying things such as; 'How many people agree or disagree with that point of view?' (Hands or thumbs up, down or side) You can also ask questions such as 'Having heard that, what questions might we ask?'
- **Ask for a summary** – promote active listening by asking for a summary of what has been said e.g. 'Could you summarise Kim's point?' 'Can you explain what Jane has just said? 'Can you tell me the arguments so far?'
- **Play devil's advocate** – challenge students to give reason for their view by presenting opposing points of view, or by asking students to be devil's advocates, 'Who can think of a different point of view or an argument against that?'
- **Invite a range of responses** – model open mindedness by inviting students to consider different points of view: 'There is no single correct answer to this question. I want you to consider alternatives.'
- **Encourage student questioning** – invite students to ask their own questions before, during and/or after discussion. 'Has anyone a question about what has been said?'

Key points of facilitation

Thinking includes a number of important elements that a leader can model and encourage to provide forward movement in a discussion. The leader is there to provide positive cognitive interventions that help take the discussion forward. During the discussion the leader needs to be aware of opportunities to focus attention on the key elements of thinking. These include....

- **Questioning:** Asking good questions to provide a focus for enquiry

- **Reasoning:** Requesting reasons or evidence to support arguments and judgements
- **Defining:** Clarifying concepts through making connections, distinctions, and comparisons
- **Speculating:** Generating ideas and alternative viewpoints through imaginative thinking.
- **Testing for truth:** Gathering information, evaluating evidence, examples and counter examples
- **Expanding ideas**: Sustaining and extending lines of thought and argument
- **Summarising**: Abstracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances

When using dialogue as a prompt for addressing behavioural change it is always vital to consider not going too deep too fast. A controversial topic such as name calling and bullying can be found even in the begging in of the process.

Tips for consideration to establish good communities of practice

- Members of the community collaboratively draw up a code of conduct and agree to collectively ensure that this is adhered to.
- Request one member of the group to sit outside of the community (metaphorically at least) and map all concepts that are raised throughout the dialogue. This role can be rotated so that all members of the community do this on occasion.
- Similarly, one member of the group sits outside of the community and identifies examples of one of the 4Cs (caring, critical, creative or collaborative thinking), possibly focussing on a different one for each enquiry. This role can be rotated so that all members of the community are able to observe and identify the ingredients for a successful enquiry.
- Plot the community of enquiry using initials – draw a line showing the flow of dialogue during the building section. Notice members who make many contributions, notice those who are thinking and listening without making their own verbal contributions.
- Use either an open palm or thumbs up to indicate wish to speak. Each contributor chooses the next person. Agreement should be made that members of the community will always choose a person who is indicating who has contributed less.
- Give 3 counters to each member of the community and each time s/he contributes, a counter has to be surrendered.
- Be prepared to break down into smaller groups "middle words" during the building part of the enquiry.
- Ensure contributions are relevant "How does that help to answer the question?"
- Steer clear of too many personal anecdotes
- Enquiries may take place over two sessions to allow greater time for reflection.
- Provide opportunities for movement within the enquiry, e.g. an active stimulus, rotation of groups.
- Invite whole group responses through pair share, group work or individually thumbs up to agree and down to disagree or traffic light to show the extent to which participants 'go' with an idea.
- Ask for alternative opinions "What would somebody who disagreed say?"
- During first words encourage more than one response "Yes because …but no because…"

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MAKING THE CHANGE THROUGH DRAMA AND STORY

What is Theatre for Social Change?

Theatre for Social change engages people in topics that concern them by discussion and participatory exploration. Participants can explore a variety of different solutions to relevant issues and problems using theatre-based techniques. Theatre for Social change has 2 elements that are used with disengage learners; image theatre and Forum theatre.

Image Theatre

Image theatre costs of using collectives of people to create large group stills or 'sculpts' focused around themes of oppression, power and balance. Forum theatre looks at collectively creation a piece of theatre around an agreed theme. It is the job of the whole group to discuss issues of concern that is relevant to them. This can range from bullying and racism to peer pressure and drug/alcohol abuse and include gender, gender identity and gender discrimination. Usually the stimulus for discussion could be one real situation or situations that the participants are worried about but don't know how to act, for example safety on public transport, how should you react if someone approached you. With disengaged pupils it is an opportunity to choose reasons perhaps why they are not engaging in education.

Forum Theatre

Forum theatre[16] looks at collectively creation a piece of theatre around an agreed theme. Usually the stimulus for discussion could be one real situation or situations that the participants are worried about but don't know how to act, for example safety on public transport, how should you react if someone approached you. When looking at using the stimulus of Gender it is not necessary about discrimination but also examples of the real world that might need examined or explored in a safe spere of drama

For example pupils looking at unknow bias, pupils creating pieces around gender identity. Many Forum theatre performances can take the role of support for others, LGBT groups have run theatre sessions about 'coming out' to parents and finds and rolling the experience of being both welcomed and/or rejected. Either way Forum Theatre provides a space to practice a real-world event and prepare individuals for situations that may occur.

Once a stimulus is decided upon, a group of actors or participants or both create a piece of theatre exploring the problem. The play follows the story of one character **"the protagonist"** who the audience follow the journey of, battling through their problems and issues. The person they are battling is **"the antagonist"**, they are the person we can not become but the person we as a community are trying to battle. Finally, there is an observer or bystander **"the Deuteragonist"**. This person can either be invited into the story by the person in the forum theatre piece or can be replaced by audience members to create an ally for the protagonist. The piece of theatre has many flawed areas; wrong decisions made that make the climax of the piece lead to a disastrous end.

As the play has been performed, it is then the audience's role to change the play for the better. The audience take turns discussing changes that could be made to the piece of theatre that the protagonist

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[16] Boal, A. (1995). The rainbow of desire: The Boal method of theatre and therapy. London: Routledge.
Boal, A. (2002). Games for actors and non-actors. London: Routledge.

could have done differently. Then audience members are asked to stand up on stage and show us what they believe should be done in situations in the play.

The purpose of forum theatre is to create in safe controlled environment examples of problems that people are witness to in our day to day lives. Then as a group look at solutions to these problems. It encourages people to practice making positive change and will help them make real change in the future.

Note: in some cases Forum Theatre stories are created on real life events, people have brought moments or harassment, harm or discrimination to sessions. If this happens it is first of all important to respect the individual who shares their story about using this as a 'here is what you should have done' and more here is an example of what could have happened and what could be the outcome for all of us. In the beginning feel free to use generic examples of discrimination/oppression.

Vital Elements of Forum Theatre

1. Issue of importance established
2. Discover stories and devise that could be inspired by truth. However participants should not play themselves and dwell on their downfalls
3. Avoid this or that stories, multi faced, multi faceted, multiple interventions, and blind alley's
4. Protagonist is who the oppression happens to and should struggle "bravely" so the audience can struggle on his/her behalf; they must want to fight for them.
5. Dyteragonist (do-ter-agonist) is a by standing characters or potential ally, someone who witnesses oppression in the original model and doesn't intervene but has the potential to can be brought into the model more if the spectator chooses an innocent bystander . The Specactors can change places with this person if they choose.
6. The Antagonist is the representative of oppression the oppressor.
7. Multiple points of crisis are essential. Moments of danger and opportunity. Always reflect the complexity of people's lives.
8. Introduce the parameters of the piece. The audience participation elements
9. The joker breaks the 4th wall, could use games to relax an audience, he/she always explains the rules and controls the time lengths of the intervention and is the spark for debate.
10. Agree with the audience where the first point of conflict/area for intervention is.
11. Joker offers the exit route for Specactors in the forum. Be it due to the lack of relevance or other failings.
12. Teach your actors to start/prompt those who are intervening, and help them.
13. Even with the least productive interventions find the positives. As a facilitator research the possible interventions with actors to prepare them.

As the play has been performed, it is then the audience's role to change the play for the better. The audience take turns discussing changes that could be made to the piece of theatre that the protagonist could have done differently. Then audience members are asked to stand up on stage and show us what they believe should be done in situations in the play.

The purpose of forum theatre is to create in safe controlled environment examples of problems that people are witness to in our day to day lives. Then as a group look at solutions to these problems. It encourages people to practice making positive change and will help them make real change in the future.

Always ask:

- Are we learning?
- Are we having fun?
- Is this useful?