

Women in an Equal Europe

Equality Workshop Model



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Produced by:

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Iniciativas de Futuro Para Una Europa Social, Valencia, Spain

Mirovna grupa mladih Dunav, Youth Peace Group 'Danube' (YPGD), Vukovar, Croatia

DAH Theatre Research Centre, Belgrade, Serbia

Co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund and the Arts Council Young Ensembles Scheme



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs
and Trade



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Women in an Equal Europe Introduction

Women in an Equal Europe uses a feminist framework and creative processes of theatre, film and online digital resources to reflect on the experiences of women living in Europe and the power of EU policy to promote gender equality and human rights. This transnational civil society project involves four partners from Ireland, Spain, Croatia and Serbia and uses creative processes of theatre and film and online resources to promote a greater understanding of women's rights and the positive changes that have come about in relation to gender equality as a result of belonging to the European Union. **Women in an Equal Europe** is co-funded by the Europe for Citizens programme of the European Union and the four European partners are:

- Smashing Times Theatre and Film Company (lead partner), Ireland www.smashingtimes.ie
- Iniciativas de Futuro Para Una Europa Social, Valencia, Spain www.ifescoop.eu
- Mirovna grupa mladih Dunav, Youth Peace Group 'Danube' (YPGD), Vukovar, Croatia www.ypgd.org
- DAH Theatre Research Centre, Belgrade, Serbia www.dahteatarcentar.com

Using the arts and political activism, **Women in an Equal Europe** resulted in the creation of a book, a documentary, and a drama workshop model. A series of creative events were held across Europe attended by 1,400 citizens, engaging them in discussion and debate on gender equality, human rights, the role of the EU in promoting gender equality and the kind of Europe we want for the future. An on-line questionnaire was completed by 101 citizens from Ireland, Spain, Serbia and Croatia and a range of communication and dissemination activities were conducted reaching 377,321. The final project reach was 378,721 citizens.

This document contains the **Women in an Equal Europe theatre workshop model**. To accompany the theatre workshop, participants can read the **Women in an Equal Europe book** and view the **Women in an Equal Europe documentary** created as part of the Women in an Equal Europe project. Twenty women were interviewed – five from Ireland, five from Spain, five from Croatia and five from Serbia. The interviews are contained in the **Women in an Equal Europe** book, which can be read by everybody to promote a remembrance of women's equality and experiences of life in Europe ensuring women's voices and stories

are equally heard and acknowledged. The interviews are a fascinating insight into women's experiences capturing the uniqueness and strength of the women as they speak about their lives and the importance of gender equality for all. The book's content was generated by the four European partner organisations.

Alongside the interviews, the book contains articles relating to gender equality in Europe today. The articles, written by Lauren Guy and Ruth Deasy, Ireland, and Kilian Cuerda Ros, Spain, explore the history of the European Union with respect to its role in promoting gender equality through the years and in the years to come; the history of gender equality in the four partner countries; the history of Europe and its position on gender equality dating back to the French Revolution; and the challenges for gender equality that lie ahead. Also discussed are issues such as domestic violence, gender equality in decision-making roles, and pay gaps.

As part of the Women in an Equal Europe project, a new **Women in an Equal Europe Creative Documentary** was made exploring themes of women, feminism and Europe. The documentary is directed by Mary Moynihan, theatre and film maker and features interviews with twelve women from Ireland, Spain, Croatia and Serbia along with a series of nine Vox Pops or statements from women and men exploring women's lived experiences of life in Europe and the intersection between arts, feminism and equality.

The **Women in an Equal Europe Book, Creative Documentary** and **Theatre Workshop Model** can be found on the Women in an Equal Europe page on the following partner websites:

Smashing Times Theatre and Film Company, Dublin, Ireland. www.smashingtimes.ie

Iniciativas de Futuro Para Una Europa Social, Valencia, Spain. www.ifescoop.eu

Youth Peace Group Danube, Vukovar, Croatia. www.ypgd.org

DAH Theatre Research Centre, Belgrade, Serbia. www.dahteatarcentar.com

EU Equality Theatre Workshop Model

Exercise: Warm-Up Game - Energy Circle

Instructions

The emphasis in this exercise should be on participation rather than on doing the exercises in an exact way. For people who may be nervous about the workshop, it is an easy way to become involved without anybody being under the spotlight.

1. Form a circle.
2. Facilitator turns his/her body fully to his/her right and makes eye contact with the person to his/her immediate right and claps his/her hands.
3. This person then makes a similar gesture to the person on their immediate right, passing the clap on.
4. Allow the clap to move all around the circle a number of times without either anticipation or delay and to get a rhythmical flow of handclaps going around the circle without a break.
5. Facilitator then changes the direction of the clap so that it passes to the person on their immediate left and passes all the way around.
6. When this is clearly established, the facilitator then explains that each individual in the circle can then pass the clap energy to his/her immediate right or left.
7. When this is established, the facilitator introduces a sound, for example 'yo' or 'ho' or 'ha', so that participants clap and make this sound simultaneously as they pass energy around the circle. Facilitator makes eye contact with the person on his/her right, claps his/her hands and makes a loud energetic vocalization of 'ha', passed on simultaneously as a single gesture. The sound/gesture should be powerful and vigorous and involving a total commitment of body and voice.
8. The clap/sound can also be sent across the circle. The speed should remain the same, the clap moves quickly across the circle the same as it does around the circle, and the emphasis should be on eye contact and a strong desire to get the gesture to its target.

Exercise: Warm-Up Game – Questions

1. The facilitator asks the participants to stand in a line
2. The facilitator asks several questions. Each participant has the task of moving forward one step if the answer is yes and to stay where they are if the answer is no. Sample Questions:
 - a. Do you like chocolate?
 - b. Do you believe in friendship?
 - c. Do you use Face book?
 - d. Do you believe in the power of the arts to promote social change?
 - e. Do you believe in the power of the arts to promote gender equality?
3. The facilitator can ask any question that creates an atmosphere of sharing and generates an understanding that we have many things in common. The facilitator can adjust or change the questions so they are suitable for the group you are working with – it can be a different set of questions for young people, for women for social activists etc.
4. Questions related to Women in an Equal Europe:
 - a. Do you believe in equal rights for all people?
 - b. Have you ever had the experience of not being treated the same as or being treated on an equal basis to a man (women) at your job?
 - c. Have you ever had an experience of not being treated in an equal manner in a public space?
 - d. Do you believe in social change?
 - e. Do you believe in human rights?
5. Then the participants discuss what happened in relation to positions in the space. The facilitator can briefly introduce terms for social change, gender equality and human rights – see appendix one below.

Exercise: Mapping Europe

1. Participants stand in a line again. The facilitator calls out the names of different cities in Europe and participants are asked to go there, treating the floor space as the map of the Europe.
2. When the map of Europe is established, facilitator asks participants to move again according to the answer they give to the following questions.
 - a. Which city represents the centre of Europe?
 - b. Which city is at the edge of Europe?
 - c. What is the most progressive place regarding women's rights in Europe?
 - d. What is the least progressive place regarding women's rights in Europe?
 - e. Where would you go to initiate change? Make one action that can contribute to change.
3. Again, the participants and facilitator have a discussion in relation to the outcomes of the exercise.

Exercise: Creating Empowering Stories

1. All participants sit in the circle. The facilitator explains the rules. The facilitator is the first person to start by telling his or her story. The rules are that no-one speaks except the person telling the story. Each person has up to five minutes to tell the story.
2. The person on the right-hand side of the speaker holds a watch and keeps an eye on the time. As the first person is speaking, the person who is watching the time, gives the person speaking a reminder when three minutes have passed, by gently touching the person who is speaking on the hand. Then, the person who is watching the time, gives the final notice after five minutes when the speaker has to stop. Then the person who spoke now takes the watch from the person who is sitting at their right-hand side and then he or she looks at the person who is sitting to their left and gives that person a 'look' as a sign to start their story.

3. The person that previously spoke is now the time keeper, as the person to their left now speaks and tells their story, and so on, until the end of the circle. This is the storytelling circle and no-one is allowed to talk or interrupt the person that is speaking. Also, everybody in the circle are asked to not express any verbal opinions. It is about active listening and reflection.
4. Participants in the circle are not obliged to tell a story, if someone is not eager to speak when it is his or her turn, they just give a sign to the person sitting on their left-hand side to go on and they get the watch from the person sitting on their right-hand side. The storytelling circle goes on as long as there are people who want to share the story.
5. Possible topics for the story are:
 - a. Once I initiated change . . . (related to equality for women at the place when the person lives).
 - b. If I had another chance I would react differently to. (related to a situation based on gender equality/equality for women).
6. **Image Theatre:** Once everybody has had a chance to speak, the facilitator invites the whole group to stand up and then invites each person to make an image, using their body and physical actions to express something from the stories that has made the most impression on them. Each person creates an image, all working at the same time. When all the images are ready, the facilitator assists the group to arrange the images into a living tableau, a picture composed or made up of all the images with everybody participating.
7. **Singing tableaux:** Then facilitator then asks the participants to use a word or words from the storytelling circle that made the most impression on them, one or more words that they can remember. The facilitator asks all the participants to stand in the circle again and to add a melody or sound to each of the words. When all participants have added in their sound, the facilitator creates 'chorus' from all of the melodies and sounds in the space. The participants repeat their sounds until they are confident in relation to what they are 'singing'. Once everybody is ready they go back to the 'living tableaux' and incorporate singing into the tableaux so that the participants have together created a large, living, singing sculpture.

Exercise: Thinking/taking an action together

1. The facilitator tells the group they are to be divided into smaller groups and each group will be asked to come up with three answers to two questions which the facilitator will call out.
2. The facilitator divides the participants into smaller groups of three to four people per group and each group spreads out around the space. Based on the ideas, feelings and impressions experienced by the participants from the previous games and exercises, each group is now asked to come up with three answers to two questions.
3. The facilitator calls out question one - What kind of Europe do you want for the future in relation to gender equality, human rights, diversity and peace?
4. Each group discuss their responses amongst themselves with all the groups working simultaneously in the space. Each group can write their responses on post-its and stick them up on a wall, and then collectively discuss them all before deciding on a final three.
5. The facilitator then calls out question two - What can we do to make that happen? This is about asking the group 'Are you aware of how you can influence EU policy? If yes, how can you do this? If no, what ways can we do this? And the facilitator has a list of tips ready to give to the group to assist them in answering the question.
6. Again, each group discuss their responses, write them on post-its, and stick them up on the wall to discuss before deciding on a final three.
7. Each group nominates two people who will feed the answers back to the wider group. Two designated people from each group now have three answers to question one and three answers to question two, that they feed back to the whole group for discussion.

DURATION of Theatre Workshop: Two hours

Tips: How to influence EU policy in relation to gender equality and human rights

The first policy on Human Rights in Europe was developed in 1950 by the newly formed Council of Europe, named **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)** (formally the **Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**). This was the first recognition for the importance of a citizen's fundamental rights in the eyes of the law, however, it wasn't until later after the EU had developed where a concrete policy for human rights was put in place. In 2000, the European Union adopted **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** (which was later binding in all EU countries in 2009), a policy that guarantees every citizens Fundamental Rights in every EU country. This is upheld by All EU institutions – the Commission, Parliament and Council, who are all responsible for protecting Human Rights. This policy contains:

- The first title (**Dignity**) guarantees the right to life and prohibits torture, slavery, the death penalty, eugenic practices and human cloning. Its provisions are mostly based on the ECHR, although Article 1 closely reflects Article 1 of the German Basic Law.
- The second title (**Freedoms**) covers liberty, personal integrity, privacy, protection of personal data, marriage, thought, religion, expression, assembly, education, work, property and asylum.
- The third title (**Equality**) covers equality before the law, prohibition of all discrimination including on basis of disability, age and sexual orientation, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, the rights of children and the elderly.
- The fourth title (**Solidarity**) covers social and workers' rights including the right to fair working conditions, protection against unjustified dismissal, and access to health care, social and housing assistance.
- The fifth title (**Citizen's Rights**) covers the rights of the EU citizens such as the right to vote in election to the European Parliament and to move freely within the EU. It also includes

several administrative rights such as a right to good administration, to access documents and to petition the European Parliament.

- The sixth title (**Justice**) covers justice issues such as the right to an effective remedy, a fair trial, to the presumption of innocence, the principle of legality, non-retrospectivity and double jeopardy.
- The seventh title (**General Provisions**) concerns the interpretation and application of the Charter.

The third title of this Charter covers **Equality and** deals mainly with the prohibition of all discrimination. It is from this title where The EU policy on Gender Equality was introduced. The EU is dedicated to 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.

There are many ways an individual can promote and influence EU policy in relation to gender equality and human rights. The first way to do this is Education. We need to educate ourselves on what policies are in place in the EU and learn if and how they are being enforced in our own countries. This can be done by visiting The European Commission's [Website](#) to learn about their policies and how they're enforced across Europe.

The second way we can enforce these policies is by opening up a discussion with our friends, family, colleagues and peers. The more we open the discussion on human rights and gender equality, the more we learn where and how to promote and enforce these EU policies.

It is also important to explore these policies within the art. Artistic and creative mediums such as theatre, film and drama workshops allow citizens to talk, view and look at discrimination in a different light and in a safe and secure environment. By seeing these policies enforced through creative mediums can show us how they can work in practise and encourage audiences and citizens to promote similar situations in their own communities.

And finally, it is important to visit schools and our young people, to teach them about these EU policies and how without them, their lives would be very different. When educating our young people on the importance of our fundamental rights we can encourage the right kind of social change for our future.

Key Terms

Gender Equality: Gender equality is achieved when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making, and when the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured.
www.genderequality.ie

Gender Equality states “that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally considered, valued and favoured”. Implementing gender equality fully requires equal representation and participation of both men and women in the economy, decision-making, as well as in social, cultural and civil life. Only in this way will men and women reach their full potential in society. It implies a fair distribution of resources between men and women, the redistribution of power and caring responsibilities, and freedom from gender-based violence.

Feminism: Feminism is about advocating for and achieving women’s rights based on the principle of equality ensuring there is social, political, economic and cultural equality for all. Feminism is about equality for men and women equally.

Human Rights: The idea of ‘human rights’ implies that a person has a set of rights because she or he is a human being. While someone may have extra rights because he or she is a citizen of a particular country (the right to vote in that country, for instance) human rights apply to everyone irrespective of their country. Human rights are basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world and are based on core principles of fairness, respect for human dignity, tolerance, equality, autonomy and the belief that everybody should be treated equally and with dignity – no matter what their circumstances.

Equality and Human rights apply to everyone equally – men, women, older people, children, young adults, minority ethnic people, people with disabilities, migrants, members of the travelling community, gay, lesbian and transgender people, etc.

Gender: Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society associates with men and women. The term 'gender' differs to the closely related term 'sex' which refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women. 'Male' and 'female' are sex categories, while 'masculine' and 'feminine' are gender categories.

Aspects of sex will not vary substantially between different human societies, while aspects of gender may vary greatly. Gendered differences – those that society associates with men and women – have no necessary biological component, it is cultures that construct differences in gender and these differences are changeable over time. Some examples of sex characteristics:

- Women menstruate while men do not;
- Men have testicles while women do not;
- Women have developed breasts that are usually capable of lactating, while men have not;
- Men generally have more massive bones than women.

Some examples of gender characteristics:

- In the United States (and most other countries), women earn significantly less money than men for similar work;
- In Saudi Arabia men are allowed to drive cars while women are not;
- In most of the world, women do more housework than men.

'Gender' refers to the roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women by society. Girls and boys are not born knowing how they should look, dress, speak, behave or think. Their socialization is influenced by their families, peers, communities and institutions such as the media. Gender norms are created by our culture, not by nature and can change over time. A few decades ago, for example, it would have been highly unusual, if not unthinkable, for a man to choose to give up work in order to stay at home and look after his children. Despite many advances in equality of opportunities and rights between women and men, 'traditional' or 'rigid' gender norms remain pervasive in Europe and across the world amongst both adults and young people. Gender norms can be so ingrained that people often accept them as 'the way things are' and fail to recognise the power they have to shape expectations and behaviour (Carroll, 2010).

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any kind of discrimination or harmful behaviour or act, which is directed against a person on the basis of their (real or perceived) gender or sexual orientation. GBV may be physical, sexual, psychological, economic or socio-cultural. Its root causes need to be understood in the context of gender norms, values and beliefs which support unequal hierarchies of power between women and men but also among men and among women. These hierarchies of power not only make gender-based violence possible, in some cases they create an environment where GBV is tolerated and even considered acceptable. Perpetrators may include family or community members and those acting on behalf of cultural, religious or state institutions.

Gender-based violence affects both women and men but disproportionately affects women and girls, reflecting their subordinate status in society. Different groups of women and men, such as those belonging to sexual minority groups, are also likely to be disproportionately affected by gender-based violence. Source: Youth4Youth, A Manual for Empowering Young People in Preventing Gender Based Violence through Peer Education, www.medinstgenderstudies.org.

Social Change: Social Change refers to an alteration in the social order of society. This alteration or change may include a change in nature, social behaviours, social values or social structure, and is often driven by cultural, religious and economic forces. There two ways Social Change can come about. From natural, spontaneous or unique sources like climate change and weather, or the presence of a new group of people in society. The second is by systematic sources, a new stable government, social movements like Civil Rights movements, or scientific or technological forces. Most Social Change comes about when both unique and systematic sources occur at the same or similar time, but the only requirement for it develop is a 'tangible or intangible resource input' or Social Investment. This is any investment strategy which seeks to consider both financial return and social or environmental good to bring about a positive change.

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Co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union



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Book design by EM Creative, Dublin, Ireland. Email: ed@emcreative.ie

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