



Gender Equality GW- Workshop - Overcoming gender inequality in our society

15 October 2019 15.30 – 18.00

Program

Welcome and a short introduction of the need of closing the gender gap in the Baltic sea region. Vice mayor Liselotte Ross, Kalmar.

Workshops

1. How to overcome existing equality challenges and minimize the stereotypes of gender, Chooseklaipeda ambassadors from Klaipeda
2. Herstoric workshop, Gdansk, Anna Urbanczyk, – equality expert and certified trainer from Poland.

Summary of the workshops

1. How to overcome existing equality challenges and minimize the stereotypes of gender

Workshop “How to overcome existing equality challenges and minimize the stereotypes of gender” was divided in two parts.

One part was dedicated to discussions and point of view on the most questionable stereotypes of gender. The participants were given a stereotype and when they were able to choose whether they agree or not (cards: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). The opinion had to be defended by arguments and personal opinions. This part of the workshop was a success – there were many different opinions and discussions were quite intense. Observing the workshop from outside, you can easily see two types of differences between choices. Different choices were made between youth and adults and also woman and men. Unfortunate there was no much time left to discuss the differences of choices and why they are taking over.

The second part of the workshop was dedicated to interactive process. Participants were divided into two groups and had to discuss and decide what are the most important issues women and girls are facing. The decision should have been based on group consensus. After knowing the opinion of the groups, the answers were compared with IPSOS research (8,800 online adults aged 16-64 across 27 countries, 21 Dec 2018 - 4 Jan 2019). After knowing the real statistics, groups got cards with the most pressing issues and 1 euro (represents 1 million),

which they had to divide between that stereotypes and say what is the most important to that group and where and how they would invest money to change those issues and who should be responsible (society, municipalities, governments, etc.). This part of the workshop had a lot of discussions in groups. After hard discussion the group consensus had to be made. The most important part is that female and male participants had to work together and make the decision by making a joint consensus with no gender dominating.

2. Herstoric workshops

The aim of herstoric workshops was to introduce herstoric methodology. It was also based on good practices of herstoric projects from Baltic countries.

We began with the British saying “Behind every great man there is a great women” and the differences between sex and gender. We were figuring out, how, in the past centuries, gender changed the situation of heroines. There were examples of tandems, where the man was famous and the woman, even when her achievements were significant, she was and still is missed out: Leo Tolstoy the writer and Sophia Tolstaya the editor and writer; physicists: Mileva Maric and Albert Einstein, co-authors of the theory of relativity; surrealists and artists: Gala Dali and Salvador Dali; film-makers: Alma Reville and Alfred Hitchcock; Polish activists and politicians: Anna Walentynowicz and Lech Wałęsa.

Then we came to the definition of herstory, which is: Term used to describe history written from a feminist perspective, emphasizing the role of women, or told from a woman's point of view. The principal aim of herstory is to bring women out of obscurity from the historical record. It is a neologism coined as a pun with the word "history", as part of a feminist critique of conventional historiography, which is traditionally written as "his story", i.e., from the masculine point of view.

We spent some time to discuss the role of the sensitive and empowering language we can use in our projects and work.

We worked out tools that help to portray women as a subject:

- using active voice when referring to women,
- giving back the female character the right to herself by quoting her,
- referring to female characters' achievements,
- using gender specific forms, i.e. sensitive language (cleaners not cleaning ladies, poetess, actor),
- structuring the text, prioritizing information,
- (ir)relevance of appearance, personal relationships, including anecdotes when describing female characters
- selecting photos and images illustrating the text,
- avoiding showing women indirectly through their male relatives / overshadowed by male relatives e.g. wife of...

We finished our work with the presentation and achievements of Baltic herstoric projects.

