

**Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13
of the Committee of Ministers to member states
on gender mainstreaming in education**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 10 October 2007
at the 1006th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe;

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members, and that this aim may be pursued, in particular, through common action in the cultural field;

Bearing in mind Recommendation Rec(2002)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for democratic citizenship, adopted on 16 October 2002, which declares that “education for democratic citizenship is a factor for social cohesion, mutual understanding, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and solidarity, that it contributes to promoting the principle of equality between men and women, and that it encourages the establishment of harmonious and peaceful relations within and among peoples, as well as the defence and development of democratic society and culture”;

Bearing in mind Recommendation Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, adopted on 12 March 2003, in which it invites member states to incorporate into school curricula education and training activities aimed at sensitising young people about gender equality and preparing them for democratic citizenship”;

Bearing in mind that the European Ministers responsible for equality between women and men recommended, at the 4th Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men (Istanbul, 13-14 November 1997), that the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG) and the Steering Committee for Education (CDED) work on a joint project “aimed at promoting gender equality education and non-stereotyped education at all levels of the education system”;

Bearing in mind Recommendation No. R (98) 14 of the Committee of Ministers to the member states of the Council of Europe on gender mainstreaming, which recommends that the governments of member states encourage decision makers to “create an enabling environment and facilitate conditions for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the public sector”;

Having noted the Declaration of the European Ministers of Education on the main theme of the 20th Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education on “Educational Policies for Democratic Citizenship and Social Cohesion: challenges and strategies for Europe”, (Krakow, 15-17 October 2000);

Recalling the Declaration of the European Ministers of Education adopted at the 21st Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education on “Intercultural Education in the New European Context” (Athens, 10-12 November 2003);

Bearing in mind the following texts adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly: Recommendation 1229 (1994) on equality of rights between men and women and Recommendation 1281 (1995) on gender equality in education;

Bearing in mind the Council of Europe European Charter for a Democratic School without Violence (2003);

Reaffirming their commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), particularly Articles 2, 4 and 10;

Mindful that, despite the fact that there is a considerable amount of legislation at national and international level to guarantee equal opportunities, that boys and girls are increasingly being educated together in many member states and that there are a greater number of women in the education system, there are still excessive disparities between girls and boys, women and men, in our societies with respect to school and social practices, educational and career guidance, training, employment, participation in society in general and, in particular, decision making, and that these disparities undermine the human rights of both men and women, which include the right to participate fully, as equal partners, in all aspects of life;

Mindful that these disparities negatively impact on women's and men's lives and have implications for our societies, which are too often deprived of women's contribution in the public arena and men's contribution in the private sphere;

Considering that democratic societies must be based on partnership and the equal sharing of rights and responsibilities between women and men, cater for their respective needs, ensure balanced participation in all areas of life and full citizenship rights to every woman and man;

Mindful that representations of femininity and masculinity and models for assigning social roles, which shape our societies, are replicated at school, and that eradicating formal discrimination will not be sufficient to ensure that the school system is a vehicle for de facto equality;

Mindful that stereotyped social roles for the sexes limit opportunities for women and men in fulfilling their potential, that equality calls for gender partnerships to be positive and dynamic, so as to bring about structural change at all levels and, eventually, a new social order;

Concerned about the fact that girls' academic success does not automatically lead to success in terms of the transition from education to the workforce and participation in political and economic decision making and about the lack of academic success and acquisition of social and personal skills by boys;

Mindful of the education system's responsibility to educate pupils/students for active participation in the various aspects of democratic life, be they political, civic, social or cultural, and at all levels – local, regional and national;

Acknowledging that teachers can become agents for the perpetuation of gender-based selection mechanisms or, on the contrary, for social change, and that it is essential to involve schools and the various participants in the education process in promoting gender equality;

Mindful that teacher education and training is crucial in fostering gender equality in education;

Mindful that, at school, the non-formal sphere, namely the hidden curriculum, is just as important as the formal sphere in constructing girls' and boys' identities;

Convinced that equality between women and men and the gender perspective must be incorporated at all levels of the education system from the earliest age, so as to foster, among girls and boys, women and men, the values of justice and participation necessary for the effective and active exercise of democratic citizenship and the building of a genuine partnership between women and men in the private and public spheres,

Recommends to the governments of member states that they:

- I. review their legislation and practices with a view to implementing the strategies and measures outlined in this recommendation and its appendix;
- II. promote and encourage measures aimed specifically at implementing gender mainstreaming at all levels of the education system and in teacher education with a view to achieving de facto gender equality and improve the quality of education;

III. create mechanisms, throughout the education system, to favour the promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in schools;

IV. bring this recommendation to the attention of the relevant political institutions and public and private bodies, in particular, the ministries and/or public authorities responsible for framing and implementing education policies at central, regional and local level, school management bodies, local and regional authorities, trade unions and non-governmental organisations;

V. monitor and evaluate progress arising from the adoption of gender mainstreaming at school, and inform the competent steering committees of the measures undertaken and the progress achieved in this field.

Appendix to Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13

Definitions

For the purpose of the present recommendation:

“gender mainstreaming” means: the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, to ensure that a gender equality perspective is incorporated at all levels and stages of all policies by those normally involved in policy making;

“gender budgeting” means: the application of gender mainstreaming to the budgetary process, namely, gender-based assessment of budgets, bringing a gender perspective into all levels of that process, and restructuring revenue and expenditure to promote gender equality;

“quality education” means: taking account of the following three elements:

- matching performance to expectations (fitness for purpose);
- self-improvement and transformation (focus on processes);
- empowerment, motivation and participation (focus on learners);

“democratic citizenship” means: assuming and exercising one’s rights and responsibilities in society, by participating in civic and political life, and by valuing human rights and social and cultural diversity;

“democratic school” means: a school where governance is based on human rights, empowerment and involvement of students, staff and stakeholders in all important decisions.

The governments of member states are invited to consider the following measures with a view to implementing them:

Legal framework:

1. incorporating the principle of equality between women and men into national laws on education, for the purpose of giving girls and boys equal rights and opportunities at school, and promoting *de facto* equality between women and men in society as a whole;
2. assessing the gender impact of future laws on education and, where necessary, reviewing existing laws from a gender perspective;

Education policies and support structures:

3. launching special programmes to bring the gender mainstreaming strategy into education policies and schools;
4. drawing up action plans and allocating resources to implement the gender mainstreaming programme, including inbuilt monitoring and evaluation;

5. studying the impact of education policies on girls and boys, women and men, providing qualitative and quantitative instruments for gender impact assessment, and using the gender budgeting strategy to promote equal access to, and enjoyment of, school resources;
6. ensuring that the statistics produced by education ministries and authorities are broken down by sex, and published regularly;
7. ensuring that committees or task forces set up by those ministries and/or authorities are gender-balanced;
8. organising awareness-raising initiatives and/or training on gender equality and gender mainstreaming for the staff of education ministries;
9. preparing general documentation on incorporating the gender perspective and gender equality dimension, and particularly examples of good practices, and disseminating this material, *inter alia*, via the websites of education ministries and/or authorities;
10. preparing and disseminating guidelines for schools, teachers and curriculum planners on incorporating the gender perspective and gender equality dimension; making school inspectors more aware of gender mainstreaming as an element in evaluation of schools, and devising indicators for quality assurance and self-evaluation;
11. providing teachers and other education staff with information on international agreements and guidelines on equality between women and men, particularly in the education field;

School governance and school organisation:

12. encouraging school management bodies to introduce gender mainstreaming in schools;
13. sensitising parents and guardians and involving them in schools' work on gender mainstreaming and gender equality;
14. encouraging the wider education community to accept schools' objectives and mission in the matter of gender mainstreaming, and play an active part in implementing that strategy;
15. promoting balanced representation of women and men at all levels of the education process, particularly among school managers and principals;
16. promoting a holistic approach to informal and formal education in schools – an approach that includes life-skills programmes, covers human rights, human dignity and gender equality, develops self-esteem and self-respect, and encourages informed decision making, thus preparing girls and boys for community and family life;
17. promoting a democratic school culture, which includes adopting educational practices designed to enhance girls' and boys' capacity for participation and action, and for coping with change and gender partnership, as a prerequisite for the full exercise of citizenship;
18. encouraging balanced participation of boys and girls in collective decision making and school management, and in all extra-curricular activities, for example, school councils, children's parliaments, youth forums and clubs, students' associations, outings, school exchanges, voluntary work, meetings with local political leaders and information campaigns;
19. encouraging local authorities and relevant officials to support any conversion work (sanitary facilities and accommodation, etc.) needed for schools to accommodate both girls and boys and their lifestyles;

Initial and in-service education and training for teachers and trainers:

20. promoting awareness-raising and training on gender equality for all education personnel, and particularly school principals; producing classroom aids and teacher-training materials on gender mainstreaming in education, and distributing them to teachers;

21. including, in initial and in-service training, content which allows teachers to reflect on their own identity, beliefs, values, prejudices, expectations, attitudes and representations of femininity/masculinity, as well as their teaching practice; teachers should be encouraged to challenge sex-stereotyped attitudes and beliefs, which can inhibit boys' and girls' personal development and prevent them from realising their full potential;

22. bringing equality, diversity and the gender perspective into various areas of initial and in-service teacher training, and particularly: the production, reproduction and transmission of knowledge; the dynamics of teaching (teaching materials and methods; interaction and assessment) and institutional culture (organisation of the school day, school layout and interior design, recreational activities, posters and advertisements);

23. improving the teaching profession's public image and, when necessary, increasing teachers' salaries, for the purpose of encouraging both men and women to opt for careers in teaching, particularly at pre-school, primary and secondary level;

Course programmes, school curricula, subjects and examinations:

24. paying special attention to the gender dimension in course programme content and general curriculum development (particularly for scientific and technological subjects), and revising curricula as necessary;

25. evaluating the place of women in school curricula and the various disciplines, and highlighting their experience and contributions in the subjects taught;

26. taking account, in planning curricula, of girls' and boys' interests and preferences in respect of learning and teaching styles, for the purpose of fostering academic success and broadening the range of educational and career options;

27. making education for private life part of the school curriculum, when necessary, in order to encourage boys and girls to be self-reliant in this area, make them more responsible in their emotional and sexual relationships and behaviour, combat sexist role stereotyping, and prepare young people for a new gender partnership in private and public life;

Teaching materials:

28. making authors and publishers of school textbooks, and of educational, teaching, assessment and career guidance materials, aware of the need to make gender equality one of the quality criteria for the production of these materials and the development of multi-media products for use in schools;

29. encouraging teachers to analyse, challenge and so help to eliminate sexist stereotypes and distortions which these textbooks, materials and products may convey in their content, language and illustrations;

30. encouraging teachers to analyse and counter sexism in the content, language and illustrations of comics, children's books and games, video games, websites and films, which shape young people's attitudes, behaviour and identity;

31. devising and disseminating indicators for the appraisal of teaching materials – particularly textbooks and multi-media products – from a gender perspective;

Teaching methods and practices:

32. including analysis of teaching methods and practices from a gender perspective in guidelines for self-evaluation and quality assurance in schools;
33. making teachers aware of research done on teachers' interaction with pupils of each sex;
34. promoting gender mainstreaming in sports and leisure activities, where gender-based stereotypes and expectations may affect girls' and boys' self-image, identity-building, health, skills acquisition, intellectual development, social integration and gender relations;
35. encouraging girls and boys to explore new roles, activities and areas, and ensuring that they have equal access to all parts of the curriculum and to the same learning experiences;
36. ensuring that non-sexist language is used, and account taken of the gender dimension in teaching practice and throughout schools;

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights:

37. making gender equality a central part of education for democratic citizenship and human rights, and including that and other issues which are vital to democracy – namely, the individual's rights and responsibilities in the private and public spheres – in basic legislation on school systems, as aims to be achieved in curricula, school culture and teacher training;
38. creating school learning contexts which focus on the needs and interests of both girls and boys regarding issues which affect our societies; enabling them to develop and exercise democratic citizenship, *inter alia*, by acknowledging both girls and boys as agents for social change, and devising projects which encourage initiative, give them action-geared knowledge and skills, and so forge links between life at school and outside;

Educational and career guidance:

39. making gender mainstreaming one of the objectives of educational and career guidance;
40. encouraging and training guidance staff to use gender mainstreaming, so that they can analyse and counter the effects of sexist socialisation when necessary;
41. exploring the influence of female and male role perceptions on girls' and boys' identities and life plans, and promoting discussion of educational and career choices in the classroom;
42. promoting co-operation between schools and firms, for the purpose of giving girls and boys a better idea of the openings available in various sectors, and particularly in occupations dominated by one sex;
43. compiling and disseminating sex-based statistics on various careers;

Preventing and combating sexist violence:

44. teaching young people to consider and interpret relationships with reference to gender equality, human rights, power relations and violence;
45. providing guidelines to help schools to ensure that respect for human beings is the basis of their activity, and prevent/combat any forms of individual or collective violence or discrimination which generate unsafe situations, fear, persecution, psychological or sexual harassment, physical assault or sexual violation of girls and boys in ordinary school life;
46. raising the awareness of education staff and training them to detect, analyse, respond to, and combat all forms of sexist violence;

47. making girls and boys aware of the dangers of exploitation, sexual abuse and trafficking to which they are exposed, ensuring that schools can respond quickly to serious violations of their sexual integrity and safety (incest, rape, paedophilia);

48. requiring schools to devise policies and procedures to deal with gender-based bullying, harassment and violence;

49. making school principals and teachers aware of violence rooted in custom and culture, affecting either women or men, so that they can analyse and act on it, and support the right of girls to self-determination;

Vulnerable groups:

50. promoting specific measures for girls and boys from groups whose customs and culture make for early school-leaving, and focusing parents' attention on this issue;

51. promoting specific measures for young people from disadvantaged groups, both boys and girls, who drop out and/or face social exclusion;

New information and communication technologies:

52. adopting cross-sectoral strategic guidelines on the need to apply gender equality criteria in using information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and, in particular, developing and selecting multi-media products for use in schools;

53. promoting equal access to, and use of, ICT for girls and boys from an early age in schools, and other formal and non-formal training and education contexts;

54. analysing how new information and communication technologies are used by girls and boys,

Media:

55. encouraging exploration of the role which the media can play in teaching and helping young people (girls and boys) to develop critical attitudes to sexist representations of femininity, masculinity and gender relations in society;

Research on gender and education issues:

56. initiating and supporting research on gender and education, for example:

– research on sexism in the oral and written language used in the classroom and elsewhere in schools, including inter-pupil communication;

– research on innovative projects on gender stereotyping and pupil behaviour, representations of masculinity and femininity, new identities for girls, and relations between girls and boys, with special reference to aggressive and abusive behaviour;

Monitoring:

57. collecting and processing, on a regular and ongoing basis, statistics on pupils and other participants in the education process, broken down by gender and covering levels of instruction, courses of study, disciplines and career options (particularly in scientific and technical subjects), publishing them regularly, and ensuring that they are widely distributed;

58. implementing this recommendation by monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming policies, practices and results;

59. regularly evaluating measures adopted and action taken, publishing the findings and disseminating them widely among the parties concerned.