

# **EMPOWERING EDUCATION TRADE UNIONS TO ADDRESS GENDER EQUALITY IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION THROUGH SOCIAL DIALOGUE**

TRAINING WORKSHOP  
Vilnius, 25-26 February 2019

## **REPORT**



EUROPEAN TRADE UNION COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION  
COMITE SYNDICAL EUROPEEN DE L'ÉDUCTION



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## ABBREVIATIONS

BUPL	The Danish National Federation of Early Childhood Teachers and Youth Educators
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EEPU	Estonian Educational Personnel Union
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ETUCE	European Trade Union Committee for Education
FLESTU	Federation of Lithuanian Education and Science Trade Unions
FSLE	Fédération des Syndicats Libres de l'Enseignement (Romania)
LIZDA	Latvian Educational and Scientific Workers' Trade Union
LTESTU	Lithuanian Teachers, Education and Science Trade Union
NSZZ "Solidarność"	National Education Section NSZZ "Solidarność"
SEB	Syndicat des Enseignants Bulgares (Bulgaria)
SNES-FSU	Syndicat National des Enseignements de Second Degré (France)
SNUipp-FSU	Syndicat National Unitaire des instituteurs, professeurs des écoles et PEGC (France)
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TUS	Teachers Union of Serbia
UIL-Scuola	Unione Italiana del Lavoro- Scuola (Italy)
VBE	Verband Bildung und Erziehung (Germany)

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The second training workshop of the ETUCE project [Social dialogue and gender equality: Empowering education trade unions to address gender equality in the teaching profession through social dialogue](#) took place in Vilnius, Lithuania on 25–26 February 2019.

Recent socio-economic changes in Europe, the rapid spread of digital technology, and migration have had a significant impact on gender equality. However, ETUCE studies reveal that less than 40% of the education trade unions deal with the gendered effect of the economic crisis and address issues of gender equality in social dialogue. This project therefore seeks to provide education trade unions with concrete tools and practices to address the challenges of gender inequality through enhanced social dialogue in the education sector at national, regional and local level. This two-year project (December 2017 - November 2019) continues the work that ETUCE and its member organisations have achieved in this field and seeks to update the existing [ETUCE Action Plan on Gender Equality](#) (2010) while promoting concrete measures for its implementation at national and local level. This training workshop '*Education Trade Unions Addressing Gender Equality Through Social Dialogue*' is one of several activities that the ETUCE Secretariat is organising in the project period from December 2017 – November 2019, and is the second of three workshops on addressing gender equality in social dialogue. More than 30 participants, representing Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Romania and Serbia were in attendance at this workshop in Vilnius. The first workshop took place in Rome on 14–15 January 2019 and was attended by representatives from ETUCE member organisations in Albania, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey. A third and final workshop is to take place in Munich in spring 2019. The findings and good practices collected during the three workshops are to be presented in the online database of good practices and used to update the existing ETUCE Action Plan on Gender Equality (2010) in order to better support ETUCE member organisations in promoting gender equality within education trade unions and in the teaching profession with a view to

providing concrete measures to ensure the gender equality perspective in policy-making at national and local level. A final conference is due to take place on 16-17 September in Bucharest, Romania.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Provide education trade unions with concrete tools and practices;
- Raise awareness of the need to include the discussion on gender equality in social dialogue at national and European level in the education sector;
- Identify major factors in gender inequality in the teaching profession;
- Update the ETUCE Action Plan on Gender Equality;
- Assess the implementation of the Recommendations of the ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality

## 2.PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP

The project is led by an Advisory Group who provide guidance and field knowledge, assist in the design of the online survey activity, contribute to training workshops and the project conference as well as to the creation of an animated gender equality clip which is to be released before the end of the project. The Advisory Group consists of six representatives from national education trade unions for each level of education:



Ute Foit, VBE, Germany,



Alexandra Cornea, FSLE, Romania



Gabriella Tønneson Lanyi, BUPL, Denmark



Rossella Benedetti, UIL Scuola, Italy



Alexandra Bojanic, SNUipp-FSU, France



Inga Puisa, FLESTU, Lithuania

## 3.OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

Following up on the objectives of the ETUCE Work Programme 2017-2020, ETUCE is committed to promoting concrete measures for enhancing gender equality in the teaching profession. This commitment was demonstrated by the adoption of a Resolution at ETUCE's Special Conference in Athens 2018, which mandates the Standing Committee for Equality to develop an Action Plan for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. In light of ETUCE's campaign aimed at candidates for the 2019 European Parliament elections, **Chair of the ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality, Rossella Benedetti**, underlined the need for an attractive teaching profession, which appeals to men and women equally to secure a democratic, prosperous and equal Europe.

## WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- To share good practices of tackling inequality in the education sector through different social dialogue instruments and to acquire knowledge and expertise;
- To discuss the outcomes of the online survey and to enrich the research report with specific country cases;
- To collect recommendations for the ETUCE Action Plan on genderquality

From left to right: Inga Vanga, LIZDA, Latvia - Rossella Benedetti, Chair of ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality - Inga Pavlovaite, Expert





## 4. EUROPEAN CONTEXT: GENDER, EDUCATION, AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

**Virginija Langbakk, Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**, reported on EIGE's contribution to the European and national efforts to eradicate gender inequalities and gaps. The role of EIGE is to provide the European Commission with robust facts so that sound decisions can be made which promote gender equality, in particular regarding the use of the European budget to strengthen gender equality. In order to obtain factual information and to raise awareness, EIGE runs research projects on topical matters, such as digitalisation and the participation of women in courses in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), gender-related challenges in education and lifelong learning. Langbakk informed participants that the focus of this year's EIGE's Gender Equality Index would be on work-life balance in the hope that the EU would pay more attention to this critical issue. This report is also to include a risk assessment in relation to gender-based violence to shed light on femicide and silent deaths in Europe. Langbakk commended the work being conducted by education trade unions in the sphere of gender equality and expressed her desire to cooperate more closely with ETUCE and its member organisations in the future.

(center) Virginija Langbakk, Director of European Institute for Gender Equality delivering welcome message



## 5. PRELIMINARY SURVEY RESULTS

As part of this project, ETUCE commissioned desk research and an online survey to identify national findings relating to existing career segregation in the teaching profession and to identify and analyse the ways gender equality is addressed by education trade unions in social dialogue. **Inga Pavlovaite, Project Researcher**, reported on the preliminary survey results to the workshop participants.

47% of ETUCE members responded to this survey representing 76% of countries in which ETUCE has members. Despite gender equality being enshrined in EU treaties and legislation, significant gender gaps remain in employment, and are particularly acute in southern Europe. In the education sector, women continue to be over-represented in lower-paying positions and under-represented in higher-level positions. The survey revealed that apart from tertiary education, the teaching profession is not sufficiently

50% of trade unions have taken action to address the unequal representation of men and women in different sectors of education



Just 40% of education trade unions have internal gender equality policies in place!



(right) Inga Pavlovaite, Project Researcher presenting the preliminary research results



attractive for men. Furthermore, female teachers are considered more suited to primary and early childhood education, posing a challenge for men who wish to work with younger age-groups in several countries. As for school leadership, apart from early childhood learning centres and primary schools, men are over-represented in management positions. The survey also demonstrated that young male teachers are more likely to have a mentor, which is important in terms of their career progression.

Reflecting the situation in the education system, while education trade unions' membership is predominantly female only 60% of highest decision-making positions are held by women. The survey uncovered that work-life balance acted as a barrier for many women pursuing leadership positions and that respondents understood the need to rectify the situation. In addition to these issues, respondents mentioned gender-based violence and harassment as worrying trends in the workplace.

The capacity to address gender equality issues appears to be limited in many trade unions as very few unions have departments solely dedicated to gender equality matters. What's more, fewer unions are setting up timetables or establishing targets than before. The survey also demonstrated that gender equality is often excluded from social dialogue with unions opting for other approaches such as lobbying and awareness-raising.

Approach to address gender equality issues, 2018	Share of answers
Education trade unions alone (e.g. through research, lobbying, campaigning, awareness raising etc.)	27%
Through the work of trade union confederations	25%
Education trade unions, employers and government working together	20%
Education trade union and employers acting together in collective bargaining	11%
Education trade unions and employers acting together through other social dialogue activities (e.g. joint campaigns, lobbying, contributions to consultations etc.)	16%

Preliminary results of ETUCE survey on gender equality within education trade unions, the teaching profession and social dialogue (May 2018 - March 2019)

## 6. GENDER EQUALITY CHALLENGES FACED BY EDUCATORS IN LITHUANIA AND EDUCATION TRADE UNIONS' ACTIONS ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES

**Egle Zukauskaite (LTESTU), Inga Puisa (FLESTU), and Dr. Margarita Jankauskaite (Centre for Equality Advancement),** shed light on the challenges faced by educators in Lithuania and gave concrete examples of how Lithuanian education trade unions were tackling these challenges.

According to [EIGE's](#) Gender Equality Index 2017, Lithuania achieved a score of 56.8 out of 100, which is an increase of only 1.0 point since 2005. This score is below the EU-28 average and progress is happening at a slower pace than in other European countries. Lithuania's Index rank has dropped three positions and currently stands in 19th place.

The Lithuanian panellists reported that a great deal of work is needed on addressing gender stereotypes in the society as a whole and in education in particular. For example, many fathers are not taking full advantage of the generous paternity leave that Lithuania offers as the mother is still considered to be the primary caregiver. Furthermore male and female students continue to be separated for physical education in Lithuanian schools. Women in Lithuania also lack confidence to pursue positions of

From left to right: Egle Zukauskaite, LTESTU, Lithuania and Inga Puisa, FLESTU, Lithuania



leadership within educational institutions and education trade unions and it has been remarked that men are elected more easily than women in Lithuanian elections.

Education trade unions are actively involved in improving gender equality in Lithuania. Inga Puisa (FLESTU) informed participants of FLESTU's involvement in the [GetUp project](#). Under the lead of Unione Italiana Lavoro (Italy) and in partnership with MUT (Malta), this project aimed to address the stereotyping of educational and career choices and to promote gender equality in education, training, career guidance and at the workplace. Egle Zukauskaite (LTESTU) reported that LTESTU provides training seminars for female members to boost their confidence and to become more involved in what is happening in Lithuanian society. LTESTU also has an equal rights committee within the union, albeit very small, which focuses on gender equality issues as one of their responsibilities. Moreover, Dr. Margarita Jankauskaite warned against encouraging too many youngsters to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, pointing out that the education sector must also be promoted as an attractive and rewarding career. After acknowledging the positive evolution of the role of women in society, Jankauskaite reminded participants that male stereotypes also needed to be examined and underlined that men should not be omitted from gender equality discussions.

As regards room for improvement, the panellists agreed that gender equality issues should be included in collective agreements in Lithuania and that women should be better represented in decision-making positions in unions.

From left to right: Alexandra Cornea FSLE, Romania - Dr. Margarita Jankauskaite, Centre for Equality Advancement, Lithuania - Tatiana Babrauskienė, FLESTU, Lithuania

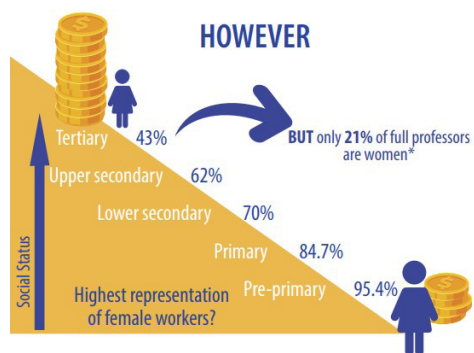


The notion of gender quotas was discussed by panellists and workshop participants and the need for awareness-raising training courses on how to avoid perpetuating unconscious stereotypes in schools was stressed. Furthermore, Tatiana Babrauskiene, FLESTU, emphasised the importance of collective action, recalling that building alliances with parents, students and local communities was a powerful tool to achieve gender equality.

## 7. EDUCATION TRADE UNIONS ADDRESSING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH SOCIAL DIALOGUE

### Horizontal and Vertical Segregation

**Borka Visnic (TUS, Serbia), Elis Cullen (EPU, Estonia) and Andres Udal (UNIVERSITAS, Estonia)** shared their views on how to mitigate horizontal and vertical segregation in the education sector by providing examples of effective actions undertaken by their unions.



Horizontal segregation in the education sector. Eurostat. Education Statistics. 2016.

*Horizontal segregation* refers to the clustering of women and men in different sectors and occupations or sub-sectors of education. Education is the sector with the second highest representation of female workers in the EU labour market, 73%. According to [Eurostat](#), just 10% of pre-primary and primary school teachers are men and only 21% of tenured professors are women. The under-representation of male and female

teachers in certain subjects can also be considered horizontal segregation. Whereas a high percentage of women teach social sciences and languages, the opposite is true for technology, mathematics, science and vocational subjects.

*Vertical segregation* refers to the concentration of women and men in different grades or levels of responsibility. Despite making up a significant share of the workforce in the education sector, women are under-represented in leadership and decision-making positions in education institutions. Similar tendencies can be observed in education trade unions themselves; while membership of trade unions in the education sector is predominately female, mirroring the share of female teaching staff in the labour market (71%), leadership in education trade unions is not representative of union membership and the education workforce.

	Early childhood education	Primary education	Lower secondary	Upper secondary
<b>Bulgaria</b>	96.2	80.5	75.7	75.9
<b>Lithuania</b>	97.1	95.3	85.6	74.9
<b>Hungary</b>	99.8	78.2	78.1	55.3
<b>Poland</b>	99.6	78.5	69.2	59.3
<b>Romania</b>	98.0	78.3	62.6	60.0
<b>Slovenia</b>	95.4	74.3	74.0	58.4
<b>Slovakia</b>	100.0	87.1	87.0	62.6
<b>EU Average</b>	90	67	61	48

Eurostat, Classroom teachers and academic staff by education level, programme orientation, sex and age groups. Accessed on 05/07/2018 - [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ\\_uae\\_perp01&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_uae_perp01&lang=en)



In 2018, only 36% of education trade unions had a female president!



In 2018, only 35% of education trade unions had female deputy general-secretaries.

As is the case in many European countries, deep-rooted gender stereotypes and a lack of confidence among women were noted as the main causes of horizontal and vertical segregation. Andres Udal (Universitas, Estonia) suggested that the Baltic States work together to implement a regional programme to address the lack of social dialogue, and the lack of discussion on gender equality issues in their countries. As for individual solutions, Elis Cullen (EEMU, Estonia) stated that it was necessary to acknowledge the existence of such segregation before implementing concrete measures to address it and suggested that both an internal and external approach be adopted to combat horizontal segregation. The internal approach would involve a lively discussion on the topic of current values led by their union and the external approach would consist of activities that could accelerate change within schools, the teaching profession, and society at large such as:

- stronger implementation of gender-sensitive curricula;
- deactivating hidden curriculum;
- encouraging men to choose the teaching profession;
- and explaining the role of teachers, their responsibilities and the nature of their work to the public.



“

*The gender dimension should be included in every aspect of social dialogue!*

Borka Visnic, TUS, Serbia

”

In order to tackle vertical segregation, TUS, Serbia, is doing its utmost to raise awareness about the lack of women in leadership positions in the education sector by publishing material on their website and holding round-tables. They also organise confidence workshops for female teachers who aspire to be school leaders and have recently received the accreditation for seminars on gender equality as part of regular continuous professional development for teachers in Serbia. This accreditation is valid for a period of three years and was possible due to a new law on National Qualification Framework which allowed education trade unions to be recognised. Likewise, Elis Cullen (EEMU, Estonia) suggests incorporating gender-sensitive pedagogy into the content of initial and continuous teacher training, encouraging men to take parental leave and taking industrial action to put an end to vertical segregation.

From left to right: Borka Visnic, TUS, Serbia - Elis Cullen, EEMU, Estonia - Andres Udal, Universitas, Estonia



## Work-life balance and the gender pay and pension gap

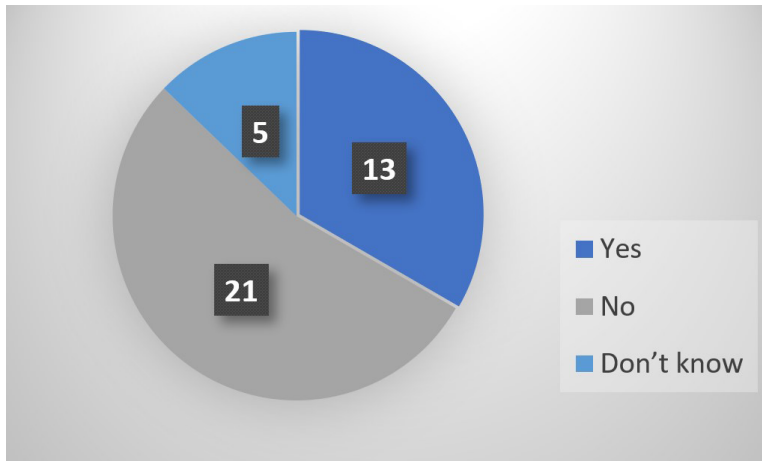
**Tomasz Gryczan (National Education Section of NSZZ “Solidarność”, Poland), Inga Vanaga (LIZDA, Latvia), and Aurélia Sarrasin (SNES FSU, France)** discussed the main challenges related to work-life balance and the gender pay and pension gap in their respective countries and presented concrete examples of how they were dealing with these issues.

### *Work-life balance*

According to the results of the ETUCE survey, the most frequently mentioned new issue was the difficulty to reconcile work and family life. Under 50% of respondents felt that their union actually helped them to juggle work and family commitments. Largely due to their significantly larger involvement in caring responsibilities (both for children, elderly relatives, and relatives with special needs), women are more likely to work part-time compared to men. Across the EU, in 2017, 31% of women worked part-time, compared to less than 8% of men. On the European level, efforts to legislate for better work-life balance provisions have been undertaken in recent years, including the [Directive on Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers](#), set to be adopted this year.

### *Gender pay and pension gap*

According to [Eurostat](#), the gender pay gap on average in Europe in 2016 was 16.2%. In the EU, 16.2% of women were at risk of poverty in older age, compared to 12% of men. Research carried out by [Eurostat](#) and [OECD](#) have also shown that across Europe, salaries of female and male teachers across different education levels are similar: in 2016, the differences were relatively small, below 3% or around €860 per year. The only exceptions to this were the early childhood education level where male teachers earned slightly less than their female counterparts, and the upper secondary level where women on average earned 1% less than men. 54% of members who responded to the ETUCE survey reported that their union addressed the gender pay and pension gap issue.



Does your union address the gender pay and pension gap? Results from the ETUCE survey on gender equality within education trade unions, the teaching profession and social dialogue (May 2018 - March 2019)

For the panellists, the main challenges relating to work-life balance and the gender pay and pension gap consisted of unattractive wages, unremunerated additional work and stress-induced burn out.

Positive achievements were noted by panellists in all three countries. In Poland, NSZZ "Solidarność" is fully dedicated to improving work-life balance by helping parents look after their children. For example, in 2002, with the help of ETUCE and EFEE, a new law was brought in which allows teachers to work remotely during their maternity or paternity leave. The union also negotiated with the Polish government regarding the retirement age of women and men and provides legal advice and support for their members in different regions. Inga Vanaga (LIZDA, Latvia) pointed out that it is crucial

From left to right: Tomasz Gryczan, National Education Section of NSZZ "Solidarnosc", Poland - Inga Vanaga, LIZDA, Latvia - Aurélie, SNES-FSU, France





*Education trade unions need a member of staff who is dedicated to gender equality issues!*

Aurélia Sarrasin, SNES-FSU, France



to understand teachers who have young children and to cater for their needs. In Latvia, primary and secondary school teachers have a flexible time schedule and can do preparatory work and corrections at home. Aurélia Sarrasin (SNES FSU, France) informed participants that SNES-FSU publishes a special brochure on International Women's Day to draw attention to gender equality issues, such as the heavy workload endured by female teachers. They also work

on gender-friendly forms of management, such as the provision of training courses during work hours to accommodate women and the right to work from home.

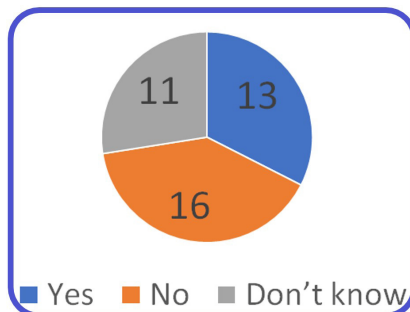
Similar efforts are being made to close the gender pay and pension gap. In France, the gender perspective is included at all stages and in all aspects of SNES-FSU's work. They raise awareness about the gender gap and its consequences in every way they can and are currently campaigning for a greater number of promotions for female teachers to make up for the historical gender gap. In Latvia, Inga Vanaga (LIZDA, Latvia) pointed out that unattractive salaries are a massive issue and acknowledged that more action is needed to obtain higher wages.

Gender equality issues linked to wider societal issues (demographic change, greater mobility etc.) and gender-based violence in the workplace

**Yanka Takeva (SEB, Bulgaria)** reported on the gender equality issues linked to wider societal issues and gender-based violence in the workplace in Bulgaria and enlightened participants on the ways in which her union, SEB, has tackled these issues.

According to the [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#), on average in the EU, women experience high levels of gender-based violence, with 33% of women reporting having experienced physical, psychological or sexual violence since the age of 15. Similarly, 57% of respondents to the ETUCE survey considered gender-based violence in the workplace to be an issue for education staff. This is primarily linked to harassment and threats of violence from pupils and parents and is also finding increasing expression in the use of social media as a tool of harassment. Nonetheless, it would appear that education trade unions are aware of the importance of this issue and are taking steps to address it.

Yanka Takeva (SEB, Bulgaria) reported that 45% of teachers in Bulgaria have been at the receiving end of violence. Another societal issue in Bulgaria is the inclusion of the female Roma population in the education system, who are prone to early motherhood and early school leaving. According to Yanka



Does your education trade union address gender-based violence in the workplace? Taken from the ETUCE survey on gender equality within education trade unions, the teaching profession and social dialogue (May 2018 - March 2019)

Takeva, they are also more likely to be hired on precarious contracts and suffer from higher unemployment rates.

SEB, Bulgaria is actively fighting these issues. Thanks to pressure from SEB, the Bulgarian criminal code was amended in 2013 and now includes harsh punishment for those who aggress teachers. As a result, violence against teachers, including gender-based violence, has been radically reduced. SEB is also fully aware of the dangers associated with social media platforms and has strengthened engagement with families to work on the rise in cases of cyberbullying directed at staff. SEB also promotes inclusive education training for teachers to ensure that the needs of students from migrant backgrounds and ethnic minorities are catered for in the classroom.

From left to right: Yanka Takeva, SEB, Bulgaria - Borka Visnic TUS, Serbia



## 8. ESTABLISHING A GENDER EQUALITY DEPARTMENT WITHIN TRADE UNIONS

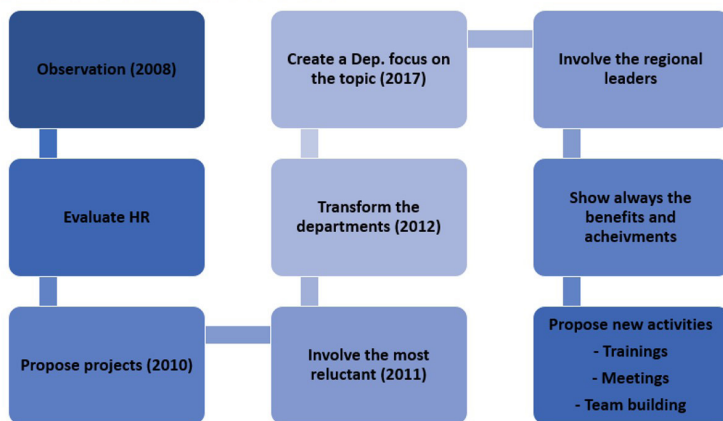
**Alexandra Cornea, (FSLE, Romania)** explained to participants how a gender equality department was established within FLSE from 2010–2017. According to Alexandra Cornea, the first step is to initiate gender equality projects and to engage staff members, including those who may be reluctant, to participate in and manage the projects. She stressed that union members must be extremely creative when it comes to funding for gender equality projects as their budgets are usually close to non-existent. Making use of the European Social Fund, Norway grants and Erasmus+ grants, FSLE initiated projects, among others, on promoting equal opportunities within trade unions, creating a framework for inclusive schools, and improving health and safety in schools from a gender equality perspective. Once members of staff had come round to the idea of the importance of gender equality issues, the next step was the incorporation of gender equality issues into the already existent youth department in 2012. Finally, in 2017, a separate equality department was set up whose aims included holding team building and training courses, submitting proposals of laws to the parliament on issues such as the protection of teachers, negotiating directly with the Romanian Ministry of Education, running campaigns, such as “Stop violence in schools” and disseminating the department’s achievements. As part of their 2018-

Alexandra Cornea, FSLE, Romania



2021 strategy, the gender equality department hopes to introduce equality measures in the new Education Act and in a new collective labour agreement, and increase the number of women in leading positions within the union to act as promoters of gender equality.

## STEP BY STEP APPROACH



Taken from Alexandra Cornea's presentation, FSLE, Romania

## 9.CONCLUSIONS

Education trade unions should include the gender dimension in all discussion in social dialogue concluded the participants of this workshop. Participants suggested several ways in which social dialogue could be used as a tool to combat horizontal and vertical segregation in the education sector, eliminate the gender pay and pension gap in the education sector, improve work-life balance, and prevent gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace.

- In order to combat horizontal segregation, participants suggested introducing financial incentives for young teachers when entering the teaching profession and equalising pay and salary requirements



for ECE, primary and secondary school educators alike. It was also stressed that more research was needed on horizontal segregation in order to raise awareness about the issue.

- As for vertical segregation, participants suggested introducing a mentoring system for early career teachers and to provide leadership courses to embolden female educators.
- The need for explicit funding for gender equality measures, such as the introduction of gender sensitive curriculum, was underlined and participants agreed that education trade unionists should support and show solidarity with union members who are in favour of gender equality policies.
- Participants concluded that the right to disconnect should be included in collective agreements, in order to improve work-life balance, and that all educators need more training to be assertive and to feel confident demanding realistic working hours and conditions.
- There should also be awareness-raising about teachers' true workload to get the public on teachers' side.
- As for caring duties, they emphasised that looking after the elderly should be the state's responsibility and should not fall solely on the shoulders of individual family members.
- As regards the gender pay and pension gap, participants agreed that all measures that improve work-life balance would have a positive effect on the gender pay and pension gap.
- Similarly, participants agreed that higher salaries were crucial to restore prestige to the teaching profession and to ensure that the teaching force is more gender-equal. They stressed that teachers must be remunerated for all additional tasks that they undertake as well as for overtime.

- Participants proposed implementing more laws on holding parents' responsible for violence, including gender-based violence, committed by students and harsher punishment for cyber-bullying. Participants also concluded that a team of specialised experts (e.g. psychologists) was needed in schools to effectively deal with the issue of gender-based violence aimed at students and staff.

As a result of the practical exercise on implementing an explicit gender equality policy, participants came up with inspiring ideas, such as:

- Conducting research on the amount of unpaid additional work carried out by female teachers after school hours;
- Publishing a leaflet on ways to prevent and sanction gender-based discrimination aimed at students and staff;
- Forming partnerships with various stakeholders (e.g. school leaders, local community, regional trade unions' leaders) to solve problems faced by the education sector collectively;
- Reviewing collective agreements with a view to including provisions on work-life balance and gender-based discrimination;
- Providing "Me leader" training courses to boost the confidence of newly-elected female trade union leaders;
- Using media (including social media) to raise awareness of gender equality issues in the education sector

*Education trade unions speak not only for teachers but also for all European citizens as they address in their work not only the economic issues but also social cohesion, human rights, equality and cultural growth that are the basis for a healthy society. Being experts in social dialogue and founded on solidarity, education trade unions are evolving into a new form or representation that aspires to a more gender equal society and a better Europe at large*

Rossella Benedetti, Chair of ETUCE Standing Committee for Equality





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