

Report of the OHCHR on realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl, pursuant to HRC resolution 32/20 – Input by SLOVENIA

1. Concrete steps to ensure the realization of the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl

In Slovenia the right to education is guaranteed to everyone, without discrimination of any kind.

Currently, the following steps are underway:

- a. Updating the syllabi of primary and secondary schools and study programmes from the gender-equality perspective and the identification of key themes
- b. Identifying gender stereotyping and the hidden curriculum

2. Measures to eliminate gender disparities in education

The Ministry responsible for education is preparing the update of primary school and secondary school syllabi and study programmes. Its first phase is expected to include a review and analysis of the existing syllabi and study programmes. The results of analysis will show how gender equality is integrated. The analysis will help expert groups develop proposals for any additions or updates of the syllabi (for example, into which school standard the topic can be included or which specific topics and didactic recommendations could be proposed for the implementation in the classroom, etc.).

The second measure of identifying gender stereotyping and the hidden curriculum is aimed at the empowerment of both teachers and students to pay attention to the occurrence of gender stereotypes, their ability to recognise them and the power of the hidden curriculum, and how to react to them.

Our goal is to raise awareness and to eliminate the self-evidence of practices which lead to unequal gender opportunities for all stakeholders in the educational process at all levels. We know that children's values are largely in sync with those of their families – therefore, we will include parents and the general public as well. The young are influenced also by their teachers with their values and practices which often encourage gender inequality, since the curriculum contains the fundamental value guidelines of the existing culture.

A preschool education example: Early childhood and the pre-school period is a time of the child's first crawling into the world of stereotypes. This period of life is also an appropriate time of addressing and overcoming gender-related prejudices and stereotypes. The objectives during this period are:

- exploring the presence of stereotypes in the kindergarten as an institution,
- awareness-raising of preschool teachers of their conduct and of communicating their values and attitudes,
- awareness-raising of parents of the importance of educating children for equal gender opportunities,
- planning the content for overcoming stereotypes.

3. Challenges in implementing policies and programmes

The analysis will show which syllabi will have to be supplemented.

The analysis will help us determine the state of affairs and plan concrete measures; we will strive to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. In addition to the supplementations of the learning content, it is of course necessary to educate the educators themselves.

While the gender structure of pupils in primary school reflects the state of the population, the same cannot be said about the gender structure of teachers. Only 10 percent of teachers are men, while they represent the majority of principals.

The promotion of equal opportunities was one of the priorities in selecting projects throughout the previous financial perspective. At the level of the Operational Programme of Human Resources Development for the period 2007-2013, the principle of equality was an integral part of the programme (a vertical measure).

Gender equality was guaranteed horizontally: the evaluation of projects included also the criteria to promote equality between women and men in getting employment and in harmonising work and family life at all ages (e.g. non-educational experts in the education system). When selecting projects, the priority was given to applicants who were better assessed in the specific criteria, including the criteria of "promoting equal opportunities for the target groups and equal opportunities for women and men"; "promoting equality between women and men in accessing lifelong learning", "promoting equality between men and women in vocational education and training". Regarding the nature of the projects in the field of education, which (among other things) addressed the issues of the career guidance of young people, the promotion of sectoral and international mobility in higher education and the promotion of the research potential of young people and which were largely carried out in the science and technical fields, the implementation of these horizontal principles is extremely important in terms of ensuring a balanced access of both genders to the scientific and educational fields.

According to the report of the project on equal opportunities in the field of education, which was completed in the previous perspective of the European Structural Fund (when monitoring parent attendance at parent-teacher interviews and meetings, they found that more than 70 per cent of attendance was that of mothers), we can assume that a lot of attention will still have to be paid to the empowerment and sensitization of parents.

4. *Obstacles and barriers faced by girls in effectively accessing education*

There are no formal barriers or obstacles encountered by girls in gaining access to any level of the educational system. According to the statistics, the percentage of women who have completed tertiary education is higher than the percentage of men; this shift has occurred in the last 25 years. See also response to question 5.

However, gender roles and stereotypes that are the pillars of gender socialisation still significantly influence girl's choices and decisions in life. Through gender roles and stereotypes, boys and girls are assigned to the norms, roles, expectations and social spaces for male and female identities.

The stereotyping process starts before primary education and gender stereotypes greatly affect how we are socialised and educated. Gender stereotypes, learned at a young age, if they go unchallenged, will have a significant effect on later learning and life decisions. Before most children enter kindergarten, they begin learning to conform to powerful stereotypes about what it means to be a boy or a girl in our society.

From the very beginning of their education, girls and boys face prejudices and stereotypes that restrict their options when choosing study courses and professions. These include stereotypical notions about female and male roles and occupations appropriate for women or men that influence choices and decisions that men and women make, even though they are not in line with the needs and development trends of modern society. Gender segregation should be addressed early on and should not focus on women only; it should include men and their choices of study programmes and areas

where they are under-represented. The two sexes are challenged by seemingly similar – but in fact very limited – choices of study course and professions.

In the past several activities were carried out with a view to laying the foundations to introduce gender equality in curricula, programmes and teaching materials at all levels of education. The indicators to monitor gender equality in education were drawn up, expert bases to assess teaching materials were set and model lessons and recommendations to include education on gender equality in the curriculum, programmes and teaching materials were prepared by the National Education Institute, and study and professional training programmes for teaching and counselling staff were drafted. Through the education and training of teaching personnel and the recommendations, guidelines and instructions for pre-school and school teachers regarding the inclusion of gender equality issues in school subjects and other activities, the foundations were laid to ensure systematic education and further training of teaching and counselling staff for gender equality. Education and training in various methods for encouraging boys and girls to equally participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities traditionally characterised by predominant participation of one sex were carried out, as were projects that provided opportunities for girls at primary schools to learn about typical male occupations and promoted the enrolment of girls in secondary schools typically attended by boys.

A knowledge-based society free from gender stereotypes is among objectives in the new Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2015–2020. Therefore, continued attention will be devoted to the development and implementation of measures to systematically address the issue of inequalities and to overcome gender role stereotypes in various areas and across the education system. The main focus will be on educational content and programmes and career and study choices. In order to ensure effective teaching and the sustainability of measures, school teachers and counsellors must be well educated as regards gender equality.

One of the key challenges will be to fight gender stereotypes in study programmes and career choices. Young women tend to choose “typically female study programmes” and outnumber men in teaching, humanities, social science, health and social work study programmes, while young men are in the majority in natural science and technology programmes; a new system must be established to provide youth with information about potential non-traditional choices and promote further training in programmes and professions with underrepresentation and the professions of the future in demand on the labour market.

5. Indicators of the realization of the equal enjoyment of the right of education by every girl

♀	EDUCATION	♂
1961		
87 %	primary school or less	73 %
12 %	secondary school	25 %
1 %	higher education	3 %
1991		
55 %	primary school or less	40 %
37 %	secondary school	50 %
8 %	higher education	10 %
2015		

30 %	primary school or less	22 %
45 %	secondary school	60 %
25 %	higher education	18 %

Source: How different we are. Women and men from childhood to old age. Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2016.

The data refer to the population aged 15 years or more and shows the distribution among levels of education in years 1961, 1991 and 2015 for women and men.

♀	Secondary-school students by type of education, 2014/15	♂
46 %	Secondary general education	30 %
43 %	Secondary technical and other professional education	48 %
11 %	Secondary and lower vocational education	22 %

Source: *ibid.*

Secondary schools include almost all teenagers, e.g. in 2013, various secondary schools were attended by more than 96 % of 17-year-olds. That was one of the highest levels in Europe.

Among young people aged 20 to 24 more than 50 % were enrolled in academic year 2014/15; this data ranks Slovenia among the countries with the highest shares of persons enrolled in tertiary education. Female students have a predominant share (58 %). The highest share of female students is in social, business, administrative and legal sciences (34 %), while their male counterparts choose most programmes in engineering, production technologies and construction (32 %), and social sciences (24 %).

There are more and more young people with completed tertiary education. Ten years ago, 24 % of young people aged 25 to 29 had tertiary education, or every third woman (33 %) and one in seven men (15 %). In ten years, the proportion of young people with tertiary education increased to 35 %: 44 % of women and 26 % of men.

In 2014, more than half of all female graduates (55 %) graduated in social sciences, business, law, educational sciences and teacher education. Science, mathematics, computer science and engineering were predominantly “male” areas in 2014, since those were the areas with almost half of all male graduates (45 %).

A growing inclusion of young people in higher levels of education and their successfulness in recent years have also reflected in the improved educational structure of the adult population. Even ten years ago, there were less than 20 % of adults (25-64 years) with tertiary education in Slovenia, while there were almost 30 % in 2014. The trend was stronger for women, because ten years ago there were more than 20 % of them with tertiary education, and in 2014 more than a third (34 %), while that year there were 23 % of men with tertiary education (there were as many women with tertiary education already eight years ago).

In 2014, the proportion of adult women (25-64 years) with tertiary education was higher and the proportion of adult men with tertiary education was lower than the average of the EU-28.

Among elderly persons, men are on average more educated than women. The average educational level falls with age; however, the educational level of older men is higher than that of older women. In 2014, every other older woman in Slovenia had primary education or less, and every eleventh woman had tertiary education. Among older men, most of them had upper secondary education (56 %), and every sixth had tertiary education.