

Annex 1 to the tender specifications (Lot 1 - Scenario B)

Information and guidance for the task under technical offer (section 2.2.4 of the tender specifications)

Please edit the text in Annex 1, according to all activities listed under Deliverable Lot 1. The text should include track changes and any comments.

Excerpt

Gender segregation in study fields and career choices and consequences on the labour market

The study shows that, although specific attention is paid to this issue at both European and national level and the situation seems to be improved, gender segregation in study fields is still one of the main challenge in all EU-28 education systems. It usually starts at the final years of secondary education and extends into higher education and the labour market through occupational segregation that contributes for the persistence of gender inequalities given that occupations which are traditionally male-dominated are the faster-growing and more highly-paid occupations. At the same time, the concentration of women in a certain occupation is often accompanied by a “devaluation” of this profession and the persistence of obstacles for women’s advancement in the field. The concept of “devaluation” is a complex one that, on one side is exemplified in the low salaries and low status of the teaching profession in primary (those in which women are usually the majority in all EU Member States) and secondary education (in which women are the majority or are present in great number especially for certain field of study). On another side, the concept of “devaluation” in relation to the teaching profession is also connected to the more general concept of devaluation of women’s work and to the fact that any skill that is considered a skill that characterises women is not seen as valuable. Indeed, women are seen to be “good” to do the work of education but not at the highest ranks which are the best paid. Those positions are reserved for men together with the lack of women in leadership and decision-making positions in education institutions at all level.

Mainstreaming gender into education and training policies

Education in general and specifically school as an institution play an important role in promoting gender equality.

On the one hand, it is important to ensure that equal opportunity to acquire education is guarantee to both boys and girls. This can mean access to education (such as the right and opportunity to go to school), as well as curricula, teaching methods and teaching practices supporting children and young people of both sexes in staying in education. As shown in the previous chapter, boys and girls opportunities to learn and acquire education are different leading to differences in academic performance, perception of the school environment, and field of studies choices.

On the other hand, school as important centre for socialisation plays significant role in the creation and spread of societal values and norms. Everything happening in schools therefore also has an impact on equality in other spheres of life, e.g. in families, in the labour market and in society at large. However, the attitudes and values prevalent in society also affect the education system – education workers attitudes and practices, such as teaching methods and the development of curricula and training materials, are based on the norms, values and attitudes that are widespread in society.

Reforming the education sector alone is not sufficient to eliminate gender inequality, but the education sector has a huge potential to influence men's and women's equal opportunities and acceptance of gender equality as a fundamental value.

Within this context and before presenting examples of measures and initiatives in place, the aim of this first introductory paragraph is to present the approach of European Member States as regard mainstreaming gender into education and training policies.

According to a Eurydice report¹ three main different approach can be identified at EU level: general equal treatment and equal opportunities, equal treatment and equal opportunities in education, and gender equality in education. The different approaches are strongly related to the degree to which gender equality concepts are embeded in legislative frameworks. Firstly, distinctions can be made assuming that the type of legislative provision (i.e. whether it can be classified as basic law, as general anti-discrimination law or as sectoral law specifically related to education) can influence the application of gender equality principles. For example, education acts can deal with the aspects of gender equality that are specific to the domain of education in a more effective way than would be possible through general anti-discrimination provisions. Secondly, distinctions between the models are also made according to practices of reviewing legislation from a gender perspective, since this influences the potential of a gender mainstreaming strategy.

¹ EACEA (2010).