

Career ROCKET: Respect, Opportunities, Choice, Knowledge, Equality and Training



WS4, A4.7: Summary Repeat baseline study on teachers' and pupils' attitudes

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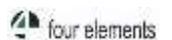
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Introduction

This summary briefly presents the results of the repetition of the baseline study on teachers' and pupils' attitudes on gender equality and on the importance to integrate gender perspective in education, that was conducted in the framework of WS4 "Promote GE culture in schools" of the Project "Career Rocket: Respect, Opportunities, Choice, Knowledge, Equality and Training". The survey had been, also, implemented during the first phase of the Project's implementation in order to identify the target groups' attitudes on the issues. Following two and a half years of activities and results, including the trainings of hundreds of students, teachers, school managers, career counsellors, etc., the repetition of the survey contributes to the identification of the Project's impact on students' and teachers' views and attitudes.

Therefore, the methodology used for this survey was exactly the same with the previous' one: the same questionnaires were administered on-line and most of the participants had participated in the first survey too. Teachers and students who participated in the trainings implemented under the Project's activities, were also encouraged to participate in this survey, even if they hadn't participated in the first one.

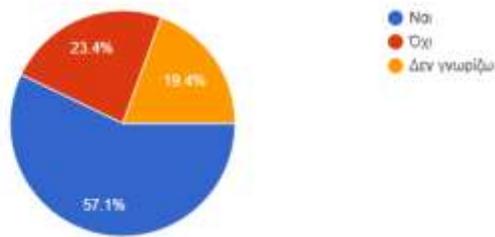
Results of baseline study repetition

The repetition of the baseline study on attitudes and perceptions on gender equality and the integration of the gender dimension in education involved more than 2000 people. In particular, the relevant questionnaires were filled in by 1003 students (526 girls and 477 boys) and 1015 teachers (546 women and 469 men). Both students (66%) and teachers (67%) were mostly of junior high school, particularly the 3rd grade.

Students' Questionnaire

In general, students seem to acknowledge the importance of gender equality in society, as well many of its implications in particular areas, such as family roles and professional choices.

1,003 responses



As the graph indicates, more than half of students participating in the survey (57.1%) positively responded on the importance of gender equality. Even though the percentage might not seem that high, it should be highlighted that in the first survey that was

conducted at the beginning of the Project, only 32.8% of participants had expressed a positive answer, while 35,7% “Did not know” (19.4% in the repeated survey).

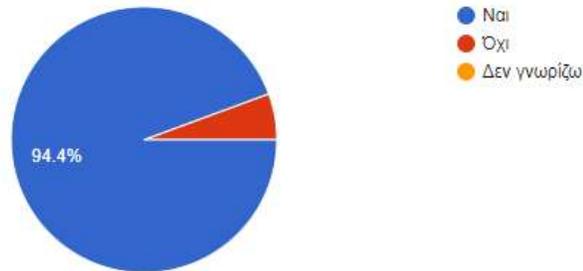
Even though in general questions, like the previous one, students seem to be receptive, in more specific questions the responses tend to express a more stereotyped way of thinking. A typical example of this trend is clearly presented when it comes to professional choices, especially professions that are “more appropriate” for men or women. The “traditional” view that men are better in technical and mechanical professions and women in the humanitarian and social sector prevails students’ opinions. On the positive side, variations in “suitability” between men and women regarding specific professions that are considered “better for males or females” do not seem to be extreme and further room for potential improvement is available.

In addition, more effort will be needed in integrating the gender perspective to the school curricula and environment, in general. Although that most gender equality topics are, to some extent, discussed during classes or extracurricular activities, some students reported on specific topics that are never addressed at school, for example contemporary images of men and women in literature, media and society, female scientists, writers, artists and public figures, and gender-based violence.

A significant finding of the repeated survey is the shift in the factors that influence students in making their professional choices. The majority of participants responded that “school as a whole” is what mainly affects their choices, while “certain teachers” and “career consultants”, also, play a very important role. Comparing these results with those of the first survey, it is evident that school’s role has been upgraded in the views of students as far as career choices in concerned. This is a clear indication of the need to put more attention on the training of school staff and career counsellors to enable them to provide stereotype-free career counselling.

Teachers' Questionnaire

1,015 responses



Teachers, also, recognize the importance of gender equality, even though a small percentage of respondents remains negative. Responses seem to be a bit more positive towards equality, compared with these of the first survey.

The stereotyped way of thinking when it comes to professional choices and prospects seem to affect teachers' opinions, too. Although on a smaller scale, teachers somehow agree to the categorization of technical/mechanical professions as "male" ones and humanitarian/social professions as "female". They, also, confirmed that it is much easier for a man to find a better paid job than women, confirming that men are pursuing higher positions or that male-dominated professions are better paid.

According to teachers' responses, most of gender-related topics are addressed either during class or in extracurricular activities. Percentages show a clear improvement when compared with results of the first survey, a fact that could be attributed to the participation of many teachers, school managers and career counsellors in the Project's activities and trainings. However, the lack or complete absence of texts or images that encourage gender equality in textbooks and training material remains an obstacle in teachers' efforts.

Most participants indicated that during the past three years they have participated in training related to gender equality and that they would like to participate in training regarding mainstreaming gender in education. These views express an increased interest on gender issues in the school environment, when taking into consideration the results of the first survey. They, also, indicate that teachers acknowledge the importance of their role in shaping students' attitudes and facilitating their career choice, thus they seek constant improvement through training.

Conclusions

Summing up, the overall results of the survey highlight the needs of students and teachers in training and awareness raising regarding gender equality - related topics as well as stereotypes that affect young people's professional prospects and choices.

Having in mind the first survey that was conducted in the very beginning of the Project using exactly the same methodology, there is an apparent change in many points of views and attitudes of participants. A stand out example is the significant decrease in responses that expressed ignorance ("I don't know" answers), indicating that now participants either have a clearer view on specific issues or they are more willing to respond to such important questions. In addition, the very balanced responses of both students and teachers in straightforward questions, now seem to be more favorable towards gender equality and combating stereotypes, particularly related to professional choices.

The role of the school environment in general, and teachers, managers and career counsellors in particular, can be characterised as significant in promoting gender equality in society and in integrating the gender dimension in many aspects of every day life. As results indicate, stereotype-free career counselling that will ensure equal opportunities for all can only be provided by educated professionals who are trained to address gender related issues.