



Gender Equality Matters – Tackling Gender-Based Violence

The latest project ESHA is involved in is a project called Gender Equality Matters – Tackling Gender-Based Violence, aptly called **GEM**. The GEM project will build on research and implement preventative and intervention actions in line with research report recommendations.

The objectives of this project are to raise awareness, change attitudes and promote behaviour changes in relation to gender-based violence generally, with specific reference to violence perpetrated against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community in and around schools.

In this two-year project the ESHA has partnered with Dublin City University (DCU - Ireland), Social Action and Innovation Center (KMOP - Greece), Research Group in Educational Technology/University of Murcia (GITE - Spain) and Fondazione Mondo Digitale (FMD - Italy).

The target groups are school-aged children (10+), parents, teachers and school heads. When working together all targets groups will have the potential to challenge attitudes, values and behaviours across school systems, school surroundings, families and local communities.

The GEM partnership is currently expanding its network of supporting local partners in the GEM network. These partners are research institutes, national and international teachers' organisations, state authorities, school organisations/networks, student groups and NGOs. All partners have excellent multiplier activities in the project, for example links on their websites, dissemination of project materials, and participation in dissemination activities such as training events, conferences and open events. All partners endeavour to ensure that awareness about the GEM project is known to the widest audiences possible.

In order to achieve the project's objectives we will work with young children, parents and educators. In particular at school level, the development of a self-evaluation instrument for schools in relation to gender equality will help educators facilitate improvement plans in relation to gender-based violence prevention in schools. The education and active involvement of parents will allow for integration of learning about the GEM subject in households. Education of teachers and teacher trainers will hold great potential for a multiplier effect across school systems and communities, as well as sustainability of efforts.

In the course of the project we aim to create a community of schools, children, parents, pre-service teachers, teachers and school leaders that will further the goals of the project during and after the project. In this ESHA is looking for your support. Seen from the base up the key messages that the GEM partners want to promote should speak to all educators. Key elements in the projects are:

-  Gender equality is a right for everybody;
-  Whether you are a boy or girl, you are entitled to be treated equally and with respect regardless of your sexual orientation;

- ✚ Gender-based violence is not acceptable under any circumstance;
- ✚ Everybody can freely challenge infringements of their rights and the rights of others, whether you are a boy or a girl that is a victim of gender-based violence, perpetrator or a bystander;
- ✚ Everybody has a role to play in tackling gender-based violence;
- ✚ In working together, together we can make a difference;
- ✚ There is a need for students, parents and educators to get involved, raise awareness of gender-based violence and eventually make schools and communities gender equal;

Gender quality is a broad subject, that is why the GEM project works on various levels. It is meant to benefit not only children that experience gender-based issues such as abuse, bullying and violence personally. It also calls upon support from students that are bystanders or bullies themselves. Through parent education and involvement, parents will play an important role in raising awareness about gender-based issues in families. Teachers and school leaders cement it all together and play a pivotal role in engaging students and parents and ensuring that their GEM activities provide a safe environment for students in and around schools and in local communities.

Participants will benefit from multiple deliverables listed below:

- ✚ Open national events for student, parents and educators;
- ✚ Newsletters to highlight the milestones of the project;
- ✚ Leaflets for use within specific target groups;
- ✚ Articles and journal publications;
- ✚ Project webpage, promotion of GEM through partner's webpages and GEM-related social media platforms;
- ✚ Community webpage highlighting national initiatives and projects for students, parents and educators (under development);
- ✚ Classroom and school resources for educators;
- ✚ Self-evaluation instruments for schools/educators;
- ✚ Training modules and manuals for teachers and teacher trainers;
- ✚ Training workshops for parents;
- ✚ Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) for students, parents and educators;
- ✚ Final conference for partners and school leaders to be held in Dublin in June 2020.

In line with regulations set by the European Union all project materials that are delivered will be free of cost and for use to the benefit of the (schooling) community as a whole. As the project progresses resources can be downloaded from the Gender Equality Matters website: www.genderequalitymatters.eu.

We request educators' support in helping us further the Gender Equality Matters project. Together we can make our schools tackle gender-based violence!!

In case you are interested in lending your support to the GEM cause, we invite school leaders to consult <http://www.esha.org/esha-projects/> and www.genderequalitymatters.eu and to contact GEM partners directly. We hope that you will participate actively and share your opinions on the GEM social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Details of our social media accounts can be found

on the project website. For further suggestions and/or queries please contact Edwin Katerberg at edwin.katerberg@esha.org.