

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender Mainstreaming (implementation of a Gender view point) is a political tool to promote Gender equality. An important starting point for this strategy is to understand that Gender does not just relate to people but is rather a principle according to which social systems and their existing control mechanisms are structured. It is the understanding of Gender in all its dimensions, not only in the context of individual Gender. Therefore, if we are interested in a way of creating Gender relations, not only behavior at the individual level must be taken into consideration, but it is also necessary to examine and analyze the mechanisms and modes of management that determine the Gender nature of such social institutions as the labor market, education systems, social systems, the economy, etc. This means that even in cultural and social institutions and organizations we can recognize Gender norms, Gender-specific strategies and structures (Kiczková, 2011).

The concept of Gender justice is usually split into three spheres of justice in the current debates on Gender mainstreaming: the first is the **sphere of political participation** - equal participation and equal representation of women and men in all official institutions and equal distribution of power and influence between men and women; the second is the **sphere of sharing natural resources** to meet the needs - equal opportunities for men and women (economic independence and equal opportunities to develop their personal ambitions, interests and talents), the third one is the **sphere of institutions** and position in them - equal opportunities in career development and employment, equal access to education, equal responsibility for children in the household and family life. (Kiczková, Szapuová, 2010).

The principle of Gender mainstreaming is anchored in the Treaty of Amsterdam which all EU Member States pledged to follow.

The crucial idea on which mainstreaming is based is: Gender dimension is considered an essential criterion for solutions to social, economic and environmental problems. It reveals and clarifies the apparent Gender neutrality of many problems, i.e. the Gender context of the problem is developed.

Gender mainstreaming is not only a political strategy but also a method of applying Gender aspects. As a method, Gender mainstreaming has several stages: Gender analysis, target definition, choice of strategy, strategy implementation, evaluation and Gender analysis. The procedure for realization of Gender mainstreaming can be imagined as a spiral approach, where each level is followed by gender analysis and the assessment and subsequent new setting of goals until full Gender equality is achieved. Such a process requires the fulfillment of several conditions: the first is the consistent understanding of Gender and Gender relations (as defined above), the second is the will to implement Gender mainstreaming - due to its difficulty and complexity, it is necessary to decide on implementation by those who have the power and the means to implement it (government, company or organization management, etc.) – it is a top-down process, the third condition is so that the implementation of Gender mainstreaming was participated in at all levels – with all concerned and so that all understand its source, goals and procedure.