

GenderStrat Workshop 28 June 2016 Changing Gender Roles and Gender Stereotypes in Education and in the Labour Market

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Our cultures are dominated by stereotypes which go way back in our history. Like telling women and men what is allowed to wear or what they are supposed to study.

Stereotypes are constructed. They are part of social control and the social system. Gender stereotypes limit people's opportunities, equal opportunities and rights in life. How can we change that?

Concrete examples from schools, other forms of education and the labour market in Iceland as well as experiences from other participant's countries were debated.

In the workshop Hanna Björg Vilhjálmsson from Iceland had a presentation on gender stereotypes. Among the things she mentioned was how important it is to analyse advertisements. They tell a huge story about our societies. The school system is crucial in creating the gender equal society. We know that teachers are treating students differently on ground of gender. She said that some of her fellow teachers are sexist in their teaching. All teachers need education on gender issues. We have the tools; we just have to use them.

Out of 33 secondary schools in Iceland 17 are teaching courses on gender studies. The aim is awakening the students and to empower them. 70-80% of the students are girls (the participation in the courses is not obligatory).

Swedish experts from the Association of Local Authorities and Regions in Sweden showed a film about gender stereotyping in health services. The staff has changed their attitudes towards fathers.

In the discussions the participants stressed how powerful pornography has become in our culture. It constantly reproduces gender stereotypes. There is a huge pressure on boys from the porn industry.

One of the most important areas remains to address in changing gender stereotypes.

