

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: "the role of men in the promotion of gender equality, in particular the role of men and fathers in the reconciliation of work and private life".

Main objectives of the project

Indicate which are the main objectives to be achieved by the project, how these address the aims of the Gender Equality Programme and of this call for proposals and the priority theme "the role of men in the promotion of gender equality, in particular the role of men and fathers in the reconciliation of work and private life".

The starting point of the project is that gender equality's legislation and programmes at national and/or European levels need to be complemented by actions taken by local authorities. The overall objective of the project is therefore to explore the opportunities of gender equality policies initiated by cities at local level. Another statement of the project's partners is that local policies implemented by European cities in order to reconcile private life and work are so far mainly, if not only, directed to women and mothers. Their efficiency is often jeopardized by the lack of involvement of men and fathers. That is the reason why the project plans to study, design and experiment local policies specifically targeting men and fathers.

More precisely, the project has three main objectives:

- 1) Its first aim is to study and experiment how cities can foster the specific role of fathers in the reconciliation of work by promoting their involvement as fathers in the private life at every stage of family life in order to influence on gender roles and stereotypes, and hence facilitate the participation of mothers in the professional life.
- 2) The second main objective of the project is to investigate how cities and local authorities can involve men as a whole (fathers and non fathers) in the promotion of reconciliation of work and private life, and more specifically of an increased participation of women in the political, economic and social life at local level.
- 3) The third objective is based on the idea that a better reconciliation of private life and work can result in a decrease of gender related violence, knowing that the non conciliation is of course not the only cause of this kind of violence. This third objective is to analyse and experiment how cities can promote the role of men at local level in the prevention of domestic violence and the treatment of its consequences.

For each of these three main goals, the objective are:

- to search existing practices of local policies in Europe that promote the role of men and fathers in the reconciliation of private life and work.

- to establish sustainable tools for the exchange of good practices between project's members, and furthermore with other European cities and local actors, within the framework of an "open initiative".
 - to study locally in each of the city involved in the project how men and fathers are involved or not and draft specifications for measures to be carried out locally.
 - to (further) develop common experimental products and actions to be carried out locally within a pilot in each of the sites involved in the project.
 - to scrutinize and analyse the results of these experimental local policies for gender equality at the local level.
- to transfer experience between the partners, and to other local authorities /local actors, policy making agencies, throughout Europe.

Detailed description of the project

Many local authorities in Europe have already designed and implemented gender policies directed specifically to women and mothers. In comparison, local policies directed to men and fathers are rather scarce. Nonetheless, local authorities are in a very adequate position to initiate policies directed to men and fathers, for the same reasons they initiated equal gender policies targeting women: local authorities have a good knowledge of the ground and can make a sound diagnosis on the role of men and fathers locally. They run local public services and fund services of general interest made for families in the field of education, health, leisure, etc. They can easily reach local population and men and fathers in particular both, in their private and public life. As for public life, cities work on a daily basis with their own services on one hand, and with local companies, political parties, consultative bodies, association and NGOs on the other hand. In each of these bodies, men can be hailed so that they act for more conciliation of private life and work. As for gender related violence, local authorities can act as a facilitator locally because of its knowledge of the local social context. For all these reasons, there is a need to investigate and experiment to what extend local authorities can promote actively the role of men and fathers in the reconciliation of private and public life, by tacking into account European directives (on father's leave for instance), national legislation, and civil society's existing initiatives.

Target group : Fathers and men of the three cities taking part in the project will be directly targeted. Hence, fathers and men of any European city is indirectly targeted

by the project. Fathers will be considered in their private life at local level where and when their involvement as fathers (i.e. a person also in charge of the education of the children) in the private life could be increased. Indeed, cities can promote the role of fathers at every stage of children/family life in order to influence gender roles and stereotypes and hence facilitate a major participation of mothers in the professional social and political life. The stages envisaged are:

- Right before the birth of a child in order to foster future fathers involvement to facilitate the present future's mother reconciliation of private life and work.
- Just after the birth, in order to encourage young fathers to take a parental leave (cf European directive xxx), so that they are in contact with their child right from the beginning
- During the growth of the children, in order to promote a major participation of fathers in activities that are still seen as women's tasks (participation in the education related to nursery and school: homework, relation with teachers, participation in post school and leisure, participation in the daily education of children at home, participation of fathers in the activities of local associations, representative bodies - school councils, parents of pupils associations, etc- related to the education of children.)

Men as a whole (fathers and non fathers) will be considered in their public life at local level, where their contribution to reconciliation of private life and work (i.e their contribution for an increased women's participation in the political, economic and social life at local level) could be improved. As measures and incentives for equal participation and representation requires men's involvement to be efficient, the cities of the project will try to reach men where they are locally over represented, that is to say, at executive level in local companies, in political parties at local level, in local consultative bodies and in the boards and other decision bodies of local NGOs and trade-unions.

In the end, the project will also target both men and fathers role locally for preventing gender related violence, that is to say in the structures (NGOs, social services, judicial assistance, etc) in charge of preventing gender domestic violence and treating its consequences.

Approach and methods to be used, activities

The project will be developed around 5 main phases: 1) overview 2) local study 3) testing 4) analysis and dissemination 5) local impact planning

1) Overview: during this phase, an inventory of local policies directed to men and fathers will be made, on the base of a common format that will be developed at the beginning of the project. Each national partner will conduct a research on their own country (France, Spain, UK) on existing practices at local level. The results of this

research phase will create the framework in which the transnational's approach will be defined.

2) Local study: during this phase, each of the two participating cities will conduct a local analysis within discussion groups with fathers and men to detect possible hurdles / opportunities for local policies aimed at these two target groups. On the basis of the results of these local studies, specifications will be made for the design and implementation of experimental measures and informative products to be tested at local level.

3) Designing and testing of two pilot actions: during this phase, the expertise gathered during phase 1 and the conclusions of phase 2 will be used for the drafting and testing of two pilot actions carried out in the two cities involved, each including both informative products and experimental measure.

4) Analysis for dissemination action: the result of the pilot will be scrutinized by a team of international experts and will lead to a final report analysis and the publication and distribution of a multilingual best practice guide and the design of a multilingual website where all project's outputs will be presented.

5) Transnational dialogue on local planning impact: the guide and website will be the core components of the dissemination plan of the project's results throughout Europe. They will also serve as input for transnational debate on the local/ urban strategies for a greater role of men in the reconciliation of work and private life. The results of debates during a transnational conference will lead to policy recommendations for local planner and local policy makers throughout Europe. In each participating city, local implementation groups consisting of representatives of all policy sectors will be set up to assist in the local implementation of the findings of the policies. The conference cooperation agreement among partners, approved activity and financial report. Three transnational coordination meeting.

Expected results and outputs:

Outputs

- a study in form of an inventory of European best practices based on 3 participating countries (France, Spain, UK)
- a joint study framework and two local studies on success factors for a major men's role,
- a multilingual website on local promotion of men's role
- a multilingual guide of best practices and its diffusion at transnational level
- two pilot actions carried out in Viladecans and Harlow where each will include 1 local communication product and 1 local experimental initiative targeting men and fathers
- a transnational conference gathering 100 participants and policy recommendations directed to local authorities for an increased role of men in the reconciliation

- **one dissemination plan and one communication toolkit will facilitate the dissemination of the projects outputs.**

This 5 main activities will be supported by the project management implemented by the project coordinator.

Results:

- **a tested system and model for innovative policies promoting, in the urban areas, the role of men and fathers in the reconciliation of private life and work**
- **an established cross sectorial and transnational dialogue between experts and local policy makers on the local/urban policies promoting the role of men and fathers**
- **planning and recommendations documents in which a different view on the role of men and fathers at local level is fully taken into account**