

WP 4.1. Training on gender equality and anti discrimination

International Comité

IC training on gender and discrimination modules were held from August 19 to November 3. Training meetings and workshops were mixed to make the training more attractive to youth. The content of the co-created modules were implemented but not in a strict schedule.

CALENDER OF ACTIVITIES

Date	Activity	Location	Group	Time	Participants
19/08/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
02/09/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
09/09/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
16/09/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
23/09/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
30/09/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
08/10/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
15/10/2023		Ostend	Ambassadors		
22/10/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
29/10/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		
28/10/2023		Ghent	Ambassadors		

Meeting 1

In the first meeting, held on **August 19, 2023** at Ghent, Kammerstraat, 10 young people were present. Supervision was provided by Jannette Danyiova, Stefanie Sergeant, Peter Danyi, and Maria Dudova.

The objective of Module I was to activate youth for the training group on gender and discrimination. It involved going over the questionnaire on Theme 1, doing experimental exercises, and discussing the theme while representing it through painting.

All young people gathered and reacquainted with each other and the guidance. After briefly reiterating the purpose of the project, we proposed to go over some questions related to both themes Gender inequality and discrimination, and then select a question/theme and discuss it together.

Using prepared work like a questionnaire and images depicting stereotypical gender roles, they engaged in a discussion lasting about 45 minutes. Young people were asked to describe what the depicted image reminded them of, what possible experiences they can tell or interpret about themselves. The projected image was a woman cooking. The image was followed by a question, "A woman should be able to cook and clean because she is a woman. Do you agree?". After the chosen answer, brief discussion and clarification of the answer followed.

We then had young people all stand up in the middle of the room in a circle. Each youth had to close their eyes and wait for the facilitator to put a sticker on their forehead.

The aim was to let all young people experience what it feels like when inequalities arise based on differences. Each youth was instructed, based on his colour on the sticker, to join all the other youth of the same colour to form a group.

Eventually two colour groups emerged, only one person had blue as his only colour and could not join the other groups. The young man in question did not understand why he in particular did not have the right colour, so he remained "on the sidelines" alone. The trainer then asked the lonely boy how he felt about it. He said it is not a very pleasant feeling, explaining that distinction seemed like an 'injustice' to him because he did not feel different from other boys and girls..

At this point, the trainer asked them how they would act to form two groups without excluding anyone separately. Many young people would follow gender differences, that is, girls with girls and boys with boys, or based on eye or hair colour.

As for the last activity of the training, all youth were allowed to choose their own place and depict their own drawing and painting materials and theme. Finally, each youth was allowed to say something in his or her own words about the day's activity and also about what he or she liked, disliked and what he or she learned.



MEETING 2

On **September 2, 2023**, in Ghent, a meeting was held with 8 participants present, supervised by Janette Danyiova, Maria Dudova, and Stefanie Sergeant. The objective of the meeting was to cover Module I and Module II on theme 2, through exercises and discussions on personal experiences. Drawing and painting activities were included, along with an introduction to social media platforms.

As a first activity, the topic of "Status and Image" was explored by projecting relevant images and discussing social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. In particular, a number of pictures were shown depicting situations on Facebook, including negative comments directed at an obese girl. Observation of the group's reactions revealed a mix of seriousness, laughter, and disapproval.

Next, participants were shown another type of image, namely a photo of a model. The comments were mostly positive, admiring the girl in the picture.

After the stage where we briefly discussed the differences with young people and surveyed their opinions, we explained more about what such an image contains and how society pressures perfection and focuses on appearance.

We also discussed common dangers among young people and their consequences, such as exclusion, pain, depression, suicide attempts or actual suicide, diseases such as anorexia, etc. The young people listened very carefully, and some of them seemed very shocked, as if they were hearing something like this for the first time, and they were very sorry. As a final activity, they were asked to spend another hour making a drawing on the topic discussed.



MEETING 3

On **September 9, 2023**, in Ghent, 10 individuals were present for a session supervised by Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova. The objective of Module I was to revisit the theme of Image and gender roles and to continue working on unfinished paintings.

Given the limited time young people often have to complete their artwork thoroughly, the decision was made to focus solely on revisiting themes and continuing work on paintings expressing their emotions regarding gender and discrimination. This meeting aimed to provide a platform for young individuals to articulate their views on gender equality and the images they associate with it.



MEETING 4

On **September 16, 2023**, in Ghent, 6 individuals attended a session with the objective of reviewing a questionnaire and discussing the designated theme. Following the discussion, participants were tasked with expressing the theme through painting or drawing. Subsequently, a discussion was held to reflect on the artwork and the themes explored, such as discrimination and exclusion. To discuss themes, we chose to project images again. We chose discriminatory images, or short videos showing exclusion on the basis of difference or colour.

To discuss the issues, we again chose to project discriminatory images or short videos showing exclusion on the basis of difference or colour.

After the screening, participants were asked if they had a similar personal experience or someone else's. Everyone, in turn, was able to share their experiences and stories with the group.

Many young people have shared personal stories, mainly from school, recounting unpleasant comments about their Roma culture; some youths have described feeling unfairly treated by certain teachers; some have expressed not wanting to attend school due to this bullying. The facilitator then asked them if they discussed these issues with their families; some responded, "yes, but they can't do anything"; other young individuals mentioned staying silent at home because their parents don't believe them.

The young people shared many of their own experiences, revealing that the theme of discrimination resonates strongly among Roma youth, akin to the theme of gender inequality. While gender inequality is not entirely unfamiliar to them, they tend to address it with less awareness. Subsequently, they were invited to express these themes through drawings and paintings. We concluded with 10-minute debriefing sessions, during which each participant had the opportunity to share what they appreciated or disliked about the session and what they had learned.

MEETING 5

On **September 23, 2023**, in Ostend, a group of 6 individuals convened under the supervision of Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova. The objective was to extend the group of participants. Following a request from young people in Ostend, we travelled there to engage with more youth about the project. With the assistance of young people already involved in the project, we motivated others to participate.



MEETING 6

On **September 30, 2023**, in Ghent, 8 individuals were present for Module III under the guidance of Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova.

The discussion moved on to address discrimination during the session. Additionally, a segment on cultural diversity was introduced, where topics such as "violence against women and forced marriage" were slated for discussion. Questions regarding gender equality, such as "Are girls equal to boys?" and "Can a man hit a woman?" were also explored collectively. Visual aids, including pictures and videos, were utilised to facilitate the discussion. Videos depicting partner violence and domestic intrafamilial violence were shown, a topic that appeared to be sensitive for some participants. Consequently, it was decided not to delve too deeply into this issue. Furthermore, videos illustrating traditional arranged marriages, where young girls are coerced into marriage by their parents, were screened. Many young people expressed disgust after viewing these videos, with statements such as "I would never marry a man I don't like and don't know!" or "I will never allow a man to hit me!", and "I will always call the police in case of violence." There were significant reactions from the group following the viewing of these videos. Some participants shared anecdotes about their classmates, who, like themselves, are Roma from Serbia and have experienced similar issues, including running away from home multiple times as a result. Amongst these narratives were accounts like "my friend also ran away and now she is in an institution". We elaborated further and explored the theme of "injustice", asking them questions like: "Why do you think it is not acceptable to marry someone whom parents choose for you?", "How can you marry someone if you are not in love?". After the discussion, we decided to make drawings and paintings of both themes denouncing injustice. Afterwards, we had debriefing and every young person said they really got something out of it. And some said they now have more information to help their friends.



MEETING 7

On **October 8, 2023**, in Ghent, 8 individuals attended a session led by Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova with the aim of fostering expression through creativity and social media. In addition to discussions on various themes and painting activities, we introduced preparations for theatre. We provided song lyrics and melodies for the participants to practise at home and bring forward during our sessions. We also outlined plans for a photo workshop scheduled to begin in 2024, where participants will engage in photography both collectively and individually, capturing images related to the themes discussed throughout the project. Theatre emerged as another focal point, sparking considerable interest among the young participants. We discussed the concept of musical theatre, with some individuals even auditioning on the spot. Following this, guidance listened to their opinions and provided further information, explaining the storyline and scenario. The enthusiasm among the youths was palpable as they found the story both beautiful and compelling. Additionally, we shared song lyrics and introduced the music that will accompany the theatrical performance. In the latter part of the session, we focused on guiding participants in expressing themselves effectively on social media. We examined their profiles on platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, discussing strategies to present themselves more clearly and positively.



MEETING 8

On **October 15, 2023**, we travelled to Ostend with a group of 5 individuals under the supervision of Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova. The purpose of the trip was to visit Martina's house, where she would showcase her drawings and paintings. Martina, an 18-year-old with remarkable talent and a deep understanding of the themes we've discussed, welcomed us into her home. Her artwork was truly impressive, earning praise from everyone present. Following the exhibition, we enjoyed a drink together and walked by the sea before returning to Ghent.

MEETING 9

On **October 22, 2023**, in Ghent, 6 individuals participated in a session led by Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova. The primary objectives included preparations for the "What About Us" event scheduled for November, as well as exercises in crafting press statements for the event and posting them on social media. Participants who had not yet completed their paintings were given the opportunity to finish their artwork. Additionally, rehearsals were conducted for singing performances in the upcoming theatre production, alongside acting exercises. In addition to these activities, we focused on drafting a press statement for the event and discussed strategies for distributing it through

various channels. Furthermore, we created a promotional video clip to advertise the event, which was subsequently shared on social media platforms.

MEETING 10

On **October 29, 2023**, in Ghent, 7 individuals attended a session supervised by Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova. The objectives were to prepare for an exhibition event and conduct theatre rehearsals for singing and acting.

The young participants showed high motivation for theatre acting work and singing rehearsals. One of the tasks involved creating their own story, in which themes of gender and discrimination were highlighted. They also practised and rehearsed singing to music adapted to fit the narrative of the theatre production.

During the rehearsals, we observed that the young people were increasingly aware of what was expected of them. They also demonstrated a lot of empathy in making the theatre story their own. Following the rehearsals, we conducted a debriefing session, during which all the young people remained motivated. In the second part of the meeting, we discussed the possibilities of using social media and web radio as forms of expressing themselves and addressing the issues of gender and discrimination. We conducted exercises in posting messages on these platforms.

MEETING 11

In **November 2023, on the 5th**, in Ghent, 8 individuals gathered under the supervision of Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova with the objective of introducing the concept of a webradio. During the session, we explored the nature of a webradio and listened to various examples. We engaged in discussions on what a webradio could entail and explored the process of setting one up. Due to a lack of equipment for technical practice, we conducted role plays to simulate how individuals would present a radio broadcast. It was agreed upon that we would reach out to a local radio station to arrange a visit and gain further insight into the workings of a real radio station.

EVENT

On **28 November 2023** at De Centrale in Ghent, supervised by Janette Danyiova and Maria Dudova, all young participants were present during the "What About Us" event, with the additional objective of showcasing the works to a wider audience from the project.

An exhibition featuring drawings and paintings related to themes of gender inequality and discrimination was held. The young people expressed great pride in themselves and in what we accomplished as a group. Following the exhibition, there was a debate featuring important key figures, politicians, and academics discussing themes of gender inequality and discrimination against Roma. Subsequently, concerts were held where many young people, including those from the project, performed. The event was a success, with numerous professionals in attendance who admired the paintings. After the event, the group of youngsters worked on a video documenting the entire event, which is ready to be shared on social media and will be sent to the non-profit organisation IC on March 1st.



