

**FREE****NEWSLETTER #1** JANUARY 2021Co-funded by the  
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***All human beings are born FREE and EQUAL in dignity and rights.  
(Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)***

## To be “FREE” from discrimination

Discrimination based on gender shapes the experiences, identity and opportunities of all individuals. In schools, girls and women are confronted with widespread discrimination and sexual harassment which present significant implications on the educational experiences, aspirations and achievement of young girls. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) states that discrimination against women<sup>1</sup> violates the “principle of equality of rights” and becomes an “obstacle to the participation of women on equal terms with men”. The everyday name calling, bullying and stereotypes, the intimate acts of partner violence, the emotional abuse and peer pressure are all acts present within schools.

## About the project

Welcome to the first newsletter of the “Free from Gender Based Discrimination: Teachers and Parents Together projects”. Through strategic partnerships and transnational collaboration, the FREE project focuses on preventing and combatting discrimination or exclusion caused by non-compliance with the accepted norms in school society due to gender discrimination against pupils in the UK, Greece, North Macedonia and Spain.

As evident in many European studies, school can be breeding grounds for gender-based discrimination and violence. Within this context, examples of gender-based discrimination includes not being accepted by classmates, physical assaults, isolation, bullying and violence. The implication of this is that the discriminated are often depressed, suffer from anxiety, have fewer friends, higher suicide and attempted suicide rates.

<sup>1</sup>. *Convention of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>*

The FREE project aims to address this issue with an emphasis on collaboration and cooperation of teachers, parents and wider community on eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence in educational settings.

Throughout the projects, these objectives will be met through the construction of numerous educational tools and community initiatives based on:

- User-led and evidence based educational material to be used in classroom
- Capacity building programme for teachers and information material for parents
- Web based resources toolkit that will enable teacher's capacity building, allowing easy access to all project information
- Organising information session for parents and testing the collaboration model in practice

The main objectives of the project entails:

- Build the capacities of teachers and raise the awareness of parents on gender-based discrimination and provide the means to change school cultures that results to pupils being discriminated against
- Introduce innovative methods and tools to build the capacities of teachers and inform parents on how to react on incident of gender-based discrimination
- Promote cooperation and joint efforts between teachers and parents and build a model of collaboration, utilizing various joint activities
- Reduce the psychological and educational impact of gender-based discrimination on pupils through facilitator workshops and training.



## Project Update:

Over the past year the IARS international institute, Symplexis, Asociacion Caminos and Subversive Front, carried out field research locally in the UK, Greece, Spain and North Macedonia. Participants in this research consisted of teachers and educators from selected schools and parents.

**80**

**school teachers**

**80**

**parents**

**160**

**participants**

Selected participants in each country were involved in 2 types focus groups where parents and teachers were asked questions such as:

- Do you think gender discrimination or sexist behaviour is common in schools?
- What do you think is the cause of this issue?
- Does your school have guidelines or good practices regarding gender-based discrimination or sexism in schools?

In addition to this, data were disseminated through an anonymous survey 4 countries where parents and teachers were asked to identify initiatives that will have a maximum impact and what is required from teachers and parents for implementation of such results

Snapshot of collective results from consortium

Although the demographic of the participants was diverse, among the consortium there were similar trends in relations to what participants in all four countries believed as effective intervention strategies in tackling gender-based discrimination

Child centred  
educational tools

Teacher Training  
programmes

Family  
Workshops

### INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN TACKLING GENDER BASED DISCRIMINATION

Cultural  
sensitivity

Effective reporting  
mechanism

Community based  
initiatives

# Key dates and upcoming events for Project FREE

Here are some of the key dates related to the project, and further information on the evidence collected by the consortium will be disseminated

## NOV-DEC 2020

### INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1

Design of the practical and training guide reflecting the collaborative model between teachers and parents.

## DEC 2020- JAN 2021

### INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2

Capacity building programmes for teachers and information material and a guide for parents.

## JAN 2021-MAR 2021

### INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 3

Development of web platform which will have training modules and capacity building training material

## MAR 2021- AUG 2021

### INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 4

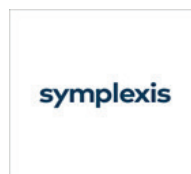
Piloting testing of all outputs in the field. This will include delivering capacity building programmes and pilot resources in workshops

## Contact

For any information, please contact the project coordinator:  
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Keep your eyes peeled for upcoming workshops, online events, conferences.

Make sure you follow us all on social media



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