



**EMBARGOED 00:01 THURSDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2022**

**Europe wide project to tackle gender-based discrimination in schools holds international conference in London today**

**\*Teachers and charity CEO available for interview – details in notes**

A Europe wide project to tackle gender discrimination in schools from an early age holds a conference today, to share international learning and hear from educators and parents involved in the programme.

FREE from gender discrimination: parent and teacher together, co-funded by the EU and coordinated by UK charity IARS, works across five European countries to undermine gender stereotypes, norms and roles that are the main causes of gender-based discrimination in schools.

Through face-to-face training and an online training platform, the FREE project provides a space for teachers, school staff and parents to come together to explore persisting gender stereotypes, and to develop a whole-school approach to understand and challenge these stereotypes.

During the conference, FREE will be exploring the results of this training in the UK, Spain, Greece and North Macedonia, and will showcase the online training platform.

IARS also delivers training in schools around preventing gender discrimination and violence, and works to strengthen policies behind creating a safer, more inclusive society, and in February this year responded to the UK Government call for evidence as the Home Office prepared to update its strategy 'Violence Against Women and Girls'.

Claire Bonham, Chief Executive of IARS, said:

'We know that the UK Government is taking the issue of gender discrimination and violence seriously, which is why we contributed to its call for evidence on Violence Against Women and Girls.

'The findings of our report show that much more needs to be done at an early age to tackle stereotypes and accepted behavioural norms that can engender gender-based discrimination and violence in relation to women and girls.

'We hope that the UK Government listens to the lived experience of 12-18-year-olds we provided in our evidence, so that the UK can improve its response to these crimes.'



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

2019-1-UK01-KA201-062092

### **Notes to editors:**

***Dr. Claire Bonham, Chief Executive of The IARS International Institute is available for interview.  
Contact Claire directly on: [director@iars.org.uk](mailto:director@iars.org.uk) +44(0) 7833 224442***

***The CPD accredited online training platform can be found at: [www.projectfree.eu](http://www.projectfree.eu)***

### **Children First works through the following partners:**

- **Coordinator - The IARS International Institute / UK [www.iars.org.uk](http://www.iars.org.uk)**
- **Symplexis / Greece [symplexis.eu](http://symplexis.eu)**
- **Caminos / Spain [www.asoccaminos.org](http://www.asoccaminos.org)**
- **IDEC / Greece [www.idec.gr](http://www.idec.gr)**
- **Novel Group / Luxembourg [www.novelgroup.lu](http://www.novelgroup.lu)**
- **Subversive Front / North Macedonia [www.s-front.org.mk](http://www.s-front.org.mk)**

### **Explanation of terms used:**

#### **Gender Based Discrimination**

Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

#### **Gender Based Violence**

Violence directed against a person because of that person's gender (including gender identity/expression) or as violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. It can be physical, sexual and/or psychological, and includes a) violence in close relationships, b) sexual violence (including rape, sexual assault and harassment or stalking), c) slavery, d) harmful practices (i.e., forced marriages, female genital mutilation and 'honour' crimes) e) cyberviolence and harassment using new technologies.

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