

First steering group meeting Gender Mainstreaming Community of Practice

Meeting notes 2010-02-10

Place; Agence FSE, chaussée de Charleroi 111, Bruxelles

Participants;

1. Christian Veske, ESF Estonia
2. Lee Maripuu, ESF Estonia
3. M^a Jose Rosco, Women's Institute, Spain
4. Maribel Castellvi, Women's Institute, Spain
5. Caroline Meyers, ESF Flanders
6. Rebhandl, Ulrike, ESF Austria
7. Racioppo Anna Rita, Isfol, Italy
8. Frédéric Gosgnach, ESF French speaking Belgium
9. Jenny Charlier, ESF French speaking Belgium
10. Schlinke, Sabina, German Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, ESF
11. Manuela Marinho, COMISSÃO PARA A CIDADANIA E IGUALDADE DE GÉNERO
12. Fabienne Vauguet, National Action Unit, ESF Sub-DirectorateVAUGUET
13. Renate Wielpütz, Germany, Support structure on GM
14. Marianne Öberg-Håkansson, ESF Sweden
15. Anna Tengqvist, TG Equality, Sweden
16. Anne-Charlott Callerstig, TG Equality, Sweden
17. Gerhard Braeunling, European Commission

- Welcome and presentations
- History of the previous GM CoP network was presented by Renate Wielpuetz
- The commissions perspective – Gerhard Braeunling spoke about the importance of the network. Still a lot of misunderstanding and knowledge shortage about gender mainstreaming exists. However, we have a lot of experiences to build on from the work of the previous network and from the work done in many member states. It is important to keep a European perspective and to work with both “new” and “old” member states. It is also important the results from the work in the network are spread in the ESF structures on a national level.
- Short round from each country, on hopes for the network (personal, for the organisation and for the European level). Among the issues that were raised were the continuing and unsolved problematic of the gender pay gap, reconciliation of work-family and gendered employment patterns that are shared among all member states. There was also a discussion on the importance to gain more knowledge on how to work with awareness raising and sensitizing and to gain real commitment from stakeholders to face the “gender challenges”. It was discussed the importance to increase the understanding that a gender perspective is essential to all major objectives of the ESF and the Lisbon strategy and not merely an “added value”. One hope that was emphasized was that the network can be an important reference on the European level. Also on the project level, gender awareness and knowledge on how to work with a gender perspective on all levels of the policy cycle is an important issue to work

on. The network can hopefully focus and learn more about some of the “points of needles” that we know exist in the current processes. There is also still a need to share good practices about the practical work. The development of the multiple discrimination/intersectional perspective in European politics and the implications it has from a gender mainstreaming perspective were also among the issues that were raised in the discussions. Also the importance of emphasizing the gender perspective as not only focusing a women’s perspective was stressed.

- Anna Tengqvist made a short “walk through of the application” and described the organisation of CoP as it has been outlined in the application. There were a short discussion on additional countries that were seen as important to include in the steering group. Poland and Rumania were among those mentioned. In order to be a member in the steering group, a real commitment in terms of resources and invested time has to be made and a clear ambition to take responsibility for the work of the network. The GM CoP will also welcome members that will participate on a more participatory level or who may want to organize an event in relation to the activities planned by the steering group.
- Anne-Charlott Callerstig spoke about the mobilization phase. This phase will last between 15th of March to 15th of September. During this time it is important to establish 1) the “learning agenda” – what issues that should be our focusing points, 2) the “working methods” – learning seminars, peer reviews, web based work etc . Also the main activities in relation to the main objectives of the network should be decided in more detail; knowledge building, learning and networking activities, awareness raising, training and sensitizing activities, dissemination etc. This should be done for both the ESF-working group, the thematic working groups and for the network as a whole. Also how to build an infrastructure for the work on both a European and national level should be outlined. The baseline study should serve as a base for this work.
- The website was discussed. The previous site is currently “down” and Anna and Renate have been investigating what the status of the website is. Hopefully it is possible to retrieve the lost material and to re-launch the website. The issue of whether it should be merely improved or completely re-built was raised. This discussion will continue depending of the result of the investigation. Also the domain name www.gendermainstreaming-cop.eu will be kept if possible.
- Base line study was discussed with Renates draft as a starting point. The issue of what the exact purpose of the base line study is was raised. The main purpose should be to serve as a base for the work during the mobilization phase to decide the details of the working programme. The countries represented in the steering group can be seen as “case studies” where we can be given a more in-depth understanding of the state of the art of GM in relation to the ESF. The situation for the remaining countries, can be analyzed based on the investigations and statistics produced by the Commission etc. Also the base line study can serve as a starting point for further investigations that the steering group might want make in the future.

The base line study should foremost serve as a background for the concrete actions taken by the GM Cop in the coming years. However, some of the results may also be made public on the website to show the various situations in different member states, as in a “gender index”. One suggestion was to make this as an interactive “map”.

Many suggestions were made in the discussions about the content and Anna and Anne-Charlott will come back with a suggestion that can be discussed further via mail. Members of the steering group will be responsible to write input from their own countries. Anna and Anne-Charlott will provide background information from reports from the commission etc and also put the report together.

- Working groups – short presentation were made during the day from lead countries (Portugal, Belgium, Estonia). Discussion on possible new working groups was initiated and will be continued.
- Next steering group meeting were decided to 28th - 29th April in Madrid

Notes taken by Anne-Charlott Callerstig