



РЕПУБЛИКА БЪЛГАРИЯ
Министър на образованието и науката

№.....
..... 2020.

TO
Dr. JULIAN PETROV
CHAIRPERSON OF „EDUCATION“ TRADE
UNION AT „PODKREPA“
CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR

Re: *Letter of intent for cooperation and support under project „Growing up equal“ of Education trade union at Podkrepa Confederation of Labour*

DEAR Mr. PETROV,

In response to your letter, received by e-mail, on cooperation and support under the project "Growing up equal" of the Education trade union at Podkrepa CL, which aims to increase the sensitivity of primary education professionals and pre-school educators to their own unconscious prejudices, which format the way they treat boys and girls, as well as the additional information provided thereon, we would like to emphasise our commitment to gender equality policies in all areas of public and political life.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, I inform you that many initiatives have been planned with the participation of professionals from higher education institutions, public authorities and interested organisations in order to reach a public consensus and answer many questions related to school sexuality, gender stereotypes and activities in these areas with adolescents in educational institutions. The crisis situation around COVID-19 hinders the implementation of these planned activities by postponing them in time.

In this regard, we would like to recognise that "Psycho - gender development is a complex biosocial process in which natural and social factors intertwine, and they cannot be

explained separately without considering their complex interaction“ (https://ejournal.vfu.bg/en/pdfs/Petar_Neshev-Polovite_rol_i_polovata_identichnost_kato_problem_v_psihologiyata.pdf).

There are different scientific perspectives on gender identity formation. According to some authors, it ends in infancy, after which it remains static and can not be changed.

According to other sociological theories gender identity is formed in the process of socialization. In the scientific fields such as psychology, sociology, which examine the subject of gender identity and the roles arising from it, there are various and often controversial statements.

According to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, the gender is naturalized artificially in order to be present to us as natural. People are not born as men or women - they become such according to the role models prescribed to them by society.

In most modern societies there is a heteronormative two-pole system of defining and embracing gender identity – it can be either male or female, with all the resulting patterns of behaviour, way of dressing, emotness, etc. It is expected from each individual to fit into one of these two categories, depending on the physiological sex characteristics with which it was born, as well as with its corresponding gender role.

It is clear from the above stated that the impact in this area of child development is difficult to take place in educational institutions, without the risk of having different societal moods and pressures in support or denial. There is a need for public consensus, which is defined by the level reached by public attitudes, as it is known that in the process of achieving equality between women and men, the existing attitudes in society which are justified by cultural differences are most difficult to overcome.

In this regard, we should note that we could commit to support the proposed project on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science, taking into account the proposals that we present to your attention:

- The purpose of the project and the name to be reformulated in the direction of breaking stereotypes and attitudes towards the activities that girls and boys should perform;
- The project activities should be directed towards students from III-IV grade, since in this period of child development there are efforts to self-assess and self-affirm among others, as well as to adapt to the surrounding realities. This is the age in which more active efforts are directed to absorb the professional knowledge and skills needed future realization, in order to ensure a more complete level playing field between girls and boys.

I use the occasion to congratulate you and to express my willingness to cooperate in the implementation of initiatives in the field of education.

X

Tanya Mihaylova
Vice-Minister of Education and Science