

Equal access and equal opportunities for men and women to the municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities in Sofia

Project “Equality for Local
Development: Gender
Mainstreaming in
Municipalities”

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Problem

- There are nine municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities in Sofia, used by members of the respective associations to the clubs or with individual permits for attendance.
- The main goal of the clubs' activities is to provide opportunities for social contacts. The activities are organized by the associations to the respective clubs and basically include board games like chess, backgammon, cards, as well as lectures, excursions, concerts and trips.
- In practice, the men and women who actually attend the activities are less than the members of the associations to the clubs.
- There is a clear gender division in the choice of activities which separates men and women into large groups with different interests.

Object of the survey

The associations using the municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities in Sofia ***from gender perspective*** regarding

- membership,
- schedule for attendance and
- attendance.

Objectives of the survey

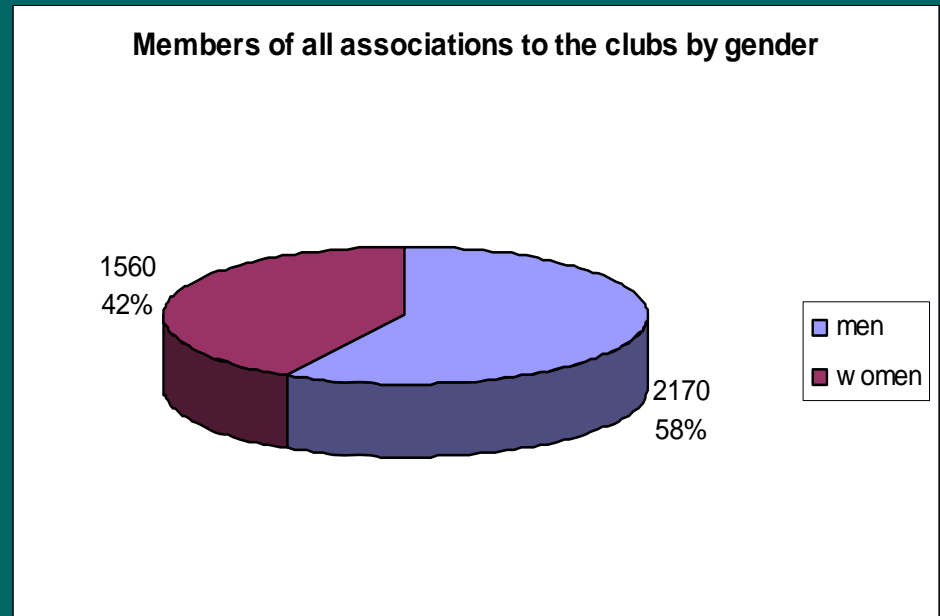
To find out if men and women

- have equal access and
- equal opportunities to use the municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities, based in Sofia and
- to participate in their preferred activities.

Collected data from the survey

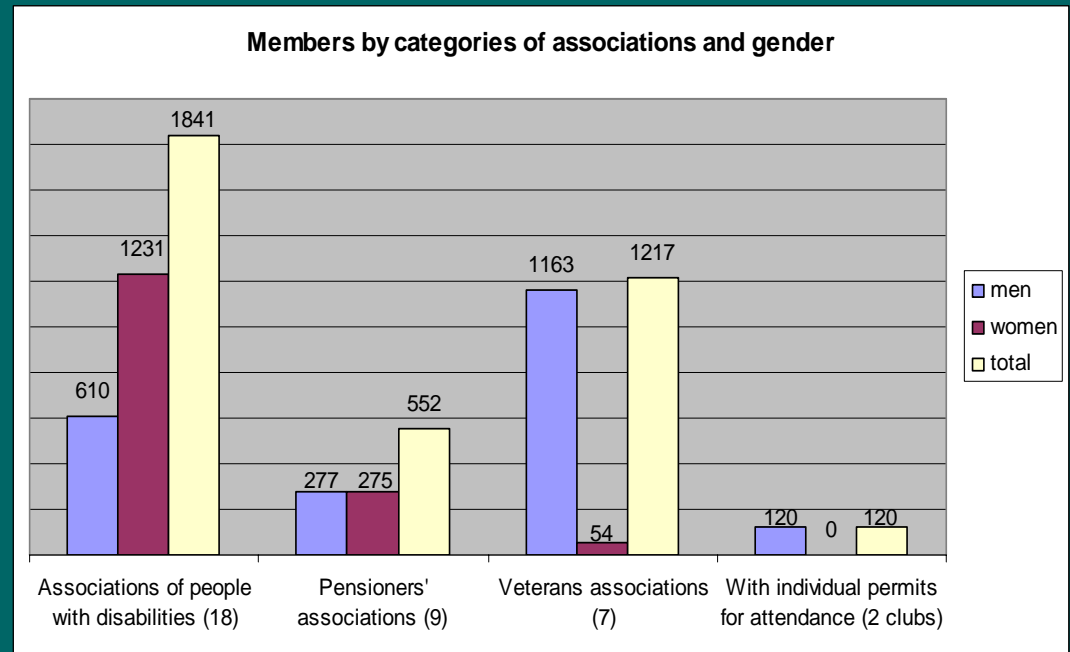
R1 – representation

- The associations in which pensioners and people with disabilities are organized are 34 in total and include 2170 men (58%) and 1560 women (42%).



R1 – representation

- There are 4 specific categories of associations: of people with disabilities, of pensioners, of war veterans, and people with individual permits for attendance.



R1 – representation

- The women members of the associations of people with disabilities are twice as men – 67%.
- In the pensioners' associations the representation of men and women is equal.
- In the war veterans' associations the women are 4%, while the holders of individual permits are only men.
- The proportion of the members of the associations by gender varies for the clubs – in three of the clubs prevail women, in three – men, and in three – their number is approximately equal

R2 – resources

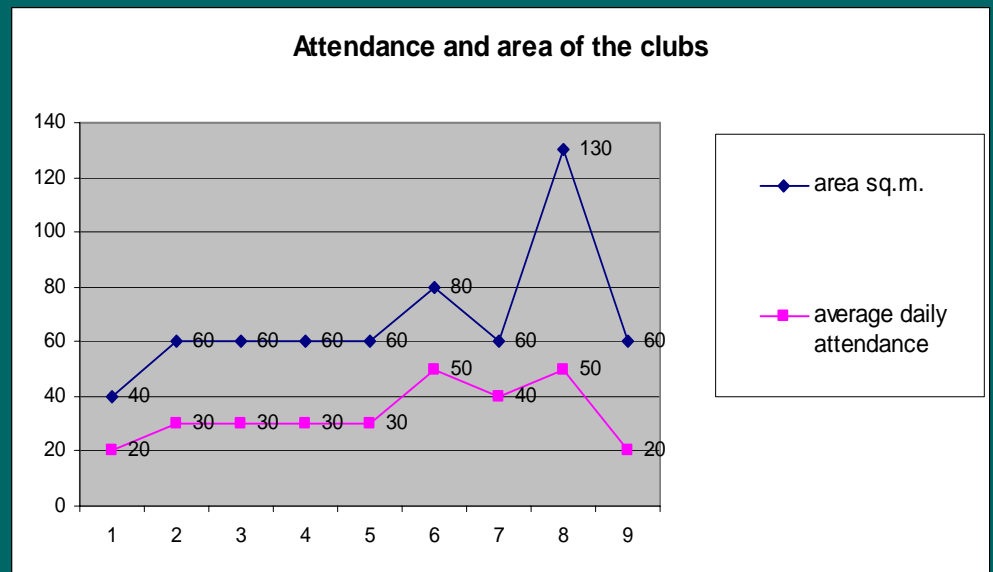
- Money: the budget for 2007 is 450 000 BGN – increased with 100 000 BGN from 2006; for maintenance and salaries of the technical assistants; the activities are financed by the membership fees and donations;
- Place: the clubs are municipal property; area varies from 60 sq.m. to 130 sq.m.
- Related to the place is the schedule of attendance, which is determined by the chairs of the associations and the technical assistant to the respective club, as well as on the actual attendance of the clubs.

R2 – resources

- Different patterns:
- In some cases the actual attendance corresponds to the number of the members.
- In others, although there are more women members of the associations, they have restricted opportunities for using the club for their activities.
- In third cases, with almost equal number of men and women associations' members, most of the visitors are from one gender only.

R2 – resources

The data is based only on the observations of the technical assistants, because there is no such statistics



Situation analysis and conclusions (R - realia)

- There are more men than women among the members of the associations to the municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities in Sofia.
- It is due to the fact, that the war veterans' associations represent the half of the members of all associations.
- Therefore, although at retirement age women are more than men, they are not well represented in the pensioners' associations – almost 17% for all categories.

Situation analysis and conclusions (R - realia)

- The women pensioners are a neglected target group, which does not use the public resources (the municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities) equally with men. It would be good if the reasons for this situation are explored, and how could more women be attracted to participate in these associations, considering that most of them live alone, not surrounded by children or relatives.
- There is an opposite trend with regard to the associations of people with disabilities. Here, the future work should be focused on men in order to identify their problems and take measures, specifically targeting them.

Action plan

- The clubs should start gathering statistics by gender related to the attendance which should be used for the preparation of the schedule, in order to ensure equal access and equal opportunities for men and women.
- The Social Activities Directorate should conduct a survey by gender among the target groups on the territory of Sofia Municipality about: their preferred activities, their needs of such clubs, and the reasons for which they do not participate in the associations and/or do not attend the municipal clubs for pensioners and people with disabilities.

Action plan

- Based on the results, a gender sensitive municipal strategy for senior citizens should be developed, with financially supported measures.
- The activities in the municipal clubs should be expanded by attracting additional funds through projects of the Social Activities Directorate for external financing and encouraging the partnership between the associations and non-governmental organizations working in this area.
- The activities in the municipal clubs should be promoted in the communities in order to attract and actively engage more people from the target groups.

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