

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – NEED OF RATIONALISING THE FREE TIME OF PUPILS TO DEVELOP THEIR INTERESTS AND TALENTS**

### **Team**

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### **Description of the problem**

**Local authorities are the main provider of extra-curricular activities in the educational institutions. The necessary funds for the implementation of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities are provided mainly through external financing programs for which the schools apply in partnership with the municipalities. Are these programs gender sensitive and how is that reflected in the project proposals regarding the choice of activities and the evaluation of the results achieved?**

### **Object of the survey**

**The survey explored from gender perspective the guidelines and the project proposals developed by the Municipality of Sofia in partnership with schools in 2007 under 2 programs of the Ministry of Education.**

- National Program “The School – Territory of Students” – proposals of 116 schools**
- Three schemes under the Human Resources Operational Program – proposals of 107 schools**

### **Objectives of the survey**

**To make an analysis from gender perspective of the requirements in the guidelines and their application through the criteria for choosing extra-curricular and out-of-school activities as well as to determine the factors for the choice of activities.**

### **Data (R1, R2)**

The choice of the activities is determined by the available resources of the educational institution, the local authorities (Sofia Municipality) and the priorities the state policy, namely: information and technological resources; legal and regulatory framework; financial resources; human resources; identifying the needs of the target groups and the beneficiaries. The focus of the survey fell on the latter as it is considered the most important for determining the activities.

Gender equality is not included among the evaluation criteria for the projects under the National Program and the indicators give only the total number of pupils (representation – R1). Only 25% of the project proposals determine their activities based on the needs of their target groups and direct beneficiaries, but it is not done from gender perspective. Practically, there are no projects that encourage the participation of boys or girls in a certain activity (resources – R2).

In the guidelines of the Operational Program gender equality is listed as the first obligatory horizontal principle. Each activity requires an indicator for the number of participants by gender but it is not bound with the final effectiveness indicator, which is the limitation of the funds per pupil/child participating in the project (representation – R1). Only 15% under the Operational Program determine their activities based on the needs of their target groups and direct beneficiaries. These activities are determined based on the identified needs by gender in only a neglectfully small number of projects (resources – R2).

### **Analysis and conclusions (R3)**

The lack of requirement for gender equality in the National Program does not allow evaluating whether the activities have effects on the boys and girls and if they address the actual interests and needs of the respective groups. In fact, the activities are determined in an outdated manner based only on the traditions in the school or stereotypical notions about their necessity which is not identified through a gender perspective.

**Although the Operational Program requires the observation of the principle of gender equality, it does not require identifying the needs of the target groups and beneficiaries by gender. There are only indicators by gender for the number of pupils but not for the effectiveness of the financial resources used. This fact raises the question how the observance of the main horizontal principle for gender equality is guaranteed. There is a threat that these financial resources are allocated unequally and as a result could deepen existing inequalities instead of overcoming them and as a result – not used efficiently for encouraging equal opportunities and access of boys and girls to extra-curricular activities.**

### **Action Plan**

- **To raise the gender awareness through trainings of the educational community with regard to gender analysis of the needs of pupils, including specific training on gender equality issues for future beneficiaries of the Operational Program;**
- **To create a gender-sensitive data base of extra-curricular activities in order to support the schools in project development for more accurate formulation of the necessary measures;**
- **To enhance the partnerships between the municipality and the schools with non-governmental organizations working on gender issues;**
- **To make a recommendation to the Ministry of Education and Science for amendments in the Guidelines in order to include an ex post evaluation indicator for the efficiency of the resource allocation by gender.**