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# Gender equality within youth organizations

A brief analysis in Romania, Spain and Portugal



# Introduction

As part of the European project **OBLIO - One Bridge for Lifelong Inclusive Organizations\***, coordinated by Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca (Romania), in partnership with Graal (Portugal) and Cazalla Intercultural (Spain), we conducted an inquiry process to get to know youth organizations' perspectives and practices regarding gender equality.

**125 organizations answered an online survey, designed by the partnership, and the main results are presented on the following pages.**

We believe our survey attracted responses from the organizations that are most interested and involved in the topic of gender equality, which introduces some bias. The results paint a positive scenario and **yet we can see there are still steps to take towards gender equality in these organizations!**

Despite these reservations, it makes sense to share the collected data: **our analysis reveals signs of the persistence of inequalities and provides some information on what has been done by youth organizations in order to promote gender equality.**

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\*OBLIO is funded by Erasmus+ Program and aims to contribute to capacitate youth organizations with tools to become more egalitarian, safe and inclusive contexts.

# Who answered this survey?

**125**  
organizations

## Country



## Area of activity

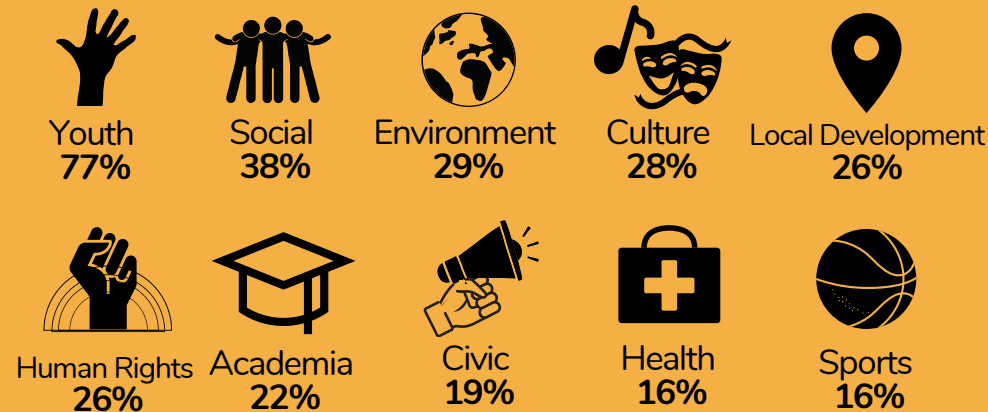
**33%**  
Local

**18%**  
National

**18%**  
Regional

**31%**  
International

## Fields of intervention



## Gender distribution of the people involved in these organizations



**60%**



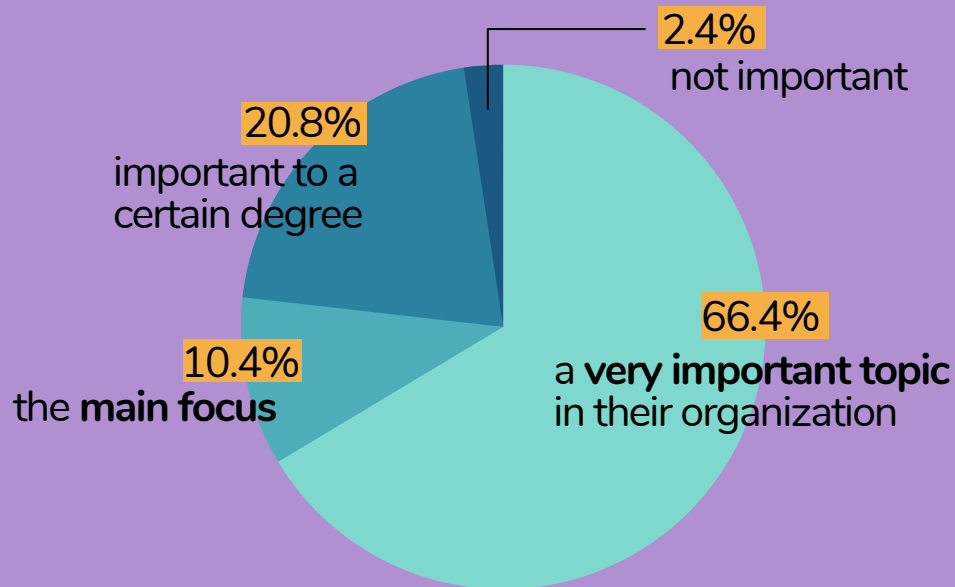
**39.4%**

**Other**

**0.6%**

# Importance of gender equality

According to the respondents, for these organizations, gender equality is...



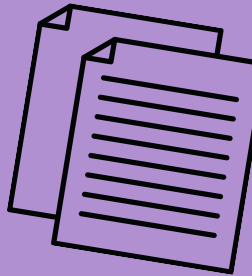
When comparing with society...

- < 77% consider that they are **more** egalitarian than society.
- || 21% consider that the organization is **as egalitarian as** society.
- > 2% consider they are **less** egalitarian than society.

# References in strategic documents to gender equality and non discrimination

**26%** do not reference gender equality and non discrimination in their strategic documents.

[ 8% don't know how to answer this. ]



# Activities promoting gender equality

As stated by the respondents, **52%** of the organizations promote some activities about gender equality, mostly targeting their volunteers and beneficiaries.

**However, most of these activities occur occasionally and they include:**

- Campaigns
- Workshops
- ▲ Courses
- Gatherings
- Seminars
- ▲ Debates
- Lectures
- Awareness actions

# Leadership of the organization

The person with more responsibility and power in the organization is...



44,8%



53.6%

Other

1.6%

These results lead us to conclude that, **despite the majority of people involved in youth organizations being women - 60% (page 2) - the leaders tend to be men.**

If we take a closer look at the countries reality, **we can see that this tendence is the same in each one.** For example, in Romania's case, the percentage of women as leaders is close to half (49%), bigger than in Portugal or Spain (both 42%), but women's participation in youth organizations is also bigger (close to 75%).



# Gender specific tasks

When asked about whether there are gender specific tasks in their organizations, the majority of the respondents say no. Nonetheless, **17%** consider there are gender specific tasks in their organizations. Some of the examples given are:

## Men

Tasks that require technical skills

Tasks that include force

IT programming

Sound systems

## Women

Cleaning

Marketing

Animation

Graphic design

Sexual education for women

Kitchen related tasks

Human resources

Phisical and emotional care

Tasks that require more attention

# Representativeness of women and men

## Guest speakers

According to the respondents, when inviting speakers to conferences or activities the organizations promote, only **47%** of the organizations try to include a balanced number of women and men.



## Language

About using **gender parity language** in their communication tools and platforms...

**42%**  
always use

**41%**  
sometimes use

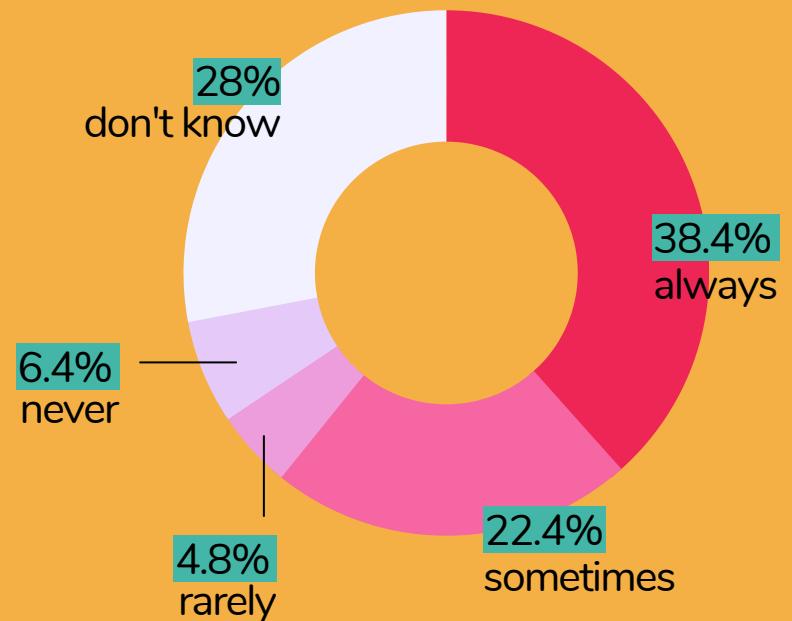
**9%**  
rarely use

**7%**  
never use

**1%**  
don't know

## Speeches and images

Regarding the organization's communication on their platforms, the answers let us know that at least **34%** don't always use images and speeches free from gender stereotypes and that refuse roles traditionally assigned to women and men.



A considerable number of the respondents don't know how to answer this specific question (**28%**).

# Sexism and gender-based violence

17%

of the respondents knows someone who has **experienced sexism or gender-based violence in their organization.**

## Measures to address sexism or gender-based violence

Only **34%** have specific measures to address sexism or gender-based violence incidents that might occur in the organization. Some of the examples given are:

### Measures to prevent:

- Campaigns against violence
- Trainings for youth workers
- ▲ Specific protocols
- Monitor and observe the behavior
- Bring the topic of equality to the internal agenda

### Procedures to deal with specific cases:

- ▲ Internal reporting procedures
- Termination of voluntary contracts
- Suspension of membership
- ▲ Mediation
- Consultations with professionals

## LGBT+ people

While **63%** of the respondents say that in their organization, there are **inclusive and non-discriminatory measures** towards LGBT+ people, a vast majority (**90%**) consider that **people** from this community **can openly assert their identity.**

9%

consider that LGBT+ **people can not openly assert their identity.**

# In conclusion

From the data collected, it is possible to conclude that **gender equality has not been fully achieved in all the youth organizations inquired** and that the involvement of women and men in this sector seems unbalanced.

These inequalities become clearer when we look deeper into the answers given:

**Women are underrepresented in leadership positions** in youth organizations.

To a certain degree, **the distribution of tasks between women and men appears to be biased.**

In terms of communications, the organizations still have a lot of work to do in order to **eliminate ways of communication that perpetuate stereotypical ideas** of what being a woman and a man is.

**Sexism exists** in the youth sector and the **organizations are not entirely prepared** to deal with those situations.

Nevertheless, the answers lead us to conclude that **these youth organizations are aware of gender equality issues.** However, the described tools and methods for consistently promoting gender equality are in most cases vague, **leaving room for improvement.**

By bringing a **more structured approach** to gender equality in the responding organizations, and even more in other youth organizations in our countries, **we can hope for progress towards a society with equal opportunity for women and men.**

The majority of the youth organizations that answered the survey consider that they are more egalitarian than society. **This is a good indication that increases our expectations for society's progress towards a future with equal opportunities, rights and representativeness for women and men.** It also shows the important part youth organizations can play by making efforts to promote gender equality through their practices and activities.



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