

FEM-ABLE



FEM-ABLE

Promoting women's participation
in the political domain

FEM-ABLE TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS PARTNER COUNTRIES

Deliverable D4.1

Part A

CESIE, All partners

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PREFACE

This document represents a cornerstone output of the FEM-ABLE project, capturing the essence of implementation activities conducted across seven partner countries: Portugal, Lithuania, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, and Sweden. This comprehensive report reflects the partnership's collective efforts and achievements in promoting gender equality in politics and decision-making roles.

The deliverable is structured into two main sections, each addressing critical dimensions of the project's objectives:

Section A: **A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF FEM-ABLE TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS PARTNER COUNTRIES**

This section offers a detailed account of the FEM-ABLE Gender Equality Strategies implementation at the national level. It documents the activities undertaken, provides an analysis of outcomes, and reflects on the broader impact. By assessing the effectiveness of the FEM-ABLE Toolkit, this section evaluates its role in fostering gender equality within diverse sociopolitical and cultural contexts.

Section B: **EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER EQUALITY IN POLITICS: A COMPILATION OF NATIONAL CASE STUDIES**

This section brings together a series of national case studies showcasing successful initiatives from the partner countries. These case studies delve into the challenges faced, the innovative solutions applied, and the strategies that proved effective. Highlighting at least one best practice per country, this compilation serves as a resource for inspiring future endeavors in advancing gender equality in political spheres.

Together, these sections form a cohesive narrative that not only documents the project's progress but also serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, practitioners, and advocates working towards a more equitable and inclusive political landscape across Europe.

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SECTION A:

A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF FEM-ABLE TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS PARTNER COUNTRIES



A.1 INTRODUCTION

FEM-ABLE is an EU-funded project aimed at promoting the participation and representation of all individuals in political decision-making processes, with a particular focus on women. The project achieved this through the development of national and European gender equality strategies, which were then implemented at the local level in each country involved; **Portugal, Italy, Greece, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden, and Cyprus.**

This implementation involved a wide range of stakeholders, including public institutions, political parties, local and national associations, activists, and the broader civil society.

This document offers an overview of the FEM-ABLE Strategies objectives and scope, highlighting the successful presentation and dissemination of these national gender equality strategies across partner countries through a series of **workshops, seminars, and events.**

The project's final phase focused on increasing public awareness, mobilising support, and influencing policy changes. Central to this effort was the broad dissemination of these strategies, supported by targeted communication and advocacy initiatives to maximize the project's impact.

A.2 IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

Following the development of the EU and national gender equality strategies, the project planned and executed a series of targeted activities in each participating country. These activities were specifically designed to **promote the adoption of these strategies at both local and national levels.**

The approach emphasised **interactive and experiential learning methods**, shifting away from traditional lecture-based formats toward more engaging and participatory techniques. Workshops, seminars, and public events were employed to encourage dynamic discussions and deepen participants' practical understanding of the strategies.

The primary audience for these activities included key stakeholders, particularly **political parties, policymakers, politicians, election candidates**, who are instrumental in driving change and enhancing women's influence in political arenas. Furthermore, the events were also addressed to encourage **broaden public** discourse on women's political representation and participation, providing a platform to showcase and exchange best practices in advancing gender equality across different contexts.

This section summarises the activities implemented in each partner country, detailing the events' scope, audience reached, activities conducted, and any contextual adaptations made.

A.2.1 PORTUGAL, Universidade Lusófona

Universidade Lusófona organised a series of events between May and July 2024, including an event in Lisbon and two in-person workshops in Porto. The primary objective of these events was to disseminate information about the FEM-ABLE project and promote Portugal's National Strategy for gender equality in politics.

In addition to sharing insights and raising public awareness, the events were designed to foster collaborative and participatory approaches aimed at addressing and overcoming the barriers to female political participation. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, including activists, policymakers, and academics, these sessions created a platform for constructive dialogue. They encouraged participants to propose innovative solutions to persistent challenges, such as gender stereotypes, institutional discrimination, and the difficulties women face in balancing personal and professional commitments within the political arena. The events sought not only to inform but also to inspire actionable strategies for creating more inclusive political environments.

“Conversations for Equality” event

Scope of the activity

To encourage their peers to think about female political participation and its obstacles, a class of graduating students from Universidade Lusófona organized the event "Conversations for Equality" which featured four guests who work on gender equality in different fields.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The event took place on the 23rd of May, inside Auditorium José Araújo, located at Universidade Lusófona – Lisbon University Center, Campo Grande 376. It started at 3pm and lasted until 5pm.

Support staff and facilitators:

- **Sónia Lamy**, Assistant Professor and Integrated Researcher at Universidade Lusófona;
- **Diana Loureiro**, Master Scholarship Researcher at Universidade Lusófona;
- Two graduating students of Communication and Journalism, with the role of moderators:
 - **Beatriz Emídio**;
 - **Gustavo Pereira**.

Guest speakers:

- **Maria Helena Santos**, University Professor and Scientific Researcher in Social Psychology and Gender Studies at ISCTE - Lisbon University Institute;
- **Carla Sofia Nunes Semedo**, Councilor at Cascais City Council;
- **Ana Vitorino**, Political Advisor for the Socialist Party and Co-found of the HeForShe chapter in the city of Setúbal;
- **Francisca Cabral**, Announcer at MegaHits radio station on the program “Girls Night Out”.



Image 1 – Participants, Guest Speakers and Moderators at "Conversations for Equality"

Although the event was hybrid, with streaming done via Zoom, all participants were present in person. The participants, totalling 65 from all genders, were primarily composed of students from the organizing class, along with individuals from other years, which added significant value as they aligned with the target audience. The majority of participants were aged between 18 and their early 20s. Their background in communication and journalism proved to be a key differentiator, given that the event focused on the representation and diverse portrayal of women in the political sphere in relation to the media. This alignment of their academic focus with the event's objectives facilitated more engaged discussions and a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.

Description of the event

In implementing the National Strategy, Universidade Lusófona challenged the final-year students of the Lisbon University Center's Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Journalism to organize the first event. To this end, the class selected the subtopics they wished to address, within the scope of women's political participation and diversified representation, they chose the guest speakers, and subsequently divided into various groups responsible for inviting the speakers, drafting the event brief and press release, managing social media, creating content for the platforms, and covering the event. For dissemination purposes, an [Instagram account](#) was created.

As the political spectrum is a reflection of society, cultural norms and trends, it is at the deep root that these problems must be addressed. By participating in dynamic activities using critical thinking,

university students were confronted with the complexities of gender inequalities and were able to engage, think and debate these issues together, working on the organization of the event from February 2024 to May 2024. This collective work proved more fruitful for students rather than merely observing or attending a lecture.



Image 2 - Meeting with students, in the classroom, to provide a theoretical framework while organizing the event

On May 24th, 2024, at 3PM, the event commenced with Sónia Lamy from the FEM-ABLE project, who provided an insightful overview of the project's context, highlighting the critical work carried out thus far, the event's scope, which was co-organized by students, and key statistical data concerning women's political participation both in Portugal and across Europe. The presentation outlined the project's objectives, particularly its mission to increase political inclusivity and gender parity, setting the tone for the discussions that followed.

Subsequently, Maria Helena Santos delivered a comprehensive presentation on the Parity Law and the legislative framework aimed at advancing the Movement for Political Parity (MpPP). The movement is dedicated to achieving 50% parity in political representation across all levels of government in Portugal, including the Parliament, as well as national and regional administrations. Santos emphasized the necessity of institutional reforms to ensure that women have equitable access to political power, discussing the slow but significant progress made to date.

Following these presentations, a debate was held, featuring four expert speakers and moderated by two student facilitators. The discussions delved into critical issues such as the Civic Movement for

Parity, the persistent barriers to women's political engagement, the intersections of feminism and broader social inequalities, and the pivotal role that men can play as allies in advocating for women's rights and gender equality. The speakers brought diverse perspectives, integrating both theoretical insights and practical experiences, which enriched the dialogue.

After the debate, the floor was opened to the audience, allowing for a dynamic and interactive session. Attendees were encouraged to pose questions and share their own experiences and viewpoints, resulting in a robust exchange on topics such as queer feminist perspectives, the impact of positionality in political discourse, and the notable absence of Afro-descendant female professors in higher education institutions. This last point raised concerns about how this underrepresentation affects Afro-descendant female students, both in terms of mentorship and academic visibility, shedding light on broader systemic issues within the education and political systems.

The event concluded with a particularly thought-provoking moment, as one of the speakers asked the audience how many identified as feminists. In response, the vast majority of attendees raised their hands, signaling widespread support for feminist principles. This moment underscored the shared commitment of those present to the ongoing fight for gender equality and representation, while also serving as a powerful reminder of the solidarity within the room. The event not only fostered critical discussions but also strengthened the resolve of participants to advocate for systemic change in their respective spheres.

Topics discussed

Civic Movement for Parity - This movement advocates for equal representation of women in political offices, striving for 50% gender parity across government bodies. The discussion focused on the historical context of this movement in Portugal, the progress made so far, and the ongoing challenges in implementing parity laws.

Barriers to Female Political Engagement - Various obstacles that women face in entering and thriving in politics were addressed. These include structural and cultural barriers such as gender bias, lack of mentorship, unequal access to resources, and the balancing of political careers with traditional family roles. The debate highlighted the need for targeted policies to dismantle these barriers.

Feminism and Intersectionality - The conversation expanded to include the concept of intersectionality, recognizing that women's experiences in politics are shaped by overlapping identities such as race, class, and gender. The need to consider these intersections when advocating for gender equality was emphasized, ensuring that political reforms benefit all women, not just a privileged few.



Image 3 - Maria Helena Santos doing her presentation on the Civic Movement for Parity at "Conversations for Equality"

Role of Men as Allies in Women's Advocacy - This topic explored how men can contribute to gender equality by actively supporting women's rights and challenging patriarchal structures. The debate highlighted the importance of men recognizing their own privilege and using their influence to foster inclusive environments in politics and beyond.

Queer Feminist Concerns - The audience raised issues regarding the representation and inclusion of queer voices within feminist movements. The discussion centered on how traditional feminist discourses sometimes overlook LGBTQ+ concerns and how queer feminism can challenge heteronormative structures in both political and social contexts.

Positionality in Political Discourse - Participants discussed how one's social influences their perspective and engagement in political spaces. This topic underscored the importance of self-awareness and critical reflection on how positionality shapes political discourse and decision-making.

Absence of Afro-descendant Female Professors in Universities - A key issue raised was the underrepresentation of Afro-descendant women in academia, particularly as professors. The discussion covered the implications this has for Afro-descendant students, including the lack of visible role models, mentorship, and representation in academic curriculums, highlighting the broader need for diversity in educational institutions.

Feminist Identity and Solidarity - The event concluded with a powerful reflection on feminist identity, where the vast majority of participants expressed their identification with feminist principles. This moment of solidarity reinforced the collective commitment to advocating for gender parity and women's rights in political spheres and society at large.

“Porto Femme Film Festival and Casa das Associações” Workshop

Scope of the activity

On July 9th, in collaboration with Porto Femme Film Festival¹ and Casa das Associações (House of Associations)², Universidade Lusófona held the first workshop consisting in the screening of a documentary, which drew a connection between the active role of Portuguese women during the Portuguese dictatorship regime and the current state of female political participation.

The event also included a discussion featuring Municipal Deputy Susana Constante Pereira and Diana Loureiro, research fellow from FEM-ABLE. Over the course of an hour, the conversation explored barriers to women's political participation, such as balancing personal and professional life, gender stereotypes, and cultural norms. The discussion also addressed topics like intersectionality, feminism

¹ Porto Femme is an international film festival that focuses its action on promoting the work of women and non-binary people in cinema, promoting equality and empowerment in the cinematographic universe, while it also assumes itself as a space for creative freedom, sharing and debate for everyone.

² Casa das Associações is an NGO that represents youth associations in the municipalities of the Porto district before public and political authorities, in defense of the interests of the youth association movement. It aims to participate in the definition of transversal policies aimed at youth in general and the associative movement in particular.

in healthcare, discrimination in the Municipal Assembly, the media's portrayal of femicides as "crimes of passion," and the perceived stagnation in the feminist movement.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The workshop took place on the 9th of July, at Casa das Associações, located in Porto on Rua Mouzinho da Silveira, 234. It started at 3pm and lasted until 5:30pm.

Support staff and facilitators:

- **Diana Loureiro**, Master Scholarship Researcher at Universidade Lusófona
- **Raquel Batista**, PhD Student of Communication and Activism at Universidade Lusófona
- **Susana Constante Pereira**, Municipal Deputy of Porto

The participants comprised seven women, aged between 20 and 50, all of whom were involved in the associative movement and activism, aligning with our target audience. Their participation was particularly significant, as associative activism plays a crucial role in fostering civic engagement and empowering individuals to advocate for social and political change. This involvement enables the development of leadership skills and strengthens collective efforts to address systemic inequalities.

Description of the event

The event was organized in collaboration with Porto Femme International Film Festival and Casa das Associações. As part of this partnership, Porto Femme took responsibility for curating the film to be screened, while Casa das Associações provided both the venue and the audience, comprised primarily of young women engaged in the political associative movement and activism. This target demographic was particularly relevant, as these women are at the forefront of pushing for change through grassroots efforts, contributing significantly to the feminist cause and advocating for greater political representation. The event commenced with Diana Loureiro from the FEM-ABLE project offering an overview of the project's context, its objectives, and the progress achieved thus far. Loureiro also detailed the purpose of the event, emphasizing its focus on women's political participation, supported by key data that highlighted the persistent gender gaps in political representation both in Portugal and internationally.



Image 4 - Diana Loureiro at "Novíssimas Cartas Portuguesas" workshop

Following this introduction, Municipal Deputy Susana Constante Pereira introduced the film, asking participants to pay close attention to the moments that resonated with them personally. The documentary, *Novíssimas Cartas Portuguesas*, was then screened, bridging the historical and the contemporary by exploring the role of women in the political and social struggles during Portugal's Estado Novo dictatorship. During this regime, women were marginalized, with limited rights and

minimal representation in public life, confined largely to domestic roles under patriarchal societal norms. However, many women resisted, playing critical roles in underground movements and other forms of activism. The documentary connected this past activism to the present state of female participation in politics, underscoring the importance of remembering this legacy in current feminist struggles.

After the screening, a discussion was initiated by the FEM-ABLE spokesperson and Susana Constante Pereira, focusing on key issues raised in the film. The participants reflected on various aspects of the documentary, which led to a broader debate on the enduring barriers women face in political engagement today. Topics of discussion included the difficulties of balancing personal and professional responsibilities—a challenge that persists for many women despite advances in gender equality. Gender stereotypes and cultural norms were also critically examined, as these societal constructs continue to restrict women's opportunities in both political and public spheres.



Image 5 - Discussion after the documentary screening at the 1st workshop

Moreover, the conversation addressed intersectionality, highlighting how multiple identities—such as race, class, and sexuality—intersect to shape women's experiences of discrimination. Feminism in healthcare was another important topic, bringing attention to gender-based disparities in health access and treatment. Discrimination within the Municipal Assembly was discussed as well, with participants sharing personal experiences of how systemic biases manifest in political institutions.

The media's portrayal of femicides as "crimes of passion" was also a focal point, raising concerns about how such framing diminishes the severity of gender-based violence and perpetuates harmful stereotypes. Finally, the discussion touched on a sense of stagnation that some women feel within the feminist movement, acknowledging that while progress has been made, significant challenges remain. This stagnation reflects broader frustrations with the slow pace of institutional change and the ongoing need for activism.

The inclusion of women from associative movements was vital to the event's success, as they brought firsthand experience in advocacy and political engagement. Associative activism continues to play a

critical role in empowering women to fight for their rights, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. It equips individuals with the tools to challenge entrenched systems of inequality, both within political institutions and in society at large. These discussions emphasized the importance of sustaining such efforts, as the struggle for gender parity in politics and society remains ongoing.

Topics discussed

Women's Political Participation During the Estado Novo Dictatorship - The documentary explored the marginalization of women during Portugal's Estado Novo dictatorship, where they were largely confined to domestic roles with minimal public representation. Despite this, many women played active roles in underground political movements, setting the foundation for future feminist struggles.

Balance Between Personal and Professional Life - A key issue discussed was the challenge women face in balancing their careers with family responsibilities. This remains a significant barrier to full political engagement, as societal expectations often place a disproportionate burden on women to manage both domestic and professional roles.

Gender Stereotypes and Cultural Norms - The participants examined how persistent gender stereotypes and cultural norms continue to limit women's opportunities in politics and public life. These norms reinforce traditional views of gender roles, making it difficult for women to break into male-dominated spheres like politics.

Intersectionality - The discussion highlighted the importance of considering intersectionality, which looks at how overlapping identities such as race, class, and sexuality shape women's experiences. This approach helps address the complex ways in which different forms of discrimination interact, particularly for women who face multiple marginalized identities.

Feminism in Healthcare - Participants discussed gender disparities in healthcare, pointing out how women, especially those from marginalized groups, often receive inadequate treatment or face biases in the medical system. Feminist advocacy in this area seeks to address these inequalities and push for more equitable healthcare policies.

Discrimination in the Municipal Assembly - Personal experiences of discrimination within the Municipal Assembly were shared, illustrating how systemic biases and institutional barriers continue to affect women's ability to participate in politics. The discussion focused on the need for structural reforms to create more inclusive political spaces.

Media's Portrayal of Femicides as 'Crimes of Passion' - The conversation addressed the problematic media portrayal of femicides as "crimes of passion," which minimizes the seriousness of gender-based violence. This framing often reinforces harmful stereotypes and detracts from the broader issue of violence against women.

Stagnation in the Feminist Movement - Some participants expressed a sense of stagnation within the feminist movement, noting that despite progress, significant challenges remain. This frustration reflects the slow pace of institutional change and the need for continued activism to achieve gender parity and equality in all areas of society.

“Debating about women’s participation in political life” Workshop

Scope of the activity

The second workshop focused on a comprehensive debate aimed at examining women's participation across various stages of political party life. The discussion took into account a range of perspectives, including differing political ideologies—spanning the left, right, and center of the political spectrum—as well as the experiences of women of different ages and stages of their political careers. Participants explored how women’s involvement in political parties is shaped by both ideological positions and generational differences, reflecting on how these factors influence opportunities for leadership, decision-making, and policy influence.

Additionally, the workshop aimed to identify the structural barriers that hinder women’s full engagement in political party processes, while also highlighting potential strategies for promoting greater gender inclusivity and ensuring that women’s voices are adequately represented at all levels of political activity.

Place, date, and participants’ profile

The workshop took place on the 27th of July, at Casa das Associações, located in Porto on Rua Mouzinho da Silveira, 234. It started at 3pm and lasted until 5pm.

Support staff:

- **Diana Loureiro**, Master Scholarship Researcher at Universidade Lusófona;
- **Raquel Batista**, PhD Student of Communication and Activism at Universidade Lusófona.

Guest speakers:

- **Susana Constante Pereira**, Municipal Deputy of Porto and Municipal group leader of a left-wing party
- **Andrea Peniche**, Co-founder of the ‘Bloco de Esquerda’ leftwing-party
- **Mafalda Folhadela**, President of ‘Popular Youth’ - CDS-PP youth group – centre-right party
- **Clara de Sousa Alves**, Deputy of the National Assembly – right-wing party

The participants from the political parties included two younger women representing right-wing and center-right factions, as well as two older women from leftist parties. Additionally, four other women participated as part of the audience, favouring associative activism over traditional party politics. This diverse composition enriched the discussion by allowing for the exploration of various nuances and facilitating a confrontation of differing perspectives. The inclusion of women from different ideological backgrounds and age groups provided a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities women face within political structures. Furthermore, it encouraged dialogue about the effectiveness of activism compared to formal political engagement, shedding light on the motivations driving women's participation in both spheres. This multi-faceted approach ultimately contributed to a more robust examination of women's roles in the political landscape.

Description of the event

The event commenced with Diana Loureiro from the FEM-ABLE project offering an overview of the project's context, its objectives, and the progress achieved thus far. Loureiro also detailed the purpose of the event, emphasizing its focus on women's political participation, supported by key data that highlighted the persistent gender gaps in political representation both in Portugal and internationally.

Following this, the first question was posed, inviting each guest to initially share their experiences within party politics before addressing the query at hand. Although six questions were scheduled for discussion, the conversation predominantly centered around the first two, extending over a duration of two hours. The first question focused on the notion that gender stereotypes and cultural norms serve as significant barriers to women's political participation, prompting participants to explore how these dynamics manifest in their experiences.

The main ideas discussed included the observation that within the Municipal Assembly, female politicians often encounter a distinct attitude from their male colleagues. One participant pointed out that the president tends to favor male politicians, stating, "They think we are here because they allow us to be." This comment highlighted the prevailing male dominance in political spaces, which are often perceived as masculinized environments. While participants acknowledged that stereotypes could hinder women's participation, they also emphasized that there are concrete realities that are often trivialized.

Another guest speaker remarked on the existence of the parity law, which aims to address these disparities. However, her assertion that "the parity law is not enough" sparked further debate, as another participant contended that parliamentary groups must also assume responsibility for fostering gender equality. The parity law should not be viewed merely as a solution; rather, it should function as a mechanism for ensuring accountability and promoting genuine change. There was a consensus on the need to shift public opinion regarding women's roles in politics, recognizing that this is an ongoing discussion that requires sustained effort.

One guest speaker mentioned that she has never felt diminished by her gender, a sentiment she acknowledged came from a place of privilege. The second question, which addressed solutions and strategies to overcome the challenges of balancing family and professional life, consumed the remaining time and led to a rich and expansive discussion. The participants noted that motherhood is a choice and emphasized the importance of equitable parental leave policies, advocating for equal duration of maternity and paternity leave.

The issue of support for female legislators who are also mothers was raised, prompting questions about the available resources. Participants expressed that the problem lies not within the leave policies themselves but in the economic realities many women face, as a significant number do not receive paid leave. This financial strain forces women to consider the economic implications of taking time off work. They collectively agreed that meaningful progress can only be achieved by changing public perceptions and attitudes.



Image 6 - Mafalda Folhadela, Clara de Sousa Alves, Andrea Peniche and Susana Constante Pereira at the 2nd workshop

It was also highlighted that it is the responsibility of political entities to conduct assessments and devise solutions to these pressing issues. The discussion touched upon the "care crisis," with participants calling for comprehensive responses, including public services such as childcare and education. They argued for the establishment of a national care service and emphasized the necessity of care leaves that extend beyond immediate family. A poignant example was provided regarding the lack of justified absence for helping a neighbour, illustrating the need for a more inclusive definition of caregiving responsibilities.

Participants also expressed concerns about the absence of recent studies on time management, noting that women today engage in an average of 12 hours of work—combining professional commitments with domestic responsibilities. This situation was deemed reminiscent of the 19th century, highlighting the ongoing struggle for women to develop skills without facing undue burdens. They suggested that working hours should be adjusted to incorporate domestic tasks, advocating for a more equitable distribution of labor within households.

One guest speaker asserted that the state should not interfere excessively in domestic management. In contrast, another participant countered that structural imposition is necessary to gain power, asserting that the struggle for equality is inherently political. The participants underscored that being in this space signifies a commitment to contesting power dynamics. They emphasized that women do not simply choose to disengage from politics; rather, they are inherently political beings. For example, one participant noted that the decision to take responsibility for clearing the dinner table within her family context is a political statement.

The conversation also addressed the neglect in research and responses to women's health issues, including discussions on menstrual leave and menstrual poverty. In their concluding remarks, the participants acknowledged the rising influence of the far-right and the heightened responsibility that calls for rejecting all forms of discrimination, whether individual or structural. They critiqued the

prevailing technocratic view of politics, arguing instead that politics should be perceived as a means to solve societal problems.

Additionally, they highlighted the “fourth shift” in women’s lives, noting that female politicians often juggle multiple responsibilities, including activism within their parties. They recognized that discrimination also exists within leftist parties, with men acknowledging their privilege but often reluctant to relinquish it. Participants pointed out a concerning trend of blaming youth for their disengagement from political processes, observing that youth participation in political parties is dwindling. Instead, younger individuals tend to gravitate toward associations, collectives, and movements, which poses challenges to youth representation within formal political structures.

The participants asserted that political parties must reflect and adapt their approaches to better engage young people. The existing formalism in party politics creates a barrier, as youth often perceive political processes as out of their reach. They emphasized that issues begin at the grassroots level, and many young people feel disconnected from traditional political avenues, such as party youth organizations or local councils.

Ultimately, all participants expressed a shared understanding of the importance of collective effort, recognizing that transpartisan collaboration is essential for driving meaningful change in the political landscape.



Image 7 - Some of the support staff, guests and participants at the 2nd workshop

Topics discussed

Gender Stereotypes and Cultural Norms - Participants examined how prevailing gender stereotypes and cultural expectations create barriers to women's political participation. It was noted that male colleagues often exhibit a distinct attitude towards female politicians, which can undermine their credibility and influence within political spaces.

Male Dominance in Political Spaces - The conversation highlighted the masculinized nature of political environments, where women are frequently viewed as being granted access rather than being recognized as equal participants. This dynamic was illustrated by comments from participants regarding the favoritism shown by male leaders.

The Parity Law - The existence of the parity law aimed at promoting gender equality in political representation was discussed. While some participants acknowledged its significance, there was a consensus that it is insufficient on its own; parliamentary groups must also take responsibility for ensuring gender parity within their ranks.

Public Perception and Ongoing Dialogue - There was an emphasis on the need to shift public perceptions about women's roles in politics. Participants recognized that fostering a more inclusive dialogue about gender equality is a continuous process that requires active engagement and education.

Balancing Family and Professional Life - The challenges women face in balancing familial responsibilities with their professional obligations were a central focus. The discussion emphasized the need for equitable parental leave policies that provide equal time for maternity and paternity leave.

Support for Politicians who are Mothers - The need for better support systems for female politicians who are also mothers was highlighted. Participants discussed the economic implications of parental leave and the financial challenges faced by women, emphasizing the necessity of institutional support.

Care Crisis - The issue of the care crisis was raised, calling for public services that address childcare and education needs. Participants advocated for a national care service and inclusive policies that recognize caregiving as a shared responsibility beyond immediate family members.

Work-Life Balance and Domestic Responsibilities - The discussion included the burdens women carry in terms of work-life balance, with many engaging in both professional and domestic work. Participants argued for a reevaluation of how domestic responsibilities are integrated into work hours, advocating for equity in domestic labor.

State Involvement in Domestic Management - The role of the state in managing domestic responsibilities was debated. Some participants argued for minimal interference, while others asserted that structural imposition is necessary to ensure equitable power dynamics within households and communities.

Political Engagement and Identity - The participants asserted that women are inherently political beings and discussed how even everyday decisions within family contexts can reflect political agency. This raised awareness of the various ways in which women engage politically beyond formal party structures.

Neglect of Women's Health Issues - The conversation touched upon the lack of research and responses to women's health issues, including the need for policies addressing menstrual leave and menstrual poverty. Participants called for greater attention to these critical aspects of women's health.

Rising Influence of the Far-Right - The potential threats posed by the rising influence of far-right ideologies were discussed, emphasizing the responsibility to reject all forms of discrimination. Participants called for solidarity in the fight against both individual and structural discrimination.

Youth Disengagement from Politics - Concerns regarding the declining engagement of youth in traditional political processes were raised. Participants noted that younger generations are increasingly turning to associations and movements instead of formal party structures, resulting in challenges to youth representation.

Transpartisan Collaboration - The final reflections emphasized the importance of transpartisan collaboration in driving meaningful change within the political landscape. Participants recognized that collective efforts across different political ideologies are essential for advancing gender equality and inclusivity.

A.2.2 LITHUANIA, SIF

In Lithuania, 4 events were conducted by Social Innovation Fund (SIF), during the period from April to October 2024. Two events were organised in Kaunas city, one was held in Prienai, and another was organised online.

“Meeting the Lithuanian Women Lobby Organisation” event

Scope of the activity

The aims of the event were to present the National Gender Equality Strategy and good practices from all project partner countries; initiate discussions on how LMLO members can get involved in contributing to the implementation of the National Strategy; motivate LMLO members to actively participate in advocacy activities to achieve gender balance in the Parliament (Seimas) elected in 2024; and encourage LMLO members to join the EWL's gender equality advocacy campaigns in the European Parliament elections.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The event took place on the 16th of April 2024, in the premises of the Metropolis Hotel, located at S. Daukanto st. 21 in Kaunas, Lithuania. It started at 10 am and lasted until 2 pm.

The stakeholders have been reached inviting them to participate in the event. The members of Lithuanian Women Lobby organisation and their representatives participated in the event. Overall, 31 participants gathered - all women.

Description of the event

The participants were welcomed at the event and the aims and agenda of the event were presented. The event started with the presentation of the FEM-ABLE project and its activities and results so far. The situation of women in politics in Lithuania and EU was presented.

The FEM-ABLE Gender Equality Strategy and the relevant measures listed there, such as suggestions for the improvements of the legislation, support measures for women politicians, communication with politicians, etc. were presented. FEM-ABLE Gender Equality Strategy was delivered to the participants.

The good practices gathered during the FEM-ABLE project from partner countries were presented. Then the discussion at a national level with women's organizations representatives was organised on the importance of parity in politics.

Measures for achieving gender equality in politics were discussed and the role of women's NGOs with the focus on EP elections and elections of Seimas of Lithuania.

Main activities conducted

Poster presentation and discussion on the role of women's NGOs with the focus on EP elections and elections of Seimas of Lithuania

Moteryų įgalinimas ir rengimas(-is) politinei karjerai

5. Švietimas ir neformalusis mokymas	5.1. Duomenimis ir įrodymais pagrįstų švietimo priemonių, skirtų motyvuoti, skatinti ir įgalinti moteris aktyviau dalyvauti politikoje, kūrimas ir įgyvendinimas.
6. Politikų tinklų kūrimas ir konsultavimas	6.1. Lyčių lygybės politikoje mentorystės programų rengimas ir įgyvendinimas, siekiant įtraukti jaunas aktyvias moteris į politinį gyvenimą ir lyčių lygybės politiką. 6.2. Moterų klubų "Moterų iniciatyva Lietuvoje demokratijai auginti - MILDa", vienijančių įvairių politinių partijų atstoves ir stiprinančių moterų pozicijas, stiprinimas ir plėtra. 6.3. Stovykla AGORA – EWL iniciatyva.

Visuomenės informuotumo didinimas

7. Visuomenės sąmoningumo didinimas formuojant viešąjį diskursą, siekiant skatinti lyčių lygybės demokratiją ir moterų dalyvavimą politikoje.	7.1. Informacinės kampanijos, pabrėžiančios moterų dalyvavimo politikoje svarbą ir pristatančios moterų sprendimų priėmimą. 7.2. Pilietinės iniciatyvos "Moteris balsuoja už moterį", "Žalia šviesa moterims politikoje", ypač daug dėmesio skiriant jaunimo įtraukimui į pilietinių akcijų rengimą ir įgyvendinimą. 7.3. Skirtingos informuotumo didinimo kampanijų priemonės senjoroms ir jaunajai kartai. Senjoroms tikamos priemonės: vietos žiniasklaida, renginiai trečiojo amžiaus universitetuose. 8.1. Mokymai ir įsarengimai žiniasklaidai teikti nestereotipinę ir objektyvią informaciją apie moteris politikas ir vyrus politikus.
8. Adekvataus visuomenės požiūrio į moteris politikas, kuris keistų stereotipinius prietarus ir skatintų pasitikėti moterimis politikėmis bei balsuoti už jas rinkimuose, formavimas.	

Presentation of FEM-ABLE good practices:

The good practices on encouraging women political participation gathered in project partner countries during the research phase were introduced to the participants. The handouts were distributed.

Geroji praktika

Gerosios praktikos pavyzdžiai įvairiose Europos šalyse, surinkti vykdančią bendrą projektą FEM-ABLE: moterų dalyvavimo politinėje srityje skatinimas

"Lyčių kvotos rinkimų sąrašuose" - Italijos geroji patirtis

- Graikijoje, Ispanijoje, Švedijoje, Italijoje ir Ispanijoje taikoma įvairi geroji patirtis, skatinanti moteris dalyvauti politikoje. Šiame pranešime bus pristatytos kai kurios iš jų.

"Lyčių kvotos rinkimų sąrašuose" - Italijos geroji patirtis

- ✓ Šios gerosios praktikos tikslas - padidinti moterų atstovavimą renkamuose nacionaliniame, regioniniame ir vietos lygmenyse įvedant lyčių kvotas rinkimų sąrašuose.
- ✓ Italijos vyriausybė priėmė teisės aktą, kuriuo reikalaujama, kad politinės partijos į savo rinkimų sąrašus įtrauktų minimalų moterų kandidatų procentą. Teisės aktuose nustatyta kvotų sistema, kuria užtikrinama tam tikra lyčių pusiausvyra atrenkant kandidatus. Reikalaujama, kad kiekviename rinkimų sąraše būtų ne mažiau kaip 40 proc. kiekvienos lyties kandidatų, o didžiausias nuokrypis - 10 proc.
- ✓ Vyriausybė kartu su moterų teisių organizacijomis vykdo informavimo kampanijas ir teikia paramą politinėms partijoms, kad padėtų joms laikytis kvotų reikalavimų. Tai apima mokymo programas, išteklius apie lyčių lygybę ir dalijimąsi gerąja patirtimi.

"Politikų saugumo tyrimas (PSU)" - Švedijos geroji patirtis (1)

Tikslai:

- ♦ Įvertinti kiek išrinkti atstovai, įskaitant moteris, atlikdami savo politinį vaidmenį, patiria priekabiavimo, grasinimų ir smurto.
- ♦ Palyginti šiuos (ne)saugumo incidentus rinkimų ir pereinamaisiais metais, siekiant nustatyti tendencijas ir pakeičyti politinio ciklo metus.
- ♦ Pateikti duomenų, reikalingų prevencijos ir kovos su grasinimais, smurtu ir priekabiavimu, kuriuos patiria politikai ir politikės, strategijoms kurti.
- ♦ Nustatyti veiksnus, dėl kurių tam tikri atstovai yra jautresni priekabiavimui, įskaitant lyčių, amžių, kilmę ir politinę priklausomybę.
- ♦ Įvertinti ataskaitų teikimo rodiklius ir paramos sistemų, skirtų nukentėjusiems asmenims, veiksmingumą.
- ♦ Nustatyti, ar rinkimų kampanijos prisideda prie didesnio grasinimų ir priekabiavimo skaičiaus.
- ♦ Įvertinti informuotumą apie paramos sistemas politinėse organizacijose.

"MIGS (MIGS-Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies) - Viduržemio jūros regiono lyčių studijų institutas" - Kipro geroji patirtis

- ♦ Tikslas - užtikrinti pokyčius moterų teisių srityje, ypač politikoje.
- ♦ Atliekant mokslinius tyrimus, rengiant mokymo programas ir skelbiant ataskaitas, organizacija siekia atlikti svarbų vaidmenį kovoje už moterų teises.
- ♦ MIGS yra viena iš pagrindinių organizacijų, raginančių imtis privalomų pozityviųjų veiksmų, kad būtų užtikrintas vienodas moterų atstovavimas visais ekonominiais ir politiniais sprendimų priėmimo lygmenimis. Pavyzdžiui, organizacija vykdo kampaniją už vienodą moterų atstovavimą parlamente.

Discussion on the role of women's NGOs with a focus on EP elections and elections of Seimas of Lithuania

"What can women's organisations do to support women in politics in Lithuania?"

Topics discussed

There were discussed, that the running awareness campaigns to promote the importance of women's political participation and leadership could be supported by the tools, developed in the previous projects, and on the results of the FEM-ABLE project.

Also, it was stressed the necessity of the monitoring of the political parties' adherence to their gender equality promises. By regularly evaluating party programs and their actions, NGOs can hold political actors accountable and push for the fulfillment of gender equality commitments. It was initiated to write and send letters to political parties in order to address gender equality problems and the necessity to include measures to solve gender equality problems into political party programs.

It was underlined that it is necessary to continuously collaborate with women politicians. It was suggested to organize the meeting with Provisional Parliamentary Group of Women and introduce women's NGOs and their suggestion for gender equality policy after the Parliament (Seimas) elections.

To build the capacity of Political Parties to understand and implement gender-sensitive policies the workshops for the politicians could be organized. This includes training party members and leadership on gender equality issues, creating toolkits, and offering consulting services. Small workshops in towns could be implemented during project FEMABLE.



Image 8 – Photos from the event in Kaunas, Lithuania

One of the tasks of LWLO could be the monitoring of the implementation of gender equality policy in Lithuania by using CEDAW mechanisms and writing the shadow reports, as well by participation in the UN Commission on the Status of Women sessions.

As some of the result of this event was the preparation of letters to the major political parties, followed by participation in meetings with these parties and two workshops organized.

“Politicians’ clubs MILDA” Workshops

Scope of the activity

Both workshops were organised similarly: they aimed to present the National Gender Equality Strategy, along with examples of good practices gathered during the research phase of the project. The main issue was to discuss the ways of promoting gender equality in political participation, with a focus on the context of Lithuania's local political landscape and upcoming elections on 13th of October. The workshop was provided as an interactive session, encouraged raising awareness and stimulating critical discussions among key stakeholders.

Place, date and participants' profile

Two events were organised:

- Workshop with politicians in Prienai, Lithuania, on 28 August 2024 from 11 am until 4 pm.
- Workshop with politicians in Kaunas, Lithuania, 27 September 2024 from 10 am until 3pm.

Both events were organized in partnership with politicians' clubs MILDA. The target audience consisted mainly of women politicians active in politics, representing different political parties. Both events were attended by 6 participants each.



Image 9 – Participants at the event in Prienai, Lithuania, 27th August, 2024.



Image 10 – Participants at the event in Kaunas, Lithuania, 28th September, 2024

Description of the event

At the beginning of the event the FEM-ABLE project and its activities as well as results so far were presented. The overview of the project's context was provided, the key data concerning women's political participation in Lithuania and EU, the challenges found in the project research phase.

The participants female politicians were asked to introduce themselves one by one and commented if they have and what challenges during their political career.

The video "[Creating the future now](#)" was shown to participants with statistical information, including the Gender equality index and domain of Political power, stressing the need for gender equality in politics. Participants shared their reflections after the video.

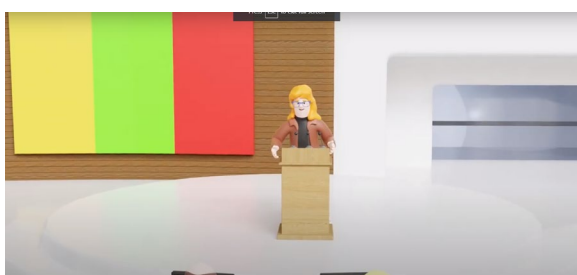
The FEM-ABLE Gender equality Strategy was presented to participants and the measures and tools to seek for the gender equality in politics. The section for the work in pairs was organized – discussing FEM-ABLE good practices. CEDAW convention and the need for the improvements in legislation in Lithuania were presented and discussed. The existing stereotypes, lack of support measures were discussed. The need for balancing personal and political life.

Main activities conducted

There were some activities as in the previous event, such as presentation of FEM-ABLE Gender equality strategy, FEM-ABLE good practices. Therefore, they will not be presented again just the activities, which were not described before will be presented. They are:

Demonstration of the video with statistical information

The video presents the concepts of gender parity in politics, the results of Gender equality index of Lithuania and EU, the benefits of women political participation.



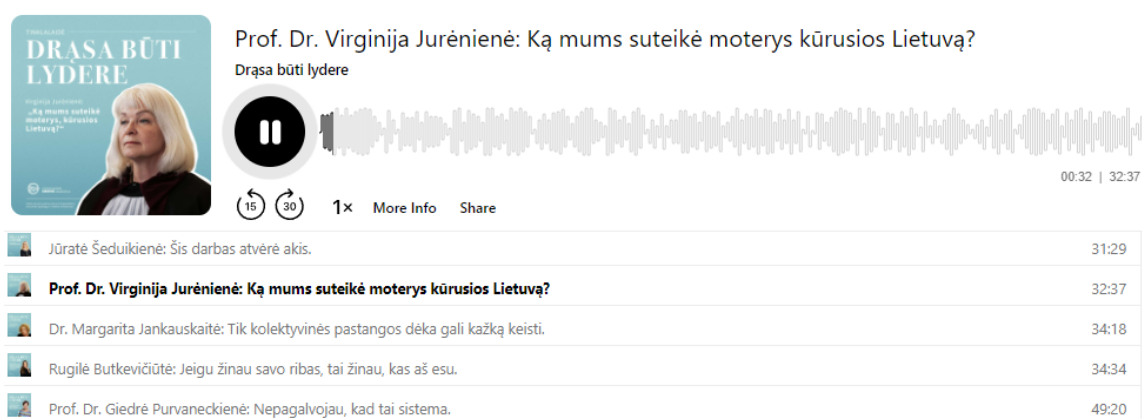
Presentation of the podcast "Courage to be a leader"

The podcast features interviews with experts, politicians, and NGO representatives on various topics, such as:

- Experts analyse Lithuanian women's involvement, interest, and participation in politics.
- Women's rights activist talks about women's solidarity, which is especially important in our society, where we are often reluctant to support other women.

- The gender equality expert analyses the issue of women's leadership by looking at the manifestations of cultural sexism, the invisible and unrecognized work that women often do, and the concept of gender equality itself.
- Talking about stereotypes and the courage to be in politics today with the mayor of a Lithuanian municipality.

The conversation with another mayor encourages people to consider and evaluate the candidacies of women politicians. Women often focus more on social and family policies, from education and health care to care for children and the elderly. Their involvement can contribute to a more sustainable and balanced welfare state.



Drąsa būti lydere
Prof. Dr. Virginija Jurėnienė: Ką mums suteikė moterys kūrusios Lietuvą?

00:32 | 32:37

Episode Title	Duration
Jūratė Šeduikienė: Šis darbas atvėrė akis.	31:29
Prof. Dr. Virginija Jurėnienė: Ką mums suteikė moterys kūrusios Lietuvą?	32:37
Dr. Margarita Jankauskaitė: Tik kolektyvinės pastangos dėka gali kažką keisti.	34:18
Rugilė Butkevičiūtė: Jeigu žinau savo ribas, tai žinau, kas aš esu.	34:34
Prof. Dr. Giedrė Purvaneckienė: Nepagalvojau, kad tai sistema.	49:20

Topics discussed

Participants discussed the structural barriers and gender biases that hinder women's political participation, emphasizing that political systems have historically been male-dominated. Women face higher expectations to prove their competence and are often subjected to criticism for personal and professional choices that men typically avoid. The group also highlighted the challenge of balancing political careers with family responsibilities, a burden disproportionately placed on women due to societal norms.

On the positive side, participants emphasized the advantages of having more women in politics. Women bring diverse perspectives, particularly on issues like healthcare, education, and social welfare, which contribute to more inclusive decision-making. They also tend to prioritize gender equality, advocating for policies that address gender-based violence, pay equity, and reproductive rights, which strengthens democratic institutions.

The discussion also focused on the mindset needed for women to succeed in politics, including overcoming self-doubt and fostering confidence. Participants stressed the importance of solidarity and networking among women and the role male allies can play in promoting gender equality. They also underscored the resilience required to stay in politics despite obstacles, with personal stories of persistence shared as inspiration.

Finally, the group concluded with an optimistic vision for the future, recognizing the growing momentum of women's political movements and the increasing number of women in leadership roles as signs of positive change in the political landscape.

“Discussions on Gender Equality Strategy” Event

Scope of the activity

The aim of the event was to discuss the necessity of women's political representation and encourage participants to share this idea with others, as well to vote for women during the national and regional elections. As a tool for the discussion the National Gender Equality Strategy, along with the examples of good practices gathered during the research phase of the project was used.

The main issue was to discuss the obstacles women face in political participation, the benefits of the gender equality in politics with a focus on the context of Lithuania's local political landscape and upcoming elections of 13th of October. The workshop was provided as an online session, encouraged raising awareness and stimulating critical discussions among the stakeholders.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The event held in an Online format on 8th of October 2024 starting at 15 p.m. until 18 p.m. The stakeholders have been reached inviting them by e-mails and phones. The partners from network of the Social Innovation Fund were invited – the representatives of businesses, education institutions, other stakeholders in order to ensure the diversity of participants. Overall participated 30 persons from various organisations, such as universities, educational centres, training institutions, third age university representatives, NGOs, private organisations. There were 6 man and 24 women.

Description of the event

At the beginning of the event the project FEM-ABLE and its activities and results reached were presented by FEM-ABLE team. The different topics, such as situation of women in politics in Lithuania and EU, the FEM-ABLE Gender Equality Strategy and the relevant measures (suggestions for the improvements of the legislation, support measures for women politicians) were presented.

The videos were demonstrated:

- [“What is gender equality?”](#)
- [“Creating the future now”](#)

Then the discussions followed concerning the stereotypes women politicians face and the other obstacles. The importance to seek the parity in politics for achieving gender equality. Measures for achieving gender equality in politics were presented.

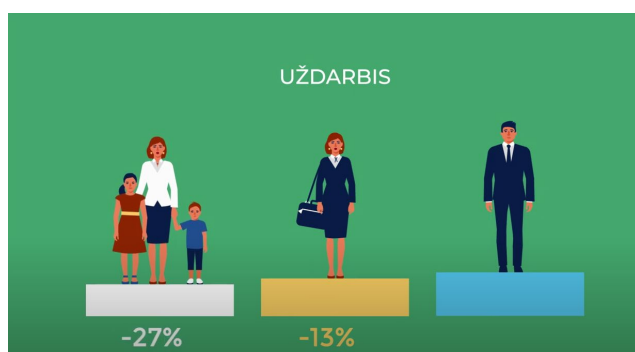
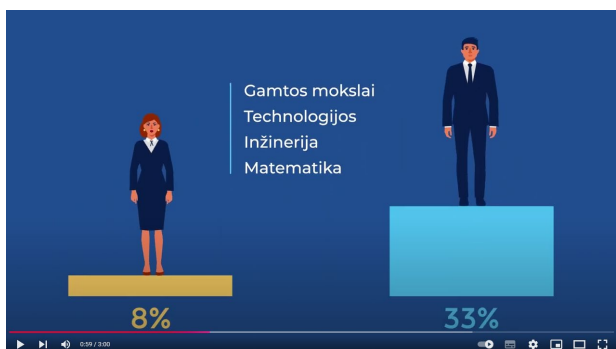
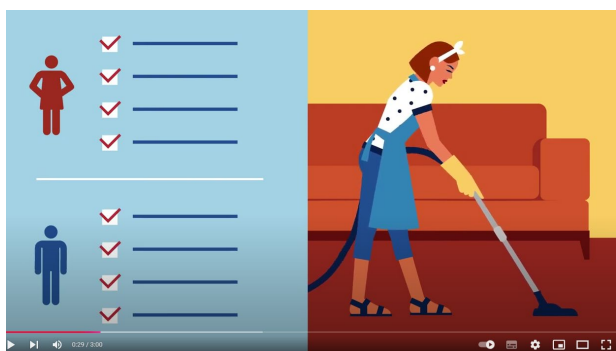
After the discussion was facilitated why it is important and how the participants can contribute:

- Educators - promoting gender equality.
- Entrepreneurs - spotting women leaders.

Main activities conducted

There were some activities as in the previous event, such as presentation of FEM-ABLE Gender equality strategy, FEM-ABLE good practices, video on gender equality in politics. Therefore, they will not be presented again just the activities, which were not described before will be presented. They are:

I. Presentation of the video “What is gender equality?”



Topics discussed

Barriers to Women's Political Participation - the structural, cultural, and social challenges that limit women's involvement in politics, such as gender biases, discrimination, and unequal access to resources.

A discussion on the role of gender quotas and other policy measures in increasing women's representation in political positions and decision-making roles took place. Sharing examples of successful initiatives from other countries took place presenting the best practices gathered in project partner countries. Discussion on the importance of training and empowering women to take on leadership roles, including mentorship programs, public speaking, and campaign management.

Highlighting how increased women's representation leads to more inclusive governance, policymaking that addresses diverse needs, and overall positive social and economic outcomes. Encouraging the involvement of young women and those from underrepresented or marginalized communities in political processes, ensuring that diverse voices are heard.

These discussions fostered the collaboration among stakeholders, raising awareness of the importance of women's political participation, and identifying practical steps to advance gender equality in political representation.

A.2.3 GREECE, WDB

Women Do Business (WDB) organised 3 activities that functioned to promote women's participation in the political space. Workshops, seminars and hybrid events were some of these activities and were crafted to respond to specific aspects of the challenges and opportunities related to gender equality in politics. Below is a detailed account of these activities, including timelines, scope, adaptations made, and outcomes achieved:

“Women politicians gathering” Workshop

Scope of the activity

This workshop was meant to raise awareness and provide practical tools to local politicians and stakeholders to increase women's participation in politics. It concentrated on the integration of gender equality into the local political strategies and on encouraging the active contribution of local leaders.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The workshop was held on the 22nd May 2024 at Hugs spiritual art cafe multipurpose room and lasted around 2:30 hours. It successfully convened 12 influential participants from various political backgrounds, including local and national figures such as candidates for mayor, regional councilors, and deputy mayors specialized in areas like culture and environment. Key attendees like Maria Kanavaki, a mayoral candidate, and Evangelia Schinaraki-Iliaki, a former regional governor, brought significant leadership experience, enhancing discussions on gender equality and political participation.

Description of the event

Conducted by Maria Zarotiadou, the workshop employed a combination of lectures, interactive group discussions, and practical exercises. This approach was intended to facilitate experiential learning and active participation, with a strong emphasis on understanding the challenges and opportunities for women in the political sphere.

Content was tailored to Heraklion's local governance structures and to the specific challenges female politicians in Heraklion face. It assisted in increasing the commitment of participating politicians to integrating gender perspectives in their future initiatives and agendas.

“Open panel discussion with women politicians” Event

Scope of the activity

This panel discussion brought the gender equality conversation to the societal roles and the media impact on gender perceptions. It aimed to get the wider community engaged and encourage discussions about gender equality.

Place, date, and participants' profile

Performed on the same day as the previous event, 22nd May 2024 at Hugs spiritual art cafe. The event attracted 30 participants from various backgrounds, reflecting a broad spectrum of the community interested in gender and politics. These included:

- Local politicians and administrators engaged in discussions around policies and community initiatives.
- Activists and NGO representatives, advocating for grassroots movements and practical implementations of gender policies.
- Young professionals and students who brought fresh perspectives and were keen on learning about pathways to political engagement.

Description of the event

Real life examples were discussed with local media figures and influencers to increase relevance and engagement. This has led to increased community awareness and inter partes open dialogue opportunities within the community.

The panel discussion was structured to facilitate an in-depth conversation on enhancing women's participation in the political domain, following a dual-phase approach:

Presentation of the FEM-ABLE Project

The session began with a comprehensive presentation of the FEM-ABLE project, detailing its objectives and the collaborative efforts across various European countries. The presentation highlighted the current underrepresentation of women in political roles and the project's strategies to address these challenges.

Interactive panel discussion

Following the presentation, the discussion transitioned into an interactive panel format. The panellists engaged with pre-set and audience-generated questions that explored strategic, societal, and policy-related themes critical to advancing women's roles in politics.

Topics discussed

The discussion topics were curated to address several critical areas, as outlined in the event's agenda:

- Strategies for enhancing women's participation: Focused on identifying actionable policies and changes needed at various levels of governance.
- Role of society and media: Explored how societal norms and media can influence perceptions and create either barriers or opportunities for women.
- Networking and support: Discussed the importance of building supportive networks that can empower women to pursue and thrive in political careers.

“Spotlighting women politicians; Ted-talk style” Event

Scope of the activity

This event aimed to inspire and empower women by highlighting the experiences and achievements of female leaders in politics and entrepreneurship. Featuring a keynote by Pepi Mpirliraki, the event showcased practical strategies to overcome barriers to women’s political participation, shared local and European success stories, and fostered a sense of accessibility in leadership roles. By combining storytelling with actionable insights, the event sought to reshape perceptions of female leadership and motivate attendees to engage more actively in business and politics.

Place, date, and participants’ profile

The second event of the project took place on June 29th in Rethymno at House of Culture. The event attracted a diverse audience of 150 participants, characterised by a significant presence of women, reflecting the focus on female entrepreneurship and political engagement. Attendees included:

- Entrepreneurs and business leaders: Figures like Alexandra Theochari, founder and creative director of KLOTHO, and Maria Malikouti, former president and managing director at ARKADI, highlighted the involvement of influential business personalities.
- Local government officials: represented by Pepi Mpirliraki herself, whose experiences as Deputy Mayor of Rethymno enriched the discussions.
- Academic and educational representatives: Likely included members from the University of Crete, adding a scholarly perspective to the discourse.
- Community members: Local residents interested in the themes of female entrepreneurship and political participation.

Description of the event

During this event, we showcased the broader impacts of the FEM-ABLE project and shared successful strategies used across Europe. The event featured a compelling keynote speech by **Ms. Pepi Mpirliraki**, whose vast experience in both local government and the private sector provided invaluable insights. The event successfully combined an inspiring presentation with a detailed exposition of the FEM-ABLE project and its strategies aimed at enhancing women’s participation in the political domain. Practical lessons on how to overcome the barriers to women’s participation in politics were provided by Pepi Mpirliraki’s keynote. We highlighted authentic local success stories and connected them to European strategies to inspire the audience. Attendees were inspired by the politician’s authentic storytelling which led to politics being perceived as more approachable.



Image 11 – Promotional poster for the event at Rethymno, 29th June 2024

Topics discussed

Pepi shared insights from her extensive career in both the private sector and local government. Her narrative included **personal stories** from her tenure as Deputy Mayor and her engagements in the hospitality industry, providing a rich, experiential perspective on navigating the entrepreneurial and political landscapes.

Her speech was not just informational but also **inspirational**, likely influencing the audience's views on women's capabilities and roles in leadership and entrepreneurship. The delivery of her speech was designed to resonate emotionally with the audience, potentially altering their perceptions about female leadership and inspiring them to pursue greater involvement in business and politics.



Image 12 – Participants at the event in Rethymno, 29th June 2024

A.2.4 ITALY, CESIE

In Italy, 3 events were conducted by CESIE, during the period from May to October 2024, in the city of Palermo, Sicily.

“Institutional gathering; advancing work-life balance” Workshop

Scope of the activity

This institutional encounter aimed to put on the table the topic of gender equality in politics, specifically work-life balance, and women’s political participation, within the context of the local political and administrative landscape in Palermo. It was designed as an interactive session, focusing on the collaborative exchange, to raise awareness and stimulate critical discussions among key stakeholders. Moreover, the event aimed at presenting the National Gender Equality strategy, as well as the National report as valuable resources developed within the project.

Place, date, and participants’ profile

The workshop was held on May 13th from 5 pm to 7 pm in Sala Martorana, a venue within Palazzo Comitini, in the city of Palermo. This event was a collaborative effort between CESIE and the Municipality of Palermo, which facilitated the successful engagement of 10 key stakeholders, including prominent figures in the local political arena; 8 women and 2 men.

Description of the event

The workshop commenced with a warm welcome to the attendees, who represented various sectors and backgrounds. CESIE initiated the event outlining the agenda. Following the introductory remarks, Concetta Di Benedetto made a compelling presentation titled "The work-life balance: policies for life-work reconciliation and equal opportunities. What lies ahead?" Her presentation provided insights into local initiatives and prospects for enhancing work-life balance within the community. The discussion that followed was rich and engaging, with participants exchanging practical strategies to improve work-life harmony.

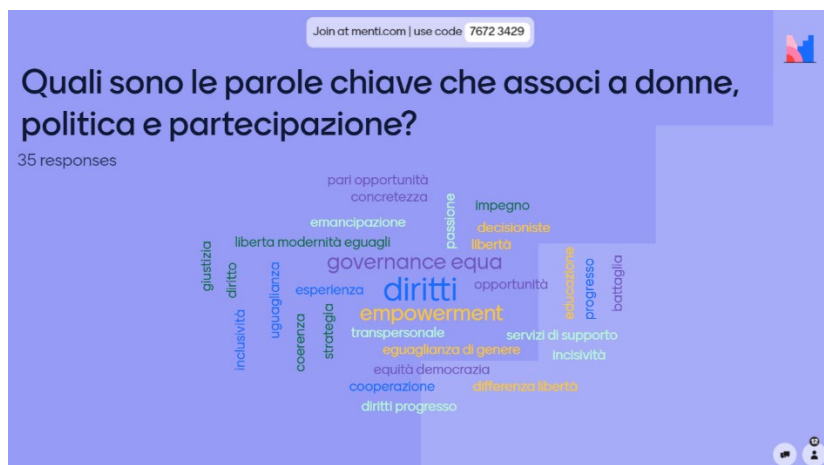
Afterward, CESIE introduced the FEM-ABLE project and the strategy developed. The presentation resonated with the audience, inspiring a spirit of empowerment and advocacy. The project’s transformative potential was well-received, sparking enthusiasm among the participants.

Main activities conducted

2 key activities were conducted during this session:

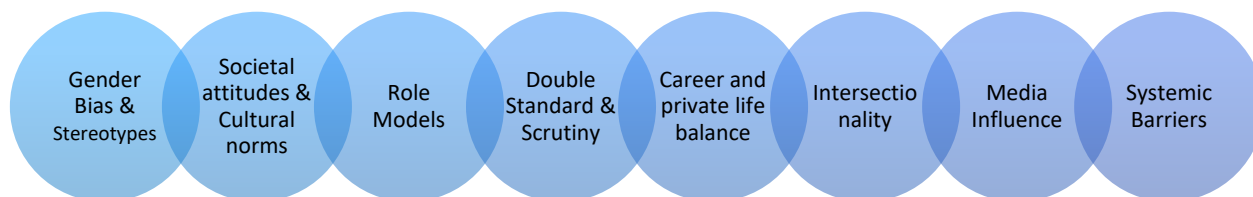
Word cloud on keywords related to women, politics and participation

The first activity involved creating a word cloud using the Mentimeter app, which was projected on a large screen. During the meeting, participants provided a wide range of interconnected concepts in response to the question, "What are the keywords you associate with women, politics, and participation?". Key concepts included rights, battle, equity, progress, justice, cooperation, inclusiveness, coherence, commitment, and democracy.



The thematic card discussion

The second activity aimed to introduce non-formal participation methodologies inside an institutional context. Participants were introduced to a set of cards designed to guide the debate toward the identified topics and priority areas in the previous research phase within the project (see *FEM-ABLE National reports*). The game was designed to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the below topics:



The workshop concluded on a positive and determined note. Participants left the event inspired and motivated to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable community. The final moments of the event were dedicated to further discussion and reflection, emphasizing the importance of collective efforts in promoting gender equality and social justice.

Topics discussed

Participants engaged in a thoughtful discussion on the **underrepresentation of women** in leadership positions, despite high female employment rates in public administration. They examined the disparities between female participation in the workforce and political representation, especially in leadership roles at both the national and local levels.

Opinions diverged on the application and effectiveness of **gender quotas**. Some participants expressed reservations about the long-term benefits of quotas, while others argued that quotas are a necessary stepping stone toward equal representation. The debate highlighted different perspectives on achieving gender equality in political participation.

Participants reflected on the **challenges and pressures** associated with holding leadership positions in the local political arena, especially for women. The discussion covered both the benefits and limitations of being a minority in leadership, with an emphasis on the additional scrutiny women often face in such roles.

In alignment with Agenda 2030, participants explored the role of education in reshaping societal attitudes and behaviors. The conversation focused on how **gender-sensitive education** can help dismantle stereotypes and combat both horizontal and vertical gender segregation, by equipping both men and women to act contrary to traditional norms.

“Inspiring students to champion gender equality strategies” Event

Scope of the activity

The session aimed to engage university students, academics, and legal professionals in discussing barriers to female political participation and exploring strategies to promote greater gender parity. By combining expert insights with interactive activities, the event sought to create a reflective and participatory environment, encouraging participants to consider how they can contribute to gender equality efforts in their own fields and beyond.

Place, date and participants’ profile

The event took place on May 31st, from 9 to 11 am, at the Politics and International Relations Department of the University of Palermo. Participant engagement was strengthened through a newly-formed collaboration with several student associations, including *Intesa Universitaria*, *Intesa Scienze Politiche*, *Intesa Giurisprudenza*, and *Vivere Scienze Politiche*. Additionally, Manoela Patti, a contemporary history researcher at the University of Palermo, contributed to establishing this connection. 2 local experts, Ninni Terminelli and Milena Gentile, who had participated in a previous workshop, were invited as speakers. The event was attended by a group of 20 participants, comprising 17 women and 3 men.

Description of the event

Manoela Patti opened the event with welcoming remarks that emphasized the significance of gender equality in political and decision-making roles and linking the event with the political science bachelor curriculum. Her introduction set a reflective tone for the day's discussions. Following her, CESIE presented the FEM-ABLE project and the National gender strategy developed to empower women in leadership positions.

Subsequently, the speakers took the stage to share personal and professional reflections on their political journeys and the challenges they faced in their battles. The event concluded with an interactive quiz, designed to engage and involve the audience in a participatory manner.

Main activities conducted

2 key activities were conducted during this session:

Speakers’ interventions;

Milena Gentile, President of the Emily Association Palermo, took the stage to reflect on what it means to be a woman in politics, the role of her association and her personal and professional experiences. Following, Ninni Terminelli, President of the equal opportunities committee of the Palermo Bar Association, addressed gender equality within the legal profession, emphasizing the challenges and opportunities for achieving parity.

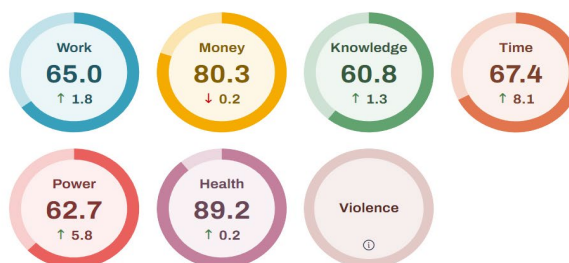
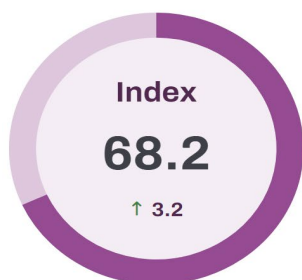


Image 13 – Milena Gentile intervention during the event in the University of Palermo, May 31st 2024

Participatory Quiz

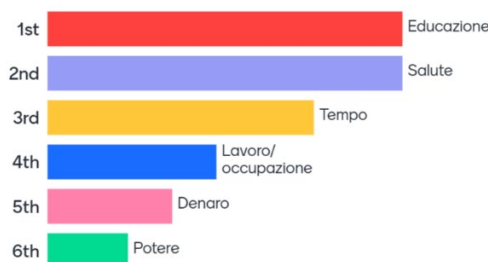
The interactive session included a Mentimeter quiz designed to assess participants' awareness of female political representation at an EU and national level and stimulate open debate. Each quiz question was followed by the correct answer and discussion prompts to delve deeper into the topics. The quiz focused on key areas such as gender quotas, the Gender Equality Index, and barriers to women's political involvement, encouraging participants to exchange ideas and network. See below the 3 questions formulated;

- *Gender quotas*: The first question asked about the year Italy introduced gender quotas (2011).
- *Gender Equality Index in Italy*: Participants were asked to rank areas of women's status in Italy, with the correct order being Education, Health, Time, Occupation, Money, Power. [Link](#)
- *Female leadership in Sicily*: The quiz highlighted that only 7.2% of mayors in Sicily are women.



Facendo riferimento alla condizione femminile in Italia, in che ordine metteresti i seguenti ambiti?

Da quello che vede le donne in testa, a quello in cui le donne sono meno forti.



These activities fostered a dynamic exchange of ideas, helping participants reflect on and discuss strategies for advancing gender equality. The discussions were lively and extended beyond the scheduled time, concluding with reflections on the complexities of gender issues in Palermo.

Topics discussed

Participants engaged in discussions about the **low representation of women** in politics at the regional and local levels, with a particular focus on the statistic that only 7.2% of mayors in Sicily are women. The group explored potential measures to increase women's political participation, including the role of mentorship programs, policy reforms, and public awareness campaigns.

A significant portion of the discussion centred on the **role of education** in empowering young girls to aspire to leadership positions. Participants examined how family attitudes, cultural norms, and societal expectations shape women's career choices and leadership ambitions. They also reflected on how gender-sensitive education can play a critical role in challenging these norms and fostering a culture that supports women's advancement.

Participants critically analysed the national representation of women in politics, emphasizing how **media portrayal and public perceptions** act as systemic barriers. The discussion revealed a general frustration with the way women in politics are often marginalized or misrepresented by the media. Participants called for greater accountability in media reporting and the need for positive role models for women in leadership.

The quiz activity generated discussion about **gender quotas** and their effectiveness in addressing gender disparities in political representation. Participants debated the pros and cons of gender quotas, particularly their long-term impact on political equality. Additionally, they discussed Italy's standing in the Gender Equality Index, particularly why women continue to underperform in the "Power" domain despite improvements in education and health.

“Gender Equality: Reflecting on the past, shaping the future” Event

Scope of the activity

The third event aimed to raise awareness and encourage reflection on the past, present, and future of gender equality in Italy, particularly among the student community. Additionally, it sought to demonstrate that politics extend beyond institutions and governments, highlighting that political action can take many forms, including protests, collective movements, and grassroots activism. Lastly,

the event provided an opportunity for participants to practice debating a key issue from different perspectives, while developing their ability to construct and present well-reasoned arguments.

Place, date and participants' profile

The event took place at the Law Department of the University of Palermo from 4:00 PM to 6:30 PM. The participant profile included students and doctoral candidates from gender studies and the *Centro di Sostenibilità e Transizione Ecologica*, who were engaged through the support of Professors Ida Fazio and Giovanna Fiume. A total of 20 participants attended the event, comprising 13 women and 7 men.

The event was promoted both online and offline, leveraging printed posters across university settings and an [open call](#) posted on CESIE's website. It was further disseminated through social media platforms, including Instagram and Facebook, as well as The Gender Talk pages and internal university networks.

Description of the event

Ida Fazio commenced the event by introducing CESIE and her colleague, Giovanna Fiume. CESIE then presented the FEM-ABLE project, outlining its goals, key activities, and partners. A focal point of the presentation was the National Gender Strategy, where priorities aimed at empowering women in leadership were highlighted, along with concrete examples of activities, such as workshops targeting gender issues among young people—such as the event itself.

Giovanna Fiume followed with a personal reflection on her journey in feminist activism, discussing her experiences from the past to present-day challenges. Her insights led into a collective reflection on pivotal moments in Italian history, ultimately setting the stage for an engaging debate on gender quotas.

Main activities conducted

Giovanna Fiume intervention

Historian and feminist activist Giovanna Fiume delivered a thought-provoking speech. She reflected on feminist activism from a grassroots perspective, contrasting it with formal institutional approaches. This intervention highlighted how political activism can occur outside traditional political structures, emphasising the power of collective action.



Image 14 – Giovanna Fiume intervention during the event in the University of Palermo, Oct 2nd 2024

Motion debate on gender quotas

In a participatory session, attendees engaged in a debate on the motion: “Should mandatory gender quotas be introduced in all Italian political institutions?” Participants were divided into 2 groups, one supporting the motion and the other opposing it. Roles were assigned randomly, encouraging participants to argue positions they might not personally agree with. This simulated parliamentary debate provided a dynamic space for critical reflection on the complexities of gender quotas and their impact on political representation. The debate fostered strategic thinking, enhancing participants’ understanding of the gender quota issue and the broader challenges associated with achieving gender equality in political institutions.



Image 15 – Motion debate on gender quotas with students in the University of Palermo, Oct 2nd 2024

Topics discussed

The opening question that sparked the discussion was **“What does ‘doing politics’ mean to you?”** No definitive answer was sought, as different perspectives were encouraged. For some, politics might be associated with voting; for others, it could involve participation in protests or simply engaging in meaningful conversations about important issues with friends. The focus was placed on exploring women's political participation in all its diverse forms and nuances. Whether through street activism, institutional work, or local community action, it was emphasised that every contribution has an impact. Additionally, the importance of recognizing that politics is not limited to politicians, but is a responsibility shared by everyone, was underscored.

A significant portion of the event focused on personal reflections from Giovanna Fiume, who shared her experiences in feminist activism. She detailed her involvement in **feminist consciousness-raising groups** in the 1960s and 1970s. These groups provided a safe space where women could discuss, reflect on their personal experiences, and recognise how patriarchal social and political structures shaped these. **The goal was to become aware of their societal roles and power relations, linking individual experiences to the collective struggle for women’s rights.**

One of the central phrases of her speech was **“The personal is political”**, a core feminist concept that highlights how seemingly private issues, such as relationships, sexuality, domestic work, and

motherhood, are deeply influenced by political and social power dynamics. **Fiume explained that, for women, these personal experiences are neither isolated nor apolitical but are closely connected to broader systems of oppression.** Recognising this link represented a revolution in how politics was done, pushing women to turn their individual experiences into concrete political action.

Fiume also expressed her preference for **grassroots activism**, emphasising the role of collective movements and street protests, which she sees as the true engine of political change, rather than formal institutions. **She concluded her talk by addressing current challenges, reflecting on the [Global Gender Gap Report 2024](#), which predicts that it will take another 134 years to achieve full gender equality worldwide.** With a provocative and sarcastic tone, she asked: *“Who’s going to wait 134 years for true equality?”*

Following this, participants were invited to observe the photos displayed on the walls around the room and share their reflections. What did the images represent? What common threads connected these moments in history? This prompted a collective reflection on key milestones in Italian history that shaped the ongoing struggle for gender equality. Among the notable events discussed were:

- **The Feminist Movement of the 1970s:** which paved the way for significant advancements, such as the 1978 Law 194 on abortion rights.
- **Rome's First Pride in 1994:** marking a crucial moment for LGBTQIA+ rights.
- **Law 165/2004 on Gender Quotas:** which promoted greater female representation in political institutions.
- **The "Non Una di Meno" Movement (2016):** a contemporary movement fighting against gender violence and structural inequalities.



*Image 16 – Archival photograph from Italian feminist movements:
Liliana Barchiesi, Movimento Femminista, 1974/1979*

These historical reflections provided a context for the debate on gender quotas, reinforcing the importance of continued activism and institutional reform in the pursuit of gender equality.

Before the event's conclusion, participants engaged in a thoughtful debate on mandatory gender quotas in Italian political institutions. The discussion aimed to explore the pros and cons of implementing such a policy, with two groups presenting contrasting viewpoints.

Those favoring mandatory gender quotas emphasised the importance of ensuring balanced representation. They argued that women should be equally represented in decision-making spaces since they comprise half of the population. Without quotas, the risk is that politics remains male-dominated, as is often the case in Italian institutions today. They also highlighted how gender quotas serve as a **tool to overcome deep-rooted structural barriers**, such as cultural biases and social constraints, that prevent women from advancing into leadership roles. Additionally, the group pointed out that **greater gender diversity improves the quality of political decisions**, bringing new perspectives on critical issues like education, healthcare, and social rights. Drawing on successful examples from countries like Norway and Sweden, they suggested that quotas could lead to significant improvements in female representation. They concluded by framing quotas as **a temporary measure**, designed to accelerate progress toward gender equality for future generations.

On the other side of the debate, the group opposing mandatory gender quotas raised concerns about **meritocracy**. They argued that such quotas could undermine the principle that individuals should advance in politics based on their skills and competence, rather than gender. The group also warned of the **potential for tokenism**, where individuals might be selected solely to fulfill quota requirements without possessing the necessary qualifications. This, they suggested, could damage the perception of women in politics. Another key point was the possibility of **reverse discrimination**, where quotas could unfairly penalize qualified men. Rather than relying on legislative mandates, the group argued that the **real issue is cultural and requires deep societal change**. They advocated for education and awareness-raising as more effective long-term solutions than imposed quotas. Lastly, they suggested that in a truly meritocratic system, gender representation would occur naturally, without the need for legal enforcement, and that quotas might create gender tensions rather than resolve them.

This debate illustrated the complexity of the issue, with both sides presenting compelling arguments. It provided participants with an opportunity to critically engage with the topic, reflecting on the challenges of achieving gender equality in political institutions while practicing their ability to argue and debate from different perspectives.

“Debating a motion on gender quotas” Event

Scope of the activity

The fourth event aimed to foster critical engagement and deepen students' understanding of gender equality issues, particularly within the context of political science, by presenting the FEM-ABLE project and encouraging active participation through a motion debate. This event focused on raising awareness of gender equality strategies, like gender quotas, and the broader socio-political dynamics connected to feminist movements.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The workshop took place on the 22nd of October 2024 at the Political Science Faculty of the University of Palermo. It began at 10:00 AM and concluded at noon, providing a dynamic, 2-hour interactive session that encouraged a rich exchange of ideas and fostered active engagement from all participants.

Participants included undergraduate students from the University of Palermo, primarily from the Political Science department and Professor Manoela Patti, researcher in Contemporary History, Department of Political and International Relations, University of Palermo.

Description of the event

The event was opened by Professor Manoela Patti, who introduced CESIE and provided an overview of the FEM-ABLE project, linking the subject matter to the university curricula. Following the introduction, CESIE conducted an engaging participatory quiz, followed by open questions to the audience. This was designed to introduce the FEM-ABLE project, highlighting its objectives, activities, and resources, particularly the National Gender Strategy, which was compared in depth with UNIPA's own [strategy](#).

The discussion then transitioned to a key aspect of the event: a motion debate, which encouraged the students to actively participate and voice their opinions. The debate fostered a space for interactive learning, challenging traditional lecture-based formats and allowing students to engage more deeply with the material.

Main activities conducted

Participatory Quiz

The quiz featured questions on international, EU, and local gender equality contexts. This was followed by open-ended questions to stimulate critical thinking among students. The quiz mirrored a similar format used in previous events, see the first hybrid event on May 31st

Motion debate on gender quotas

An activity encouraging students to engage in structured argumentation, a feature that had been a success in the second hybrid event on October 2nd.



Image 17 – Students from groups A&B preparing for the motion debate, 22nd October 2024.

Topics discussed

The event began with a reflective question:

"Why did you choose to study political science?"

Students shared their motivations, with many expressing how studying politics provides insights into how socio-political and cultural events shape society, and how such knowledge informs future change.

A pivotal moment came with the introduction of the phrase "*the personal is political*" which was explained in the context of its origins in second-wave feminism. Many participants were unfamiliar with the concept, providing a valuable opportunity to explore its historical significance and how it connects personal issues to broader societal problems. The discussion underlined how many social rights have been achieved through grassroots movements.

As the FEM-ABLE strategy was presented, students showed keen interest in specific resources, particularly the [Guide on Inclusive Language from Genova University](#), which is lacking at UNIPA. Additionally, the strategy highlighted some courses to empower women to take on leadership positions provided by institutions like [Scuola Donne di Governo](#)— which sparked curiosity among participants.

In the latter part of the session, the group explored key moments in Italy's history related to gender equality and feminist movements. While most students were familiar with major historical events, the feminist movements of the 1970s and the first pride event in Rome in 1994 were unfamiliar to many, reflecting an intergenerational gap in knowledge. Professor Patti acknowledged the need to integrate these pivotal moments into educational curricula to ensure they are not forgotten.

The motion debate was particularly well-received by participants, many of whom appreciated the departure from traditional vertical teaching methods often employed at the university. Students expressed their enthusiasm for the interactive and participatory nature of the debate, and also Professor Patti endorsed the format, recognising that students not only learned more effectively but also enjoyed the process.

A.2.5 SPAIN, La Xixa

In La Xixa, 2 events and one workshop were held between June and September 2024 in Barcelona, Spain. They focused on raising awareness on gender stereotypes and empowering stakeholders and community leaders, acting upon beliefs and attitudes through highlighted shared values.

“Onades de Dones” Event

Scope of the activity

The first event featured an open rehearsal of the play “**Onades de Dones**” by the Theatre Company La Xixa Lab. The play has been created using Theatre of Yes methods, which harness emotions to connect with real-life stories. It explores the challenges and obstacles women face in occupying space in different spheres, such as work, relationships, politics, public space... This event aimed to foster a dialogue on women's representation at various levels, using the play as a starting point. Following the performance, an open debate and participatory activities were held to reflect on women's roles and presence in public spaces, extending the discussion to potential solutions for empowerment and allyship.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The event “**Mujeres y poder: evento participativo alrededor de la obra Onades de Dones**”, in English *Women and power: participatory event around the play “Women's waves”* was held on Thursday 23/05/2024 from 15:30 to 18:15. It took place on the common terrace of LaFede.cat shared workspace, where La Xixa has their main office, Carrer Erasme de Janer, 8, 08001 Barcelona, Spain.

Facilitator, actresses and support staff:

- **Marina Pallares Elias**, theatre director and creator of the methodology Theatre of Yes
- **Angel Cristi Berríos**, facilitator of La Xixa
- **5 actresses** of Xixa Lab, theatre company of La Xixa:
 - Maria Márquez
 - Majo de las Nieves
 - Ariadna Cornella
 - Cinta Garcia Mata
 - Noura Ait Ichou
- **Marine Masson**, project manager in La Xixa
- **Clara Deschodt**, European Volunteer in La Xixa

The group, composed of 30 students and entrepreneurs from the LEINN Master program in Entrepreneurial Leadership and Innovation, aged between 20 and 30, represented a key target audience for the FEM-ABLE project. As future leaders and managers in companies of various sizes, or as entrepreneurs creating new businesses, they are, or will be, confronted with power dynamics and leadership challenges. The group was mixed, with both women and men participating, and the event was specifically designed to engage men and younger citizens and voters as allies in supporting women's leadership.



Image 18 - Theatre play "Onades de Dones" by La Xixa Lab on 23/05/2024 © Angel Cristi

This event was integrated into their educational Master program, which includes two days in Barcelona to discover and get inspired by projects rooted in transformative social economy. Setting this event within the LEINN Master aligns with Spain's National Strategy, which emphasises the importance of promoting gender equality in educational settings from an intersectional, intercultural, and feminist perspective.

Description of the event

Considering the expertise of La Xixa in theatre and participative methods, it was a choice to hold events in person, without virtual option. From the play **"Onades de Dones"**, rehearsed in front of the participants, a dialogue on women's representation at different levels was sparked. The experience of La Xixa with theatre and public debate has shown that embodying structural and societal issues on stage makes the audience more receptive to discussions, as they often identify with certain characters, or empathise with situations they've been through. This approach also makes the debate more accessible to a wider audience. The event was closed involving participants into an Image Theatre evaluation activity, embodying the emotion aroused by the precedent activities.

This event met the objectives of the FEM-ABLE National Strategy by offering a mixed space with the participation of both women and men to explore and discuss the needs and next steps to be taken on the path towards women's leadership. Through the use of theatre and participative debate, the event challenged and expanded participants' views on women's roles in public and visible spaces.

Main activities conducted

The event began with an **introduction to the FEM-ABLE project** by Marine Masson and a time was dedicated to fill in the first part of the survey. A brief presentation of La Xixa and its goals for social transformation through participatory methods served as an introduction to the coming play.

Theatre play "Onades de Dones"

This first part was followed by the **inaugural open rehearsal of the theatre play "Onades de Dones."** The play, based on the personal stories of five actresses, highlights the daily challenges women face in gaining access to spaces of participation and representation. This play was directed by Marina Pallarès-Elias³, creator of The Theatre of the Yes method, a theatrical language that brings high-quality works to life by using personal stories of individuals who may not be professional actors but have powerful stories to tell. This approach helps break down prejudices among the audience, bringing us all closer together as a community, sharing common stories. Presenting a play created through this method aligns with the desire to foster dialogue about women's representation in society, drawing from both diverse and shared experiences, in different contexts and spaces, with an intersectional and intercultural perspective. Through these five interwoven narratives, the play also sheds light on the strength of sorority and the compelling impact society has on shaping women's identities.

This play was designed to be performed outdoors, which is why we chose to hold the open rehearsal in an outdoor space and invited participants to join us there. Since the play addresses women's representation and participation in public spaces, it was essential to stage it outside, as this setting itself adds a meaningful layer to the performance.

Participatory debate

After the play, Angel Cristi Berríos opened and led a fruitful **participatory debate**, starting from situations identified within the play, and discussing potential solutions or needs. The final **feedback round** offered everyone the possibility to share their key takeaways from the play and the discussion. By creating a space for all voices to be heard, the open debate and feedback session fostered empathy and encouraged the exchange of diverse feelings and perspectives, contributing to a stronger classroom dynamic in the future.

Image Theatre exercise

To close the event, Marine Masson facilitated an **Image Theatre exercise**, one of the tools used in the Theatre of the Oppressed methodology that employs still images or tableaux to convey complex ideas, emotions, and social issues. While words can have denotative and symbolic meanings, images serve as a form of sign language, where signifier and meaning are inseparable. La Xixa recognises the power of non-verbal expression in their work. Through their bodies, participants expressed their emotional states one by one, underscoring the importance of embodying experiences for a deeper understanding of them.

³ Pallarès-Elias, Marina, "Methodology". Consulted online on 23/09/2024 [Link](#)

Topics discussed

Support the development of new models of female leadership

As future leaders and managers in various-sized companies or as entrepreneurs starting new ventures, participants are or will be directly faced with leadership positions and decision-making. Understanding the structural obstacles women encounter in their professional and personal life experience can influence future choices and strategies.

One participant identifying as a man shared how the play and subsequent discussion encouraged him to reconsider his perspectives and actively support women's leadership. Being aware of the structural oppression and challenges present in our society and spheres of power is a crucial first step toward fostering greater consideration and personal involvement in promoting gender equality. This also underscores the importance of engaging men from an early age and promoting their role as allies in this effort.

“The play sparked a lot of thoughts and emotions, leaving me with plenty to reflect on.”

Women's space, representation and place

The group deeply resonated with the discussion on women's access to participation and representation in power and public spaces. A key issue raised was the legitimacy of women's roles and expertise. One participant shared how, during a company visit, men frequently corrected women, as if their contributions needed extra validation, reflecting a broader societal issue where women's competence is often under greater scrutiny.

Space is claimed not only through formal roles but through behaviours and voice. Men's dominant voices often overshadow women, creating an environment where women feel less confident and visible, leading to a cycle of exclusion and diminished self-confidence. A powerful reflection emerged on reclaiming physical space, starting with one's body. Theatre was seen as an empowering tool for this, with one participant noting how it could help her reconnect with her body, long denied by societal norms. Seeing 5 empowered bodies confidently occupying the stage was very inspiring.

Collective sharing as a potential solution for empowerment and allyship

A male participant shared how the experience allowed him to reflect on the diversity of situations and opinions, recognising the importance of this reflection for both his personal growth and professional aspirations. This openness to different perspectives, particularly from men considering their role as allies, signals a positive shift towards supporting women's empowerment.

For the women in the audience, the play resonated deeply, addressing personal experiences that they often found difficult to articulate. The open discussion that followed created a safe space for expression, where participants could reflect on their struggles and realise that they were not isolated. As one woman noted, “Talking about it and seeing it happen to others helps us realise it's not just a personal issue, but a systemic one.” This collective recognition of shared experiences fosters a sense of solidarity and empowerment. By creating a space where both men and women can openly and safely dialogue, the event helped break down barriers, promoting deeper understanding and allyship. The shared stories and reflections allowed participants to feel less alone, creating a foundation for personal empowerment through collective action.



Image 19 - Theatre play "Onades de Dones" by La Xixa Lab on 23/05/2024 © Angel Cristi

Create non-mix spaces or rethink of existent spaces

The collective sharing of personal experiences among women highlighted the pressing need for women-only spaces where they can start from a common foundation and feel comfortable discussing experiences that others may have encountered. These dedicated spaces can foster openness and support among women, making it easier to overcome the difficulties of self-empowerment. By sharing their stories and challenges, women can inspire one another, build confidence, and collectively explore pathways to empowerment, transforming individual struggles into shared strength.

"Empowerment is something that women must cultivate together; it is challenging to empower ourselves alone. Thank you for conveying such a powerful message."

In response, one of the actresses emphasised the importance of viewing the issue from a different perspective. Instead of isolating women from men, she argued for a critical examination of existing spaces: ***"Do they have to give us this space, or is this space ours? Is it necessary to create new spaces, or should we rethink the existing ones?"*** This raises an important question about the perception of space; the notion that women must ask for permission to occupy space and feel grateful for its existence is, in itself, a contradiction.

Deconstruction of existing perceptions

The play also highlighted the prejudices women face in their daily lives. By making these issues visible through physical expression, participants engaged actively in the subsequent debate, exploring solutions to challenge and dismantle these stereotypes.

"Something comes in and changes you"

“Co-construction of a Forum Theatre piece: How do we, women, participate in politics?” Workshop

Scope of the activity

The workshop, held in four sessions with a large group of community leaders, aimed at creating the conditions of an effective empowerment for the participants, mainly women, in a mixed and supportive environment. Tackling the intersectionality of power dynamics through open debates, sharing of experiences and theatrical activities, participants were guided through the creation of their own Theatre Forum piece to be performed in public space after the workshop. The process focused on gender stereotypes de-construction to be able to conquer sound, body, public and political spaces while confronting the social and personal impeaching barriers.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The Workshop in spanish “*Co-construcción de una obra de teatro foro: ¿Cómo participamos las mujeres en política?*” took place at Espai de Families Monomarentales, Carrer Erasme de Janer, 8, 08001 Barcelona, Spain. It was split over two weekends:

- Fridays 24.05.2024 & 31.05.2024 from 5:00 to 8:30 PM
- Saturdays 25.05.2024 & 01.06.2024 from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM.

Facilitators and support staff:

- **Mamadou Diol**, social activist, international reference for the Theatre of the Oppressed, initiator of this methodology in West Africa, and creator of the KADDÚ YAARAX Theatre of the Oppressed Centre.
- **Ana Bustamante**, facilitator and feminist LGBTIQ+ activist with an intersectional perspective. She works on projects focused on youth civic participation through artistic creation and cultural management.
- **Marine Masson**, Project Manager in la Xixa

Participants

The group was composed of 25 community stakeholders, mainly women, responding to the characteristics of the secondary target groups, identified as key elements to disseminate the FEM-ABLE values and strategies. The participants principally came from Civil society organisations & NGOs fighting phenomena of discrimination, or the Educational/Academic sector (Scholars, educators, teachers, or support staff). Many of them are engaged artists or politically committed in grassroots collectives. The group was very intergenerational, participants were aged from 26 to 70 years old, and eight of the participants were also young voters. The diversity among participants was also in the mixite of their origin: Less than half of the group was from Spain, the rest of the participants were from South and Central America (Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Uruguay), from Europe (France, Germany, Andorra) and from Africa (Maroc, Guinea Bissau).

Description of the event

The workshop, part of La Xixa's ongoing group facilitation training for stakeholders in Barcelona, was designed to align with the FEM-ABLE project's national gender equality strategies. La Xixa preferred

working with one larger group of participants over a longer time than working punctually with two different groups in order to create a constant and effective awareness-raising and embodying process of the FEM-ABLE values. Held over two weekends, these sessions aimed to empower women by tooling them up to share and represent personal and collective experiences and conflicts and raising awareness on their articulation to structural power dynamics in our societies. The presence of participants identifying as men aimed at engaging male allies in the implementation of the National Strategy.

Facilitated by Mamadou Diol and Ana Bustamante, the workshop guided participants through the creation of a Forum Theatre piece, using the Theatre of the Oppressed methodology. The sessions provided practical skills and supported the strategic goal of nurturing confident women leaders, enhancing their capacities and skills, promoting intersectionality, and fostering collaboration and supportive environments and networks.

Main activities conducted

In order to be faithful to the reflection and creation path of the participants, we will retrace the workshop and the topics discussed in a chronological way. The tackled topics were actually transversal to the whole workshop but the program of the sessions was following concrete objectives relating at the same time to the creation process and the embodiment of the FEM-ABLE national strategy.

Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre - Main reference: [Augusto Boal](#)

The **Theatre of the Oppressed** puts theatre at the service of education and collective empowerment. Developed in the 1970s by Brazilian playwright Augusto Boal, the Theatre of the Oppressed has become one of the main tools of participatory communication and Latin American popular education movements. Unlike many forms of social theatre, the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) is political theatre. It is a collective rehearsal for emancipation. Based on the epistemology of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, TO allows analysing through theatre the abuses of power systematically perpetrated in our daily micro-structures⁴. This methodology consists of various tools: Image Theatre, Forum Theatre, Legislative Theatre, Rainbow of Desire, Invisible Theatre, and Journalistic Theatre. TO uses theatrical games to de-mechanise our perceptions, making us aware of our cultural filters through the explication and collectivization of our conflicts and experiences. The collectivization of individual problems and subsequent extrapolation to a group story allows for seeking collective alternatives to situations that are often difficult to solve individually.

The Forum Theatre is the main tool used within the Theatre of the Oppressed methodology and it is based on staging and performing a conflict which the audience is invited to “solve” by proposing and acting alternatives. Forum Theatre is a powerful tool to rehearse real-life situations and conflicts, helping us to give them visibility, recognise, discuss and confront them. The structure of Forum Theatre is based on presenting a short play, which is stopped at the moment of maximum conflict. At this point, the facilitator (Curinga or Joker) stops the play and invites the audience to join the debate and go on stage to replace the protagonists in order to change the situation. The situation is

⁴ Fernández-Aballí Altamirano, Ana, 2014, “Searching for horizontality: key variables and converging methodologies in the “art d kambi” project. A proposal for the creation of glocal participatory communication projects” IC – Revista Científica de Información y Comunicación, 2014, 11, pp. 103 143. Consulted online on 25/09/2024: https://ipena44.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/fernandez_aballi_selecta.pdf

reinterpreted as many times as the audience's many interventions. Each alternative suggestion is debated and analysed in order to determine its viability.

***1st Session** Bring personal stories to life in public spaces and actively encourage problem-solving.*

24th May 2024, guided by Mamadou Diol and Ana Bustamante

The first session began with the exercise **"Pair connection"** which aims to create a bond with another participant with non-verbal expression, using the body. This activity warms up the body and helps de-mechanize the mind and body. It was followed by a storytelling exercise, where the same pairs of participants told each other a personal story where they felt impeached, explaining the barriers that hindered them from reaching their objectives. At the end of the sharing, participants were asked to represent the story of the other with an image formed by their body, introducing them to Image Theatre, allowing the sharing participant to correct the image to be as true as possible to their story. The whole group positioned themselves in front of their pair, forming two lines, and one after the other they pronounced a short supportive sentence linked to the story of their pair.

"These stories are important; they all have to be told."

"We need to hear your opinion"

"Equal opportunities!"

"Impostor syndrome does not exist because I am not an impostor."

"What you are saying is important"

The second main activity of the session was the **"Walk as Sun, Moon, Star"**, which took place after a collective discussion on the role of dialogue and active listening in Theatre. Mamadou Diol invited participants to walk at different speeds (Sun being the fastest, Moon the slowest) in the room, changing direction and avoiding walking patterns, getting more and more conscious of their environment and the rest of the group. This dynamic helps one to feel to be part of a collective and at the same time independent going on with one's trajectory. It was complexified when M. Diol asked participants to embody emotions in their walks, representing Courage, Sadness, Pride, Rage, Fear... Every time the facilitator named a new emotion and modulated the speed of their walk, he then **"Stopped"** them to create emotional statues. He passed through the participants to accentuate and modify their movements or non-verbal expressions, according to his appreciation. This step of the activity fostered attention to the body and its way of expressing emotions and introduced participants to a more theatrical use of their body language.

The last activity was focused on the **characters' fabrication** in Forum Theatre. After an introduction to the difference between character construction and fabrication, Mamadou Diol invited every group to apply the Character Fabrication Technique to the characters of their play. Character Construction is the traditional work on a written character, that comes in a theatre play or a novel. The Character's Fabrication is the way to create a character from scratch, without any written base, it can be inspired by real life.

This activity emphasised the importance of everyone's everyday life as a source of inspiration to be able to create and represent trigger situations that can mirror the power dynamics of our societies.

Working without a written script obliged participants to look at their lives with sometimes newly politicised perspectives, searching for situations that can generate emotions and reactions from the public, and reappraising their personal experiences and opinions.

2nd Session Raise awareness of one's voice and body in public spaces as a means of empowerment. 25th May 2025, guided by Mamadou Diol and Ana Bustamante

After a short collective discussion, Mamadou Diol petitioned participants to form a circle around an empty chair to practice the “**Jar of words**” exercise. He chose a volunteer among participants to sit on the chair, this person would embody the character of Manoli, whose first baby was stolen during the dictatorship because she was a Republican. Participants walked around Manoli and M. Diol asked them to answer individually and at the same time, questions such as “Why was the baby stolen? How would a rich woman see the poor woman who lost her baby? What does Manoli's current partner think? What do the other children think? the mother? the father? What does the Francoist police think about this?”

This exercise strengthens the consistency of the character and fostered participants imagination, creating the conditions for participants to incorporate, memorise completely, and make a group patchwork based on each person and their vision. After a debate on the political role of theatre and community in our societies, participants used the “Walk as an emotional Sun, Moon, Star” activity to embody emotion and visualise better the space they are occupying as a body, voice, and person



Image 20 – Photographs from the workshop facilitated by M. Diol and A. Bustamante. © Angel Cristi

according to each emotion. Then they worked on **creating the dialogues** of their theatre plays. We closed these first two sessions with an open discussion on the links between the FEM-ABLE objectives and the experiences they shared during the sessions

***3^d Session** The importance of collective effort and solidarity in empowering the group.
3rd May 2024, guided by Mamadou Diol and Ana Bustamante*

The first activity of the session was **"The Director"**: participants were asked to form pairs, composed of a Director and an Actress. The director asks the actress to interpret this simple phrase: "My God, how expensive life is here in Barcelona, here everything is expensive". The Director is never satisfied with what the actress stages and will again and again ask the actress to do more, to do it better, differently...

After a couple of minutes, roles switch in the couple, the director is now the actress and the actress the director. The director can ask now for more extravagance from the Actress: more colour, using shadow theatre, ampler movements, doing Greek theatre, being animals... This exercise is interesting to tackle the topic of simple power relationship, to visualise who has the power, how they use it, and exchange the role of power-over and internalised power.

The next activity **"The Coal Miners in Solidarity"** fosters solidarity among the group, and enabled a stimulating debate on the significance and content of solidarity. While participants were walking, they had to choose a number between 1 and 20 and keep it to themselves. When the facilitator said a number, participant who picked this number were asking to fell. As in the situation of the coal miners in Chile trapped underground, if one falls, the entire group is in danger so other participants had to prevent it from falling by holding the participant. This exercise shows the group as an entity in need of all its members to follow their goal.

Lastly, the **"Triangle Activity"** reinforced the consciousness of their interdependence with each other. Everyone, without saying anything chose 2 other participants to create a mental triangle with them, without talking and without touching anybody. The participants had to do everything they could to create and keep their triangle in shaped, always going on with their goal. The activity raised awareness of confronting truths and objectives and fighting to win, which can be tied to situations in politics in a broad sense.

***4th Session** Address societal conflicts by bringing them into public spaces.
1st June 2024, guided by Ana Bustamante, Angel Cristi Berrios, Camila Francovich and Carla Edith Guerra.*

Warm-up and conversation on the previous day where participants presented their plays to the group for the first time, and shared their impressions related to this experience. One of the difficulties they faced was inhabiting the role of oppressor in their plays.



Image 21 – Photographs from the workshop facilitated by M. Diol and A. Bustamante © Angel Cristi

The facilitator invited them to an activity dedicated to facilitating this process, asking them to recall the discriminating and violent sentences or behaviours that they witnessed or lived, and at the same time encouraging active self-criticism and observation of oneself, recognising their inner stereotypes or discriminating behaviours. The activity “**Reading and expressing my stereotypes**” allowed participants to work on their own privileges and prejudices, opening a breach for empathy and active listening without judging by taking into account the intersected axes of oppression at different levels.

The last activity was focused on **presenting their plays to the group**, playing with the audience, and receiving feedback before their first presentation in a public space the following week. This closing of the workshop effectively supported them in their creation process by encouraging them to feel confident and truly accompanied by the facilitator team. This last process invited them to celebrate mistakes and welcome external participants to their play, searching for alternatives to solve the conflictual situations they staged.

Topics discussed

The workshop, especially thanks to its longer duration and the whole process with the same group of participants, generated meaningful discussions and long-lasting experiences. The experience of sharing conflictual experiences and creating a forum theatre play on these bases in a supportive environment allowed participants to tackle sensitive topics and open dialogues, at the same time as it created the conditions for empowerment of diverse female community leaders’ profiles.

Theatre as a tool for social and political transformation

Theatre in itself is about representing, showing, and sharing. Changing the ways theatre is created and who access the stage does change the meaning and impact of the plays. Changing the inspiration of theatre, choosing to show conflicts openly, and being inspired by daily life and conflicts reappraises one's experience, as much for those creating the play, as for those considered as “the audience”, who,

in Forum Theatre, are part of the piece. Forum Theatre is about creating and cherishing community by creating space for debates and valuing everyone's opinion as part of our society. Being prepared to present a theatre piece in a public space does influence the way one can receive and share this experience, being part of a shared common space while rehearsing real-life oppressing situations and inviting participants to join onstage to try solving the conflict that they embodied. Being able to be conscious enough of social issues to create reactions and links to other's lives and experiences. Public spaces are highly political and daily spaces at the same time, shared some of the participants when speaking about the venue of their presentation.

The political aspect of Theatre, and particularly of Forum Theatre, was constantly present and discussed among the group, guided by the experienced facilitators Mamadou Diol and Ana Bustamante, recording the social roles and importance of what can sometimes be seen as entertainment. Their commitment as activists in intersectional fights permitted them to widely open the debate and offer enriching examples and role models. Forum Theatre opens dialogues and the situations presented are not supposed to be fictional, but to highlight discrimination and social power structures in our society, where everyone inhabits at the same time oppressor and oppressed positions. By taking this affirmation as the basis of their theatre play, participants concur to promote intersectional perspectives on social issues and participate in the dissemination of intersectional feminist values.



Image 22 – Photographs from the workshop facilitated by M. Diol and A. Bustamante © Angel Cristi

Self-confidence and empowerment

Theatre and creative activities, and, in this case, the creation of a theatre play, is a strong empowering process for participants. The workshop helped participants become aware of their own body, voice, expressivity, and feelings. During the discussions of the workshop, one topic that always came back was the question of self-confidence. Working on their physical presence, including their voice, we created the conditions of effective individual and collective empowerment to be used in all life and public situations for participants. The participants shared that they felt in a supportive environment where they could feel safe and accompanied in their creation, but the facilitators reminded them that the creation's source is themselves, inhabiting roles, and the reality becoming half-fiction.

Where women in leadership positions often suffer scrutiny and double standards, the workshop enhanced the capacity of each stakeholder to use their voice as a unique instrument and to present their body to carry the message they had chosen.

The importance of the collective

As explained at the beginning of the report, it was important for La Xixa to organise this workshop with a larger group over a longer period, among other reasons to have time for a group process to be developed. A recurrent topic addressed during the workshop was the theme of the collective, the importance of the group, solidarity, empathy, interdependence, and empathy. The sessions stressed the relevance of team-building activities and circles of word after each one of the activities and sessions, to create a safe space for participants to share their impressions and experiences. Debates emanated from these circles of words on how and by who the actual power is represented and how its structure individualises people, more than creating community. For participants, one way to transform society for it to be more diversely represented politically is fostering relationships and networks. The group recognised the action of creating a community as a political action.

“Forum theatre” Event

Scope of the activity

The second event consisted of the co-organisation of a public and outside Theatre Forum with a grassroots Feminist collective in the district of Esquerra de l'Eixample in Barcelona. It was designed to foster collective debate about gender inequalities mechanisms and trigger individual action.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The event “**Obra de Teatre Foro by La Xixa Lab al Carrer**” in English “*Theatre Forum play by La Xixa Lab on the street*” occurred during the “Festa Major de l'Esquerra de l'Eixample” a local festival celebrating the district. It took place at the junction of the pedestrian streets Compte Borrell & Consell de Cent, Eixample, Barcelona, on the 29th of September 2024, 12:00-14:00.

Facilitators, technical and support staff:

- **10 members of the collective Feministes de l'Esquerra de l'Eixample:** The Feminists of Esquerra de l'Eixample collective is named after their centric neighbourhood of Barcelona. This intergenerational collective emerged, from a real local necessity to establish a space to share feminist views, starting from a narrow perspective from the district's daily life and experience. This women's collective network implemented as a neighbourhood association represents a

key target of the FEM-ABLE project. Their influence and recognition within the district facilitated outreach and engagement at the community level.

- **Ana Bustamante**, Joker, facilitator and feminist LGBTIQ+ activist with an intersectional perspective.
- 1 technical support
- 5 artists of **La Xixa Lab**, La Xixa's theatre company:
 - Maria Márquez
 - Majo de las Nieves
 - Ariadna Cornella
 - Alejandro Pérez
 - Maciel Maure Crescini
- **Marine Masson**, project manager in La Xixa
- **Clara Deschodt**, European Volunteer in La Xixa

Participants

Participants ranged in age from 2 to 80 years, with a majority being women. A significant number of attendees were recruited through prior communications about the event made by La Xixa or the local feminist collective. In consequence, a part of the audience was already engaged with theatre, visual arts, or feminist topics, aligning with the target civic society—individuals actively participating in and contributing to the social, cultural, economic, and political life of their community. Additionally, since the event took place outdoors and was loud and visible from a distance, it attracted random passersby from the district and beyond. These unexpected participants play a crucial role in the debates opened during the Theatre Forum play, as they often bring perspectives and opinions that might otherwise go unheard. Their contributions are essential for fostering a broader collective awareness.



Image 23 – Photographs from the Forum Theatre in Public Space on 29th September 2024 © Angel Cristi

Description of the event

Forum Theatre is a very powerful and practical tool to question and dismantle stereotypes and prejudices. The play presented aims to focus on stereotypes and prejudices towards women within a patriarchal society. The method also permits to spotlight on participants' internalised oppressions, like negative social beliefs about women.

It was significant to co-organise this event with a grassroots feminist collective to facilitate outreach and engagement at the community level. A Forum Theatre play is created from original and local stories that make sense in the context of the country, region, or even district. This event was rightly directed to local individuals to bring together alternative solutions to gender discrimination.

The play is intentionally created to exaggerate existing gender attitudes, starting a crescendo from “invisible” microaggression to obvious gender discrimination, till reaching a maximum point of conflict. At this moment, the Joker interrupts the action and starts an open debate with the participants about the situation they had just witnessed. Participants are then invited to substitute actresses and actors and explore alternatives to change the structure of power on stage. Different solutions are tried and discussed till the event ends.

Main activities conducted

The event, co-organised by La Xixa and the Feminists Collective of Esquerra de l'Eixample, began with an **introduction from the collective who invited La Xixa Lab to perform**, briefly outlining their creation and their mission to raise awareness about gender discrimination and violence, and the importance of their presence during the local festivities.

Marine Masson then explained the connection between the collective's advocacy and the goals of the **FEM-ABLE project**, which was created to address the need for increased visibility of women in public spaces and their participation and representation in spheres of power, such as politics. Marine explained the necessity of assessing the impact of the project on participants, through a questionnaire divided into 2 parts. During this event, the questionnaire was available in paper and digital format, to match the needs of the diverse audience.

Warm-up to introduce the theatre forum method

Meanwhile, Ana Bustamante took on the role of facilitator, introducing the Theatre Forum method through an **interactive and playful warm-up**. The exercise is based on a simple rule: it divides the stage and the audience into two groups, facing each other. Together, they take turns counting to three in a continuous loop. For example, if the stage says “1” and “3,” the audience says “2,” and vice versa. Once the group has mastered this, the number “1” is replaced with a word chosen by the audience. They repeat the loop, and when they're comfortable, number “2” is replaced by another word, continuing until number “3” is also substituted. The loop is practised a while longer with all the changes. The purpose of this warm-up is to actively involve the audience in their role as “spect-actors/actresses”—a combination of spectator and actor/actress, which is a key concept in Forum Theatre. In this method, participants are encouraged to engage directly in the play. The exercise also helps participants become more reactive and present in the space, fostering a sense of belonging within the group. Additionally, it encourages everyone to “de-mechanise” their actions—breaking out of automatic, logical patterns of thinking. Since Forum Theatre centres on finding new alternatives to

conflict situations, starting the event with this kind of exercise helps develop creative, out-of-the-box solutions that our bodies and minds might not instinctively offer. The artists also join the stage during the warm-up, participating alongside Ana.

Forum theatre play “A Gender Matter”

The **Forum Theatre play** “A Gender Matter” begins, depicting a job interview at the restaurant “La Nébula.” The two finalists, Monica and Robert, both with excellent references and professional experience, must demonstrate their skills to the interviewer to secure the job. This play addresses the discrimination and violence faced by individuals who identify as women, highlighting the intersections of gender, sex, origin, and class. These challenges, often ingrained in the workplace and daily life, manifest through power dynamics, microaggressions, and their broader impact within a patriarchal society. Frequently, situations that warrant questioning become normalized in our everyday experiences. Using the Forum Theatre method, the play encourages critical reflection on these lived realities.

The decision to perform the play outdoors was deliberate, making it accessible and visible to a wider audience. Forum Theatre, as practised by La Xixa, aims to reach a broad range of perspectives to foster open dialogue and introduce even polarised viewpoints on the same subject. Had the performance taken place indoors, with prior communication targeting specific stakeholders, the audience would likely have been more familiar with theatre or gender inequality issues, potentially skewing the outcomes toward those already sensitised to these topics.

A Forum Theatre play begins with a short conflictual scene that halts at the moment of peak tension when the facilitator or Joker—played by Ana Bustamante—steps in. The audience is invited into an **open discussion** about the situation they had just witnessed, “Does this happen in real life?” This prompted the audience to reflect on and identify problematic behaviours occurring in the play. Ana’s role consisted in guiding the discussion with the audience, and determining which proposals to explore. These proposals would be then interpreted by the participant on stage, stepping into the roles of one of the characters to experiment with the solution they just proposed, trying to change the outcome of the conflict. Only women stood up and acted as “spectactresses” during the Forum. Each newly presented alternative was then debated and analysed by the rest of the audience to evaluate its viability and impact.

This approach aligns with the FEM-ABLE National Strategy, which emphasises the necessity of mixed forums involving both women and men as a space for dialogue about the violence and discrimination women experience simply because they are women. Such forums are essential in identifying and making visible situations of inequality, finding transformative alternatives, to confronting and managing conflicts.



Image 24 - Participant in the debate during the event Forum Theatre in Public Space on 29th September 2024
© Anael Cristi

Topics discussed

Gender-based discrimination in professional contexts

Participants noted that gender bias remains pervasive across various industries. Roberto, for example, displayed a sense of superiority over the other characters, all women, and did not acknowledge the authority of Clarissa, the employer. This reflects the ongoing challenge women face in leadership roles, where they are often not taken seriously. One participant summed this up by saying,

"This happens all the time."

Furthermore, the group explored the idea that women in leadership roles may adopt more masculine or aggressive behaviours to succeed, reinforcing rather than challenging patriarchal structures. This raised the question of whether success requires adopting a "machista" (machist) attitude. Clarissa, the boss, voiced her belief that she wasn't responsible for changing the system, revealing how difficult it can be to push for systemic change when the power dynamics are entrenched.

Avoiding violence in conflict resolution

Participants who confronted Roberto on stage expressed that their initial response to his aggression was the use of verbal violence, but they acknowledged this cannot be a long-term solution. One participant reflected,

"In the end, I responded very violently, and I didn't like it. It didn't help, and the violence just kept growing."

This underscores the need to explore alternative approaches to conflict, to prevent the escalation of violence, and to avoid creating further divides where meaningful dialogue becomes impossible without resorting to aggression.

The importance of allyship

The conversation focused also on how women can support one another in hostile environments, creating spaces of solidarity and mutual understanding. The idea of complicity between women was explored as a way to foster supportive relationships. The role of men as allies was also brought into the conversation. The character Roberto was examined as an example of someone who failed to position himself as an ally, and participants emphasized the need for men to take on more supportive roles, with one comment noting:

"The only role that hasn't changed is Roberto's. We need to find an alternative for him."

Collective action was brought as a potential solution by members of the collective, and when someone stepped into the role of Clarissa's friend, this offered a fresh perspective on how to approach the boss and navigate power dynamics.

Occupation of space and normalised sexual harassment

Two participants that confronted Roberto on stage expressed their frustration and anger with Roberto's aggressive and offensive behaviour, noting that it was difficult to change his attitude without resorting to violence. Nothing was enough to counter the physical and vocal dominance of Roberto. This led to a reflection on the challenges of creating effective responses to harassment in different spheres of power.

Phenomenon of double standards

Women often face higher expectations and scrutiny in leadership roles compared to men. In this play, even though Monica had similar qualifications to Roberto, she was held to a higher standard by Clarissa during the selection process. This situation underlined the persistent gender bias in professional settings.

Paternalism was another form of discrimination highlighted during the discussion, as Roberto's behaviour alienated the other characters. He frequently interrupted and corrected Maria Eugenia and Monica, demonstrating how certain men in positions of perceived authority feel entitled to "teach" women how to behave or succeed. This dynamic was recognized as particularly harmful, especially when compounded by other factors like age, origin, or social class.

A.2.6 CYPRUS, CSI

In Cyprus, two events were conducted by CSI, during the period of May 2024 to July 2024, in two different cities; Nicosia and Limassol. A total of 77 participants attended both events.

“Live podcast with MEP women candidates: Women in politics” Workshop

Scope of the activity

The live podcast aimed to develop a thematic discussion with three EU MEP women candidates about **‘Women in Politics’**, extrapolating key elements from the National Gender Equality Strategy of Cyprus. Specifically, the thematic areas discussed included the context of the National and EU landscape in regards to women in Politics, the role of media, public perceptions, the limited supportive infrastructures, work-life balance and the importance of women’s political participation. The questions shared with the three EU MEP women candidates were organised according to the thematic areas outlined in the National Gender Equality Strategy of Cyprus.

The recording of the podcast supported a live audience who could listen live to the discussion as well as participate by raising specific questions to the three main speakers. The live podcast supported interactivity, focusing on awareness raising, information sharing and experiential learning on key issues and female political power in a National and on a European level and insightful information for the EU elections of June 2024.

Place, date, and participants’ profile

The interactive workshop and informative seminar was held on the 26th of May 2024, between 11 am until 2:30pm at the recording studios of ‘Black Lemon Tv’, Nicosia, Cyprus. The event was organised and hosted by CSI with the support of regional political parties that the three MEP women candidates represented during the EU parliamentary elections. The event facilitated the successful engagement of 10 key stakeholders, including prominent figures in the local political arena; 8 women and 2 men.

Description of the event

The podcast commenced with registrations and a warm welcome to the attendees from the host organisation. Attendees represented different backgrounds and organisations, all interested in women’s political inclusion as well as women empowerment in general. The organisers encouraged the completion of the first half of the Impact Assessment Survey before the podcast recording. The host organisation introduced the FEM-ABLE project and shared general guidelines in regards to the podcast recording. Following the introductory remarks, the podcast recording started with the title **‘Women in Politics’** that CSI was organising and hosted three EU MEP women candidates.

The podcast provided insightful and impactful information, directly linking the National landscape with the European Union and the overall role of women in the political framework. The podcast ended with questions from the audience, delivering lively, rich and engaging discussions with the participants. The event ended with the offline discussions that further highlighted the themes of empowerment and participation as well as the importance of women representation in national and EU political

arenas. The project's transformative potential was met with enthusiasm, generating excitement among the participants. Lastly, the event ended with a thank-you remark from the host organisation and participants finalised the Impact Assessment Survey and completed the EU centralized survey Justice, Rights & Values.



Image 25 – Recording the live podcast in the Black Lemon TV studio, 26th May 2024

Topics discussed

The discussion of the live podcast focused on the **EU elections, the representation of women in politics and on the National Gender Equality Strategy of Cyprus**, engaging the live audience with questions and further discussions.

Particularly, speakers -as well as audience- engaged in a thoughtful discussion of women's **political participation and underrepresentation on National and EU level**. Specific statistical information was shared by the main speakers and further elaborated on it is understood from these numbers.

The discussion touched upon the **legislative framework** of the country in regards to women participation and commenting on its restrictive and limited application. The discussion then moved on to **gender quotas'** effectiveness whilst expressing diverging opinions, with an overall broader understanding that gender quotas can be implemented as a first step and a stepping stone in achieving gender parity and equal gender representation in political arenas. The discussion on gender quotas showcased various viewpoints on how to achieve gender equality in political participation.

Discussions then moved on to the political affiliations and political parties, the **supportive trainings** offered and generally their role in supporting women in politics. The discussion then escalated on sharing opinions in regards to broader **supportive infrastructure and governmental and institutional support**, by referring to their personal views and experiences as mothers and young females.

The speakers also touched upon the important role of **education** in shaping public attitudes and behaviours, directly and indirectly affecting all aforementioned points, with the end goal to combat

gender stereotypes on both horizontal and vertical key societal, political and economic thematic areas and further challenge traditional norms.

Speakers expanded this discussion by focusing on a patriarchal system, **where gender stereotypes and public perceptions** are generated from. All three women shared personal examples and experiences, especially focusing on their pre-election period.

A relevant reference was made on how **media** play a crucial role in public perception, negatively affecting and impacting the role of women in politics as well as the importance of **women role models** acting as inspirations for both men and women.

The podcast concluded with a focus on expanding the link between Cyprus as a Nation and the European Union, the benefits from it and the influence on young girls and women. The three MEP women candidates openly reflected on the **EU committees** they would love to participate in if elected, with the discussion orbiting around relevant EU committees representing women and the enhancement of women empowerment and participation.



Image 26 – Participants in the live podcast recorded in the Black Lemon TV studio, 26th May 2024

“National Conference: Women in business and beyond” Event

Scope of the activity

The National Conference ‘**Women in business and beyond**’ aimed to empower women in business and beyond, through enriching discussions, interactive workshops and networking. The active contribution

of CSI, aimed in extrapolating key thematic areas from the National Gender Equality Strategy of Cyprus, directly and indirectly influencing and impacting the field of business and broadly politics, due to their interconnectivity. Specifically, the thematic areas discussed included the context of the local, National and EU landscape and dimensions in regards to women in Politics, gender stereotypes, the role of businesses, the limited supportive infrastructures, work-life balance and the promotion of diverse role models.

CSI's marked an engaging presence throughout the whole duration of the event via the CSI booth, FEM-ABLE point of information, the social experiment and the panel discussion that CSI was part of. The presence of CSI in the National Conference achieved an active engagement with the participants, supported interactivity and public dialogue with the audience in regards to female representation throughout the whole duration of the National Conference. Throughout the National Conference good practices were presented and representatives of the national female political power were identifiable. FEM-ABLE was a vivid best example shown and presented, with excessive emphasis placed on the National Gender Equality Strategy of the country and the raise of awareness.

Place, date, and participants' profile

The National Conference was held on the 13th of July 2024, between 9:30am until 18:30pm at Carob Mill, Limassol, Cyprus. The event was supported and sponsored by CSI and hosted by the National Conference organisers, with the support of the organisation. The event facilitated the successful engagement of 67 key stakeholders, direct project target groups [women, Gender equality bodies, female and male voters, political parties, female and male candidates of local, National or European elections] and beneficiaries. The event welcomed mainly women and men interested in the field.

Description of the event

The National Conference commenced with registrations and a warm welcome to the attendees from the organisers as well as from a Governmental Keynote speaker (Annita Demetriou- President of the Cypriot House of Representatives and President of the Democratic Rally). Attendees to the CSI booth and FEM-ABLE informative point of information were introduced and informed about the project via all means developed (flip books, flyers, presentations) and were encouraged to complete the first half of the Impact Assessment Survey before the panel discussions and the workshops.

The National Conference hosted four different panel discussions, five workshops, five thematic openings and introductions and six keynote speeches. CSI, participated in Panel 4; '*Women Empowerment: Breaking Barriers and Overcoming Challenges*' and facilitated one of the workshops; '*Challenging the Norms: A Social Experiment on Gender Stereotypes*', where informative, insightful and impactful information, directly linked with the National landscape, the European Union and the overall role of women in business and politics and the social norms and stereotypes were explicitly highlighted.



Image 26 – Attendees to the National Conference, 13th July 2024

During both the workshop and the panel, as well as during the whole conference, questions were raised by the audience, delivering lively, rich and engaging discussions with the participants. The whole Conference emphasised the themes of empowerment, inclusion and participation in the business sector and beyond as well as the importance of women representation in national and EU political arenas and in key managerial and decision-making areas.

The project's transformative potential was met with enthusiasm, generating excitement among the participants. By the end of the last panel, participants finalised the Impact Assessment Survey and completed the EU centralised survey Justice, Rights & Values. Lastly, the event ended with a thank you remark from the host organisation and the Conference supporters, transitioning to the networking gathering session of the National Conference.



Image 27 – Speakers at the National Conference, 13th July 2024

Topics discussed

The discussions during the National Conference focused on the empowerment of women in the **business sector** and beyond, in all societal aspects, including the **political arena**, whilst focusing on the **National Gender Equality Strategy of Cyprus** (CSI booth, panel, and social experiment), engaging the live audience with questions and further discussions.

Particularly, speakers -as well as audience-engaged in a thoughtful discussion on **women in leadership positions**; Leadership Insights to Navigate the Business World. Conversations occurred around overcoming challenges and barriers faced in the business sector and the elevation of leadership in today's dynamic business world as female leaders.

Discussions touched upon **work-life balance for women, sharing strategies to thrive in today's evolving work**. The discussion expanded on practical references as well as theoretical information to present an overall broader understanding of the theme of gender and work-life balance.

Discussions then moved on to real life examples, referring to **female founders and investors, presenting how** female founders can be successful with raising money for their new businesses and how they can be successful at their future investments.

Speakers expanded discussions on **women empowerment and how barriers and challenges can be overcome**. Powerful stories of women overcoming obstacles, breaking barriers, and driving change were communicated, whilst practical advice and inspiration to empower women's and men's journey and impact the business world were also shared.

A relevant reference was made on practical **supportive infrastructures, skills developments and training encouragement**, focusing on practical elements that would benefit female empowerment within the business sector.

Through the interactive social experiment, **gender stereotypes** were touched upon, passing on the message on how they influence our overall perceptions for women.

Overall, discussions centred around **women's leadership, entrepreneurship, and empowerment**, offering valuable insights into navigating the challenges of the modern business world. The conversations also highlighted the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, both in business and politics, with reference to statistical information as well as legislations and explored the direct link between workforce participation and political representation.

Also, the panels presented EU perspectives, with direct reference to **best practices from other EU countries and from relevant EU committees**. Lastly, the National Conference presented the overall direct link between women in business and their political involvement.

A.2.7 SWEDEN, RBV

Region Västerbotten organized a series of events in 2024, including two in-person workshops in June and a hybrid event in Umeå in November. The primary objective of these activities was to advance the FEM-ABLE project's goals by promoting Sweden's National Strategy for gender equality and addressing the specific challenges faced in the Västerbotten region. The events were designed to raise awareness, foster dialogue, and generate actionable insights aimed at overcoming barriers to women's political participation.

By engaging a diverse group of stakeholders—such as policymakers, academics, youth leaders, and representatives from civil society—these sessions created a collaborative platform for meaningful discussion. Participants worked together to address persistent challenges, including cultural norms, rural depopulation, and the underrepresentation of women in local governance. Discussions also explored innovative solutions to systemic issues such as gender biases, limited mentorship opportunities, and the difficulties women encounter when balancing political aspirations with personal responsibilities.

The events sought not only to inform participants about the importance of gender equality but also to inspire them to take action. By emphasizing participatory approaches, the workshops and hybrid event encouraged attendees to co-develop strategies and commitments for creating more inclusive political environments across the Västerbotten region and beyond.

“Discussing gender challenges in rural areas in Vasterbotten” Workshop

Scope of the activity

The first workshop aimed to explore the barriers to women's political participation, with a focus on addressing rural-specific challenges in Västerbotten. The workshop also sought to develop actionable strategies to align local governance initiatives with Sweden's National Gender Equality Strategy. Participants were encouraged to share their perspectives and co-create solutions for improving gender representation in political and decision-making roles.

Place, Date, and Participants' Profile

The workshop took place on June 3, 2024, at A Working Lab in Umeå.

Support staff and facilitators:

- Coordinators from Region Västerbotten.
- Academic experts on rural governance and gender equality.

Participants:

The workshop was attended by 14 individuals, including policymakers from rural municipalities, representatives from academia, youth organization leaders, and civil society advocates. This diverse participant base ensured a comprehensive discussion encompassing various perspectives and experiences.

Description of the Event

The event began with an introduction to the FEM-ABLE project, highlighting its goals and alignment with the National Gender Equality Strategy. Facilitators provided an overview of gender disparities in rural areas, focusing on how these affect women's political participation.

Key sessions included:

- **Presentation:** A detailed analysis of rural depopulation trends and their impact on gender representation in local governance.
- **Group Discussions:** Participants collaborated to identify specific barriers in their communities, such as traditional gender roles, limited access to leadership training, and the absence of mentorship opportunities.
- **Case Studies:** Facilitators shared examples of successful initiatives in Västerbotten and other regions, inspiring participants to consider innovative approaches.
- **Action Planning:** Attendees developed initial strategies for implementing gender-sensitive policies in their municipalities.

Topics Discussed

Impact of rural depopulation: Discussions focused on how rural-to-urban migration disproportionately affects women's opportunities to engage in politics.

Youth engagement for Gender Equality: Strategies for integrating gender equality education into youth programs were explored to foster early awareness and participation.

Building local support networks: Participants emphasized the importance of community-based initiatives to support women leaders in rural areas.

“Mentorship as a tool for fostering gender equality” Workshop

Scope of the Activity

The second workshop focused on mentorship as a tool for empowering women in leadership. Participants worked collaboratively to design mentorship frameworks tailored to the unique challenges faced by women in Västerbotten's rural communities.

Place, Date, and Participants' Profile

The workshop was held on June 4, 2024, at A Working Lab in Umeå.

Support staff and facilitators:

- Regional gender equality advocates.
- Experts in leadership development and mentorship programs.

Participants:

The 14 attendees represented a mix of local governance officials, members of civil society organizations, and educators. Their varied backgrounds facilitated rich discussions and diverse perspectives on mentorship.

Description of the Event

The workshop commenced with a presentation on the transformative role of mentorship in fostering women's leadership. Facilitators outlined best practices from existing mentorship programs and discussed their adaptability to Västerbotten's socio-political context.

Interactive activities included:

- **Role-playing exercises:** Participants simulated mentor-mentee scenarios to identify common challenges and solutions.
- **Mentorship model development:** Attendees co-designed frameworks for mentorship programs, focusing on practical implementation in rural settings.
- **Feedback sessions:** Participants shared insights from their experiences, offering constructive feedback to refine the proposed models.

Topics Discussed

- **Overcoming challenges in male-dominated fields:** Participants examined how mentorship can help women navigate systemic barriers and build confidence in leadership roles.
- **Sustainability of leadership pipelines:** Discussions emphasized creating mentorship programs that provide long-term support for aspiring women leaders.
- **Community involvement in mentorship:** The importance of involving local communities to ensure the success and sustainability of mentorship initiatives was highlighted.

“Engaging male allies in gender equality” Event

Scope of the Activity

The hybrid event aimed to provide a platform for stakeholders to collaboratively address systemic barriers to women's political participation. By combining in-person and virtual attendance, the event facilitated inclusive discussions and broadened its reach to participants from diverse geographical and professional backgrounds.

Place, Date, and Participants' Profile

The event was held on November 26-27, 2024, at Clarion Hotel and Universum in Umeå.

Support staff and facilitators:

- Coordinators from Region Västerbotten.
- Representatives from Swedish universities and civil society organizations.

Participants:

The hybrid format attracted 47 participants, including policymakers, academics, youth leaders, and civil society representatives. The audience reflected a mix of rural and urban perspectives, ensuring a wide range of views were represented.

Description of the Event

The hybrid event began with an introduction to the FEM-ABLE project by representatives from Region Västerbotten. Presentations provided a comprehensive overview of Sweden's National Gender Equality Strategy and its application in local contexts.

Sessions included:

- **Discussions:** Experts shared insights on mentorship, digital tools for advocacy, and engaging male allies in gender equality initiatives.
- **Breakout Sessions:** Participants worked in smaller groups to develop strategies for addressing specific challenges, such as rural representation and youth engagement.
- **Q&A Session:** Raising questions and sharing their own experiences and challenges.

Topics Discussed

- **Barriers to political participation:** Cultural norms, gender biases, and resource limitations were highlighted as key obstacles.
- **Role of male allies:** Discussions explored how men can actively support gender equality efforts in political and community settings.
- **Digital advocacy for inclusivity:** Participants examined how technology can bridge gaps in access and foster broader engagement.
- **Youth engagement:** Strategies to integrate gender equality topics into educational and outreach programs were discussed.

The event concluded with a call to action, encouraging participants to implement the strategies developed during the sessions in their respective communities.

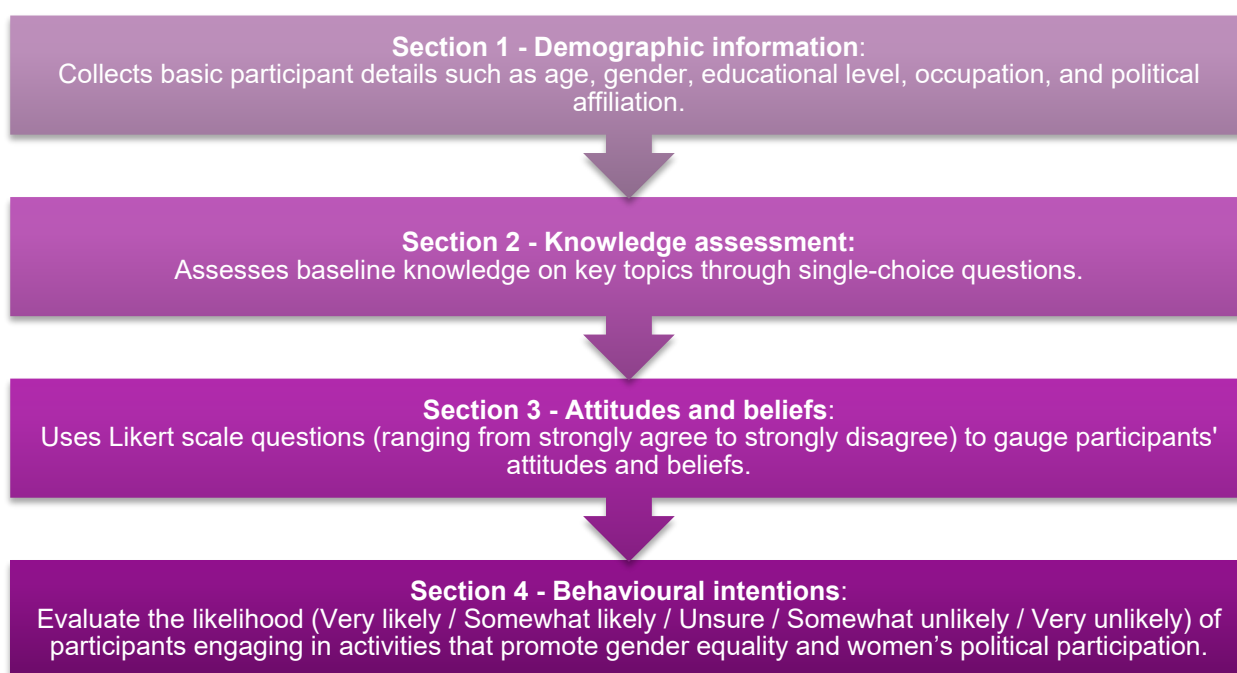
A.3 IMPACT

A.3.1 Methodology

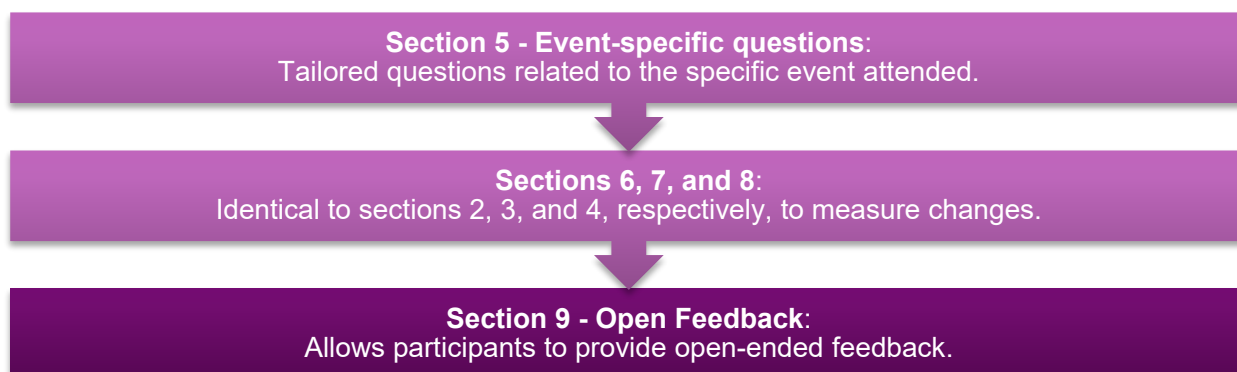
An **Impact Assessment Survey** was developed before implementing activities to evaluate participants' knowledge before and after their engagement in workshops, seminars, and events.

The primary goal of this survey was to measure changes in participants' awareness, understanding, attitudes, and potential intentions to take action based on what they learned related to women's political participation, representation, and gender equality in decision-making.

The questionnaire was organized into 3 main sections to gather data for subsequent analysis:



A post-event survey mirrored the pre-event survey to directly compare responses. However, additional sections were included to assess the immediate impact of the event and any plans for future action:



The survey was developed by CESIE, thoroughly reviewed by other partner organizations, and refined based on their feedback. [See Annex I](#). The survey was subsequently translated into all local languages for broader accessibility.

Additionally, participants were asked to complete the [EC centralized survey "Justice, Rights & Values."](#) However, the responses to this survey were not considered in the analysis as they were not made available to the partnership.

A.3.2 Country-specific Overview

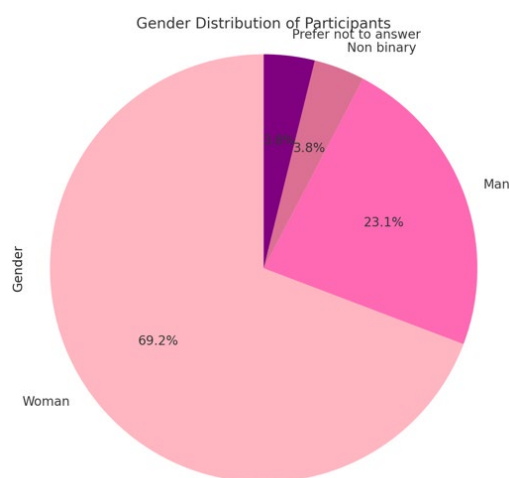
I. Portugal, Lusofona

In total, only **26 participants** completed the Impact Assessment Survey. Paper handouts containing a QR code linking to the survey were distributed, and participants were encouraged to respond both before and after the event. A large portion of attendees did not complete the survey, which presents a notable challenge in accurately assessing the true impact of the events. The low response rate introduces potential bias, as the data may not fully capture the views of the wider participant population. Those who did complete the survey may have been more invested in the subject matter or held stronger opinions, potentially skewing the results. Furthermore, many participants stopped midway through the survey due to its length and the difficulty of the questions.

Respondents' profile summary

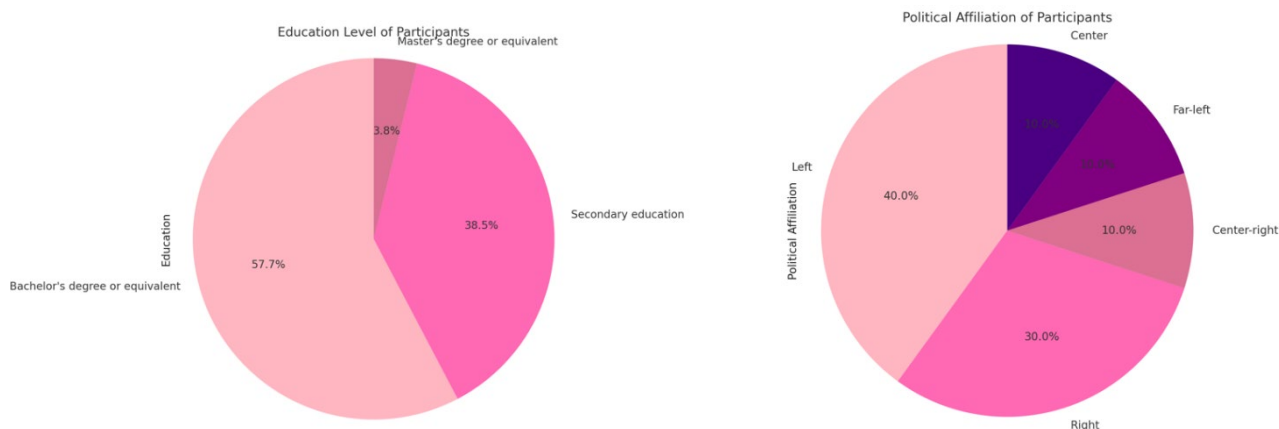
The survey responses reveal that nearly all participants were aged between 18 and 25, except for two individuals in the 26-40 age range. This is largely because the first event was co-organized by final-year communication science students, which naturally attracted a younger demographic. Moreover, given that the event was hosted by Universidade Lusófona, it is expected that the target audience will predominantly fall within this age bracket, as the university's student body largely consists of individuals in this age group. This demographic focus shapes the engagement and perspective of participants, aligning the discussions with the interests and concerns of younger adults.

The gender distribution of the participants highlights a significant female majority, with approximately 70% identifying as women. This reflects the typical audience for gender equality events, where women are often more engaged, likely due to the direct relevance of the issues to their lived experiences. However, the relatively lower participation of men (around 23%) raises important considerations for the broader goals of gender equality.



Achieving gender parity requires the involvement of all genders, and the low male turnout suggests that efforts to engage men in these discussions may need to be strengthened. This might involve creating more targeted outreach to men or framing the discussion in a way that emphasizes the benefits of gender equality for all members of society, not just women. Furthermore, understanding the reasons for this gender imbalance can provide insights into the societal barriers that prevent men from participating in such initiatives, whether due to cultural norms, lack of interest, or other factors.

The education level of the participants reveals a highly educated audience, with the majority having completed at least a bachelor's degree. This reflects the kind of demographic that tends to engage with social and political issues, particularly gender equality. Highly educated individuals may already be familiar with concepts of social justice, making them more likely to participate in events like these. However, this also presents a challenge for ensuring the inclusivity of gender equality discussions. If these conversations are predominantly attended by those with higher education, it may limit the reach of the movement to other groups who are equally affected by gender disparities but might not have the same level of access or familiarity with academic discourse. Expanding the appeal and accessibility of these events to those with lower levels of formal education could be a critical step in making the movement more inclusive and representative of the broader population.

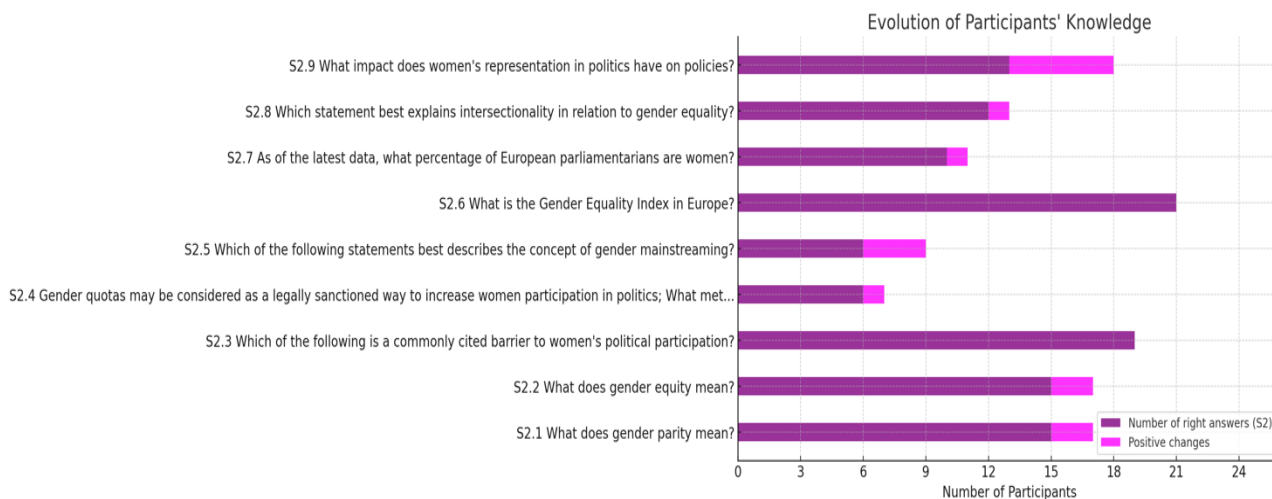


The political affiliation of the participants shows a diverse range of political beliefs, with many identifying as left-leaning. This is consistent with the fact that gender equality movements are often aligned with progressive political ideologies. However, it is noteworthy that a significant portion of participants did not disclose their political affiliation, which could suggest a desire to keep the discussion apolitical or that participants see gender equality as an issue that transcends traditional political divisions. It could also point to a reluctance to identify with a specific political label in the context of these discussions. The diversity in political affiliation is a positive sign that gender equality is being recognized across different segments of the political spectrum, though the lower representation of conservative viewpoints might indicate a missed opportunity to engage more individuals with different ideological backgrounds. Bridging this gap could help create a more inclusive dialogue and encourage broader societal buy-in for gender equality initiatives.

Survey Analysis

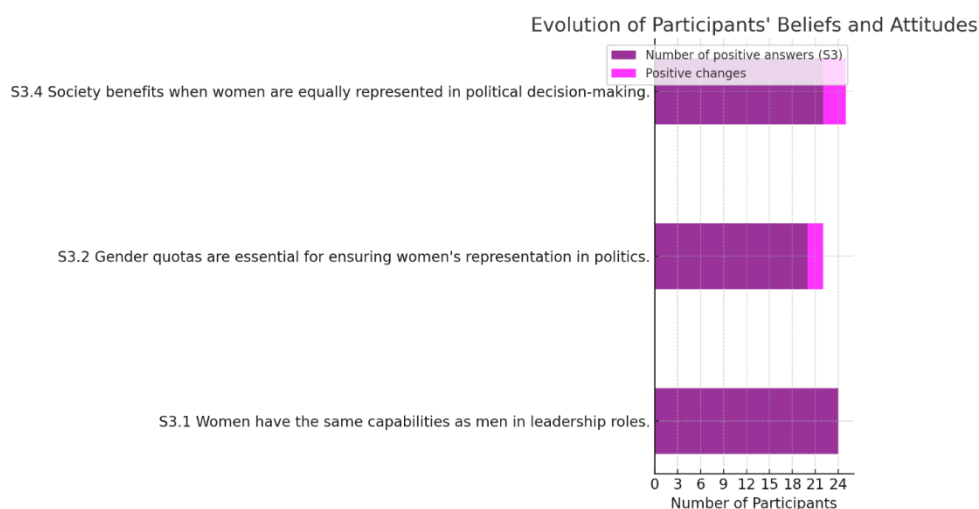
It is important to highlight that while Universidade Lusófona is a higher education institution that offers formal education, the activities organized in this context aimed to adopt a more practical, hands-on approach. The goal was to facilitate learning in a way that felt natural, rather than overtly instructional. Despite this informal structure, the themes addressed in the survey were carefully

considered and integrated into the discussions. This approach allowed participants to engage with the topics organically while still ensuring that the objectives of the survey were met. As a result, we were able to observe positive developments in participants' knowledge, following the event and workshops. These outcomes, which align with the broader goals of the FEM-ABLE project, are encouraging and deserve recognition.



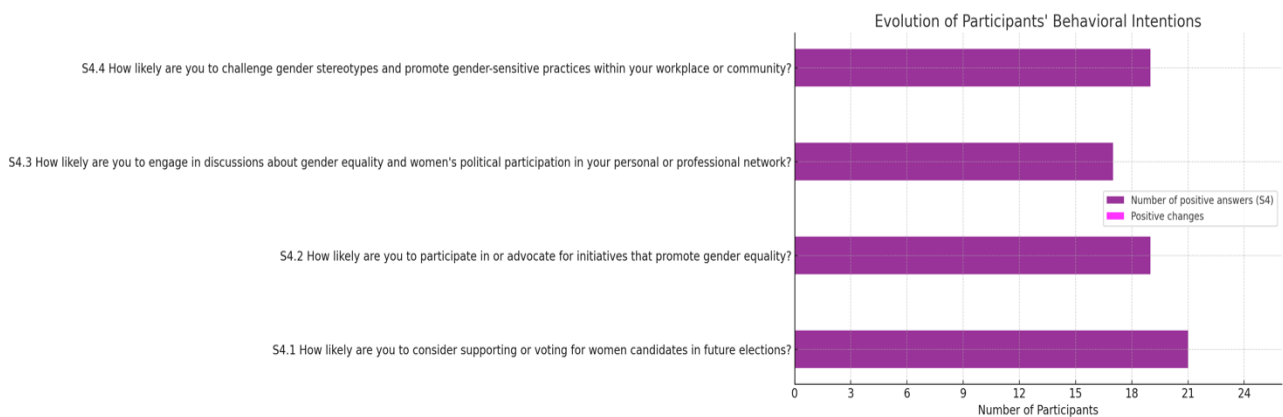
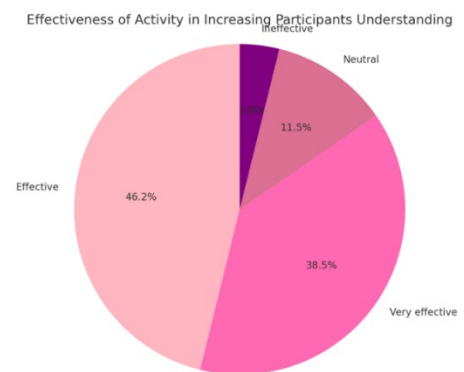
The evolution of participants' knowledge

As shown in the chart, highlights a clear improvement in understanding key gender equality concepts following the event. The event was particularly effective in increasing awareness of more technical or complex ideas such as "gender mainstreaming" and the percentage of female representation in European parliaments. This improvement suggests that the educational component of the event was highly successful in filling knowledge gaps among participants. The high number of correct answers after the event also indicates that participants left with a better understanding of the structural and societal barriers to women's political participation. However, it is also worth considering that while knowledge was increased, this does not necessarily translate into changes in behavior or beliefs. Future events might build on this knowledge foundation by providing more actionable strategies for applying this new understanding in practical contexts, such as in participants' workplaces or communities.



Evolution of Participants Belief's and Attitudes

The lack of significant positive changes in participants' beliefs and attitudes following the event raises interesting questions. One possible explanation is that participants already held progressive views on gender equality before the event, leaving little room for further shifts in attitudes. This is supported by the fact that the audience was primarily composed of individuals with higher education and left-leaning political views, who may already be well-versed in gender equality issues. On the other hand, it could also suggest that while the event was successful in educating participants, it may not have been as effective in challenging or deepening pre-existing beliefs. Attitudinal change is often harder to achieve than knowledge acquisition, particularly if the event was more focused on sharing information than on engaging participants in self-reflection or discussions that might challenge their preconceptions. Future events might consider incorporating more interactive or dialogue-based sessions to facilitate deeper engagement with participants' beliefs and encourage more significant shifts in attitudes.

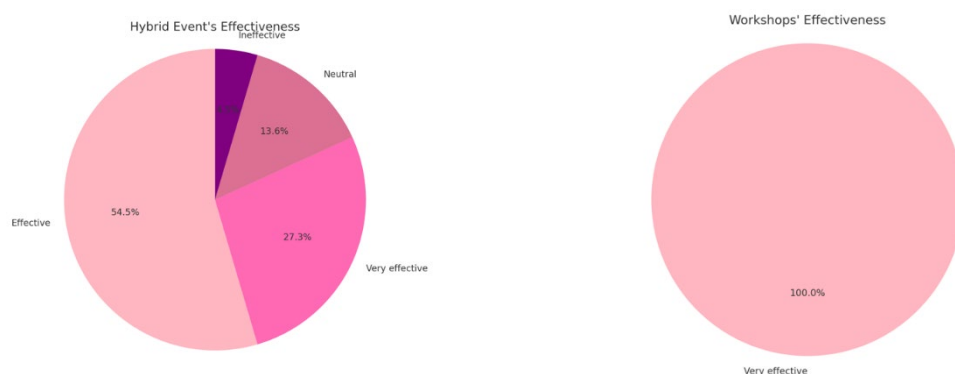


Evolution of participant's behavioural Intentions

The data on participants' behavioral intentions shows little to no change in their willingness to support gender equality initiatives or challenge gender stereotypes. This could be interpreted in two ways. First, it may indicate that participants were already highly motivated and committed to gender equality before attending the event, as evidenced by their strong positive responses in the pre-event survey. In this case, the event served more as a reinforcement of their existing intentions rather than a catalyst for change. Alternatively, the lack of change could suggest that while participants gained knowledge from the event, they did not leave with a stronger sense of agency or a clearer understanding of how to translate this knowledge into concrete actions. This highlights a potential area for improvement in future events, where the focus could be on empowering participants with practical tools and strategies to take action in their personal and professional lives. Encouraging participants to set specific goals or commitments by the end of the event might help translate their intentions into real-world impact. One other thing that must be taken into account is that the co-organizing students of the first event filled in the questionnaire immediately before the event, rather than on February when they started organizing it.

Effectiveness of all activities in increasing participant's understanding

The overall effectiveness of the event in increasing participants' understanding of the topics was rated very positively, with most participants considering the event either “Effective” or “Very effective.” This reflects the success of the event’s educational objectives, particularly in enhancing participants' understanding of gender equality issues. However, the presence of a small number of neutral or negative responses suggests that the event may not have fully met the needs of all participants. This could be due to a variety of factors, such as the content being too general for participants with more advanced knowledge or too complex for those less familiar with the topics. This underscores the importance of designing future events that can cater to a range of knowledge levels, ensuring that both beginners and those more experienced with gender equality issues can benefit. Tailoring sessions to address the specific needs of different participant groups might help improve overall satisfaction and ensure that all participants leave with a deeper understanding of the issues.



The responses to the question **"S5.3 What are the key takeaways from the events you attended?"** reflect a deep engagement with the topics discussed, particularly around feminism, women’s roles in society, and the ongoing fight for gender equality.

"That feminism is very important and a fight that deserves to be on the media agenda."

"The main conclusions to be drawn from this event are that women are fundamental in all areas of society. In politics, women have great contributions to make because they approach certain topics more easily than men. Also in research, women delve better in certain areas."

"That a woman being in politics with high positions is not that impossible."

"That women should be where the decisions are being made."

"I believe I have come to the conclusion that women's struggle is noble and very important. It is also very difficult, so all help is needed."

"There is still a lot of ignorance about feminist battles and the goals they aim to achieve."

"The fight continues."

"The importance of having a more diverse government to approve laws and projects."

Participants highlighted the importance of feminism being represented in the media, the significant contributions women make in politics and research, and the realization that women’s involvement in

high political positions is not only possible but essential. The feedback also underscores the educational value of the events, with participants noting the thoroughness of the discussions and the need for women to be present where decisions are made. Additionally, several responses pointed to the need for broader awareness of feminist struggles and the value of diverse representation in government.

These insights suggest that the events were highly effective in achieving their objectives of raising awareness and fostering a deeper understanding of gender equality issues. The fact that both workshops received a 100% "Very Effective" rating further reinforces the success of the initiatives in engaging participants and leaving a lasting impact on their views. This level of effectiveness indicates that the workshops not only provided valuable knowledge but also inspired participants to reflect on their own roles in promoting gender equality, solidifying the importance of such events in driving social change.

II. Lithuania, SIF

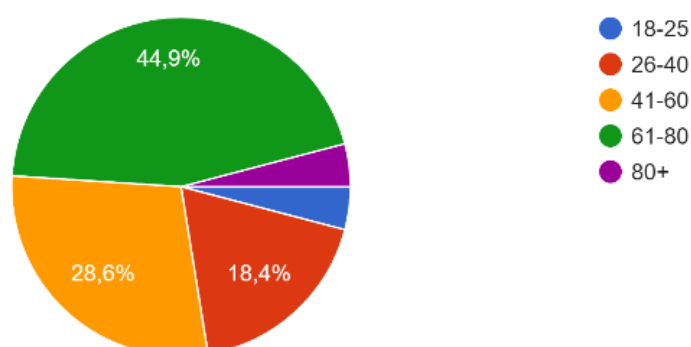
Questionnaire's results overview

In total, **49 responses** have been received to the Impact Assessment Survey. Paper handouts containing a QR code linking to the survey were distributed and PPTs shown during events, encouraging the participants to respond to the questionnaire, as well the links to the questionnaire were sent after the events.

Respondents' profile

The survey responses reveal that nearly half of all participants (45%) were aged between 61-80, 30% were aged between 41-60, 18% were aged between 26-40. This shows that the participants were of various ages, but more of them were older.

Most of participants were women (83,7%) and 14% were men. This might be explained by the format of the events as the gender of participants was influenced and defined initially in in three of the four events: two events were for women politicians; one event was organised for representatives of women NGOs. Only in the last event participated women and men (adult educators, entrepreneurs, other stakeholders).



The majority participants have university degree. The majority of the participantst are not the members of the political party, except the participantst of the workshops for politicians.

Survey analysis

Knowledge assessment

Overall, a significant improvement in knowledge in answering all questions was noted, when comparing the answers to pre and post-evaluation questions.

Responses changed to more positive comparing the pre-evaluation and the post-event questions. The majority of respondents identified the correct answers to all the questions in post evaluation and the number of correct answers increased in all the questions. These are the concepts of gender equity, 'gender parity' in politics, 'intersectionality' about gender equality, the concept of 'gender mainstreaming', understanding of barriers to women's political participation, understanding of gender quotas, the percentage of women's representation in the EU Parliament, the impact of women's representation. This demonstrates the positive impact of the events.

Additionally, it is important to mention that quite high percentage (from about 30% to 60% depending on the question) of correct answers were provided in the pre-evaluation questions, which indicates that the audience already had some understanding of terminologies related to gender equality and women in politics, which is a positive indicator.

Overall, we might state that, the events had positive impact, increasing participants' knowledge and understanding of key concepts related to gender equality and women's representation.

Attitudes & beliefs

Overall, it was observed that the responses in attitudes and beliefs are more positive in post evaluation questions. More answers are "strongly agree" to the statement that "Women have the same capabilities as men in leadership roles". As well - more participants strongly agreed in the post evaluation that "Gender quotas are essential for ensuring women's representation in politics". We might see the shift in other answers as well - if before event evaluation there were some participants that provided the answer "strongly disagree" to this statement (about the necessity of quotas), we might see that in the post evaluation there was not such answers; as well some who were "not sure" changed their attitude to more positive. there was as well positive change in the attitudes regarding the society benefits when women are equally represented in political decision-making.

In conclusion, the events had the positive influence on participants' attitudes and beliefs related to gender equality, understanding and commitment to achieving equal representation of women in decision-making roles.

Behavioural intentions

Regarding behavioural intentions, the percentage of positive responses about voting for women candidates in future elections increased in the post-event questions although it was high in the pre-evaluation as well. High positive responses were also observed in questions about participation in initiatives promoting gender equality both before and after the events. Evaluating the statements related to engagement in public discourses and challenging gender stereotypes, we might interpret that participant evaluated their possibilities more realistically.

In summary, the events effectively influenced participants' behavioural intentions, strengthening their commitment to supporting women candidates, encouraging a more realistic approach to engaging in

gender equality initiatives, and challenging stereotypes. This demonstrates the events' positive impact on knowledge, attitudes, and actions.

Feedback of the participants

Participants evaluated the **effectiveness** of the events in increasing their understanding of the topics of each event really high (90% answered strongly agree or agree).

Participants appreciated the clear, structured presentation of information and valued the open discussions, which fostered informal and inclusive communication. They highlighted gaining new insights into gender equality issues, particularly strategies for promoting women's participation in politics. Overall, they found the event highly beneficial, with many expressing satisfactions with the clarity, coherence, and engaging format.

The benefits mentioned - participants highlighted an expanded range of perspectives, a deeper understanding of gender equality issues, and an increased awareness of gender stereotypes in politics and society. Many felt more confident in their decisions and appreciated the opportunity to gain new insights, broaden their horizons, and update their knowledge on these topics.

Summarising the results, we might state that the events led to notable improvements in participants' knowledge, attitudes, and intentions concerning gender equality and women's representation. Post-event evaluations revealed increased understanding of essential concepts, positive shifts in attitudes, and strengthened behavioural intentions toward supporting women in leadership roles. The outcomes underscore the events' role in fostering awareness, engagement, and commitment to gender equality.

III. Greece, WDB

The feedback received through the impact assessment surveys revealed valuable insights for Women Do Business (WDB). Below is a summary of the key outcomes and impacts, along with significant changes or benefits observed:

Survey analysis;

Increased awareness and knowledge:

Participants reported a substantial increase in their understanding of gender equality issues in politics. The majority of the survey respondents indicated that the workshops and events had significantly enhanced their awareness of the barriers women face in political representation.

Strengthened commitment to Gender Equality:

Survey responses indicated a notable shift in attitudes among local politicians and stakeholders. Approximately 2/3 of the participants expressed a commitment to integrating gender perspectives into their political agendas, demonstrating a positive change in mindset.

Enhanced community engagement:

The hybrid events successfully engaged the wider community, with participants noting an increase in discussions about gender equality beyond the political realm. This resulted in greater community support for initiatives aimed at promoting women's political participation.

Networking opportunities:

Feedback highlighted the importance of networking opportunities created through these events. Participants valued the connections made with peers and stakeholders, which have the potential to foster future collaborations and initiatives.

Identifying areas for improvement:

While the impact was largely positive, participants provided constructive feedback on areas for improvement, such as:

- More targeted outreach to underrepresented groups within the community.
- Additional follow-up sessions to maintain engagement and momentum.

IV. Italy, CESIE

Questionnaire 's results overview

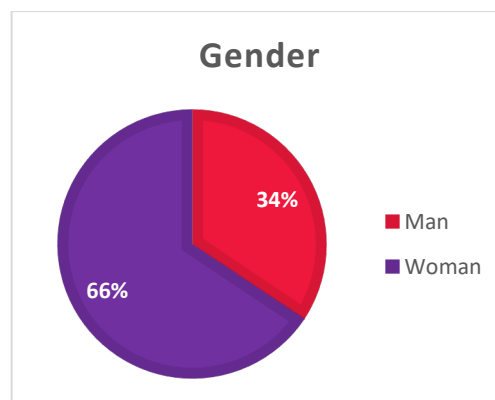
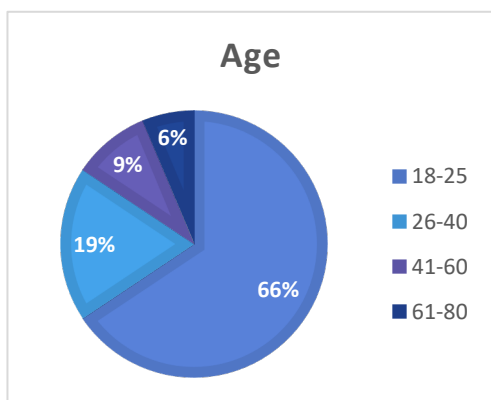
In Italy, **32 responses** were collected, despite over 60 participants being involved in the activities. Several factors contributed to incomplete responses, including difficulties using the online format, some participants leaving the event early and not submitting their initial responses, and the length of the survey discouraging completion.

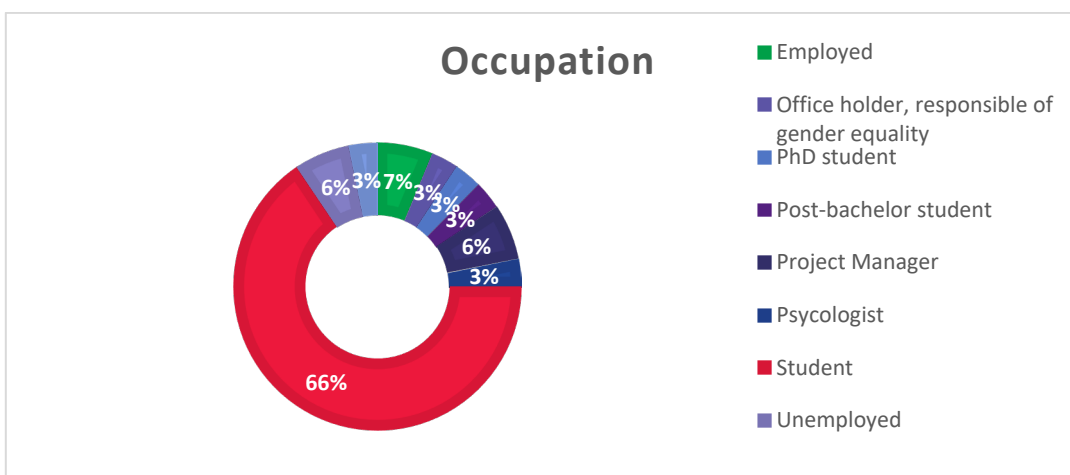
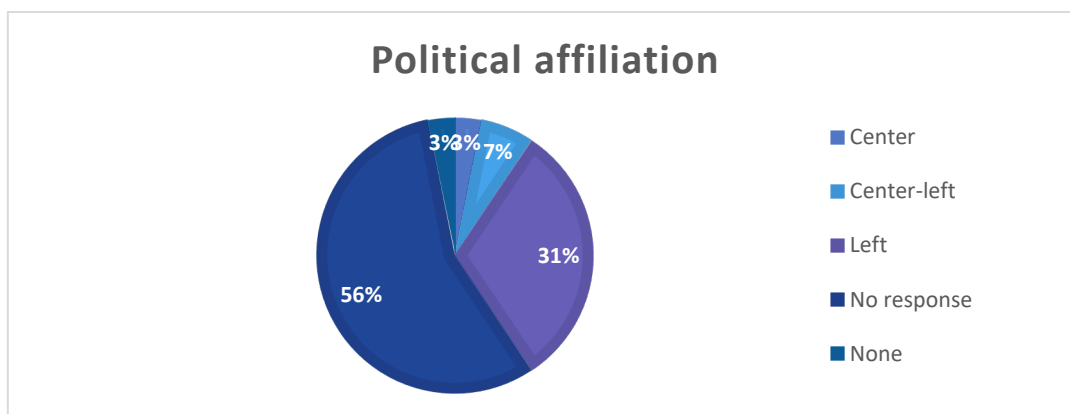
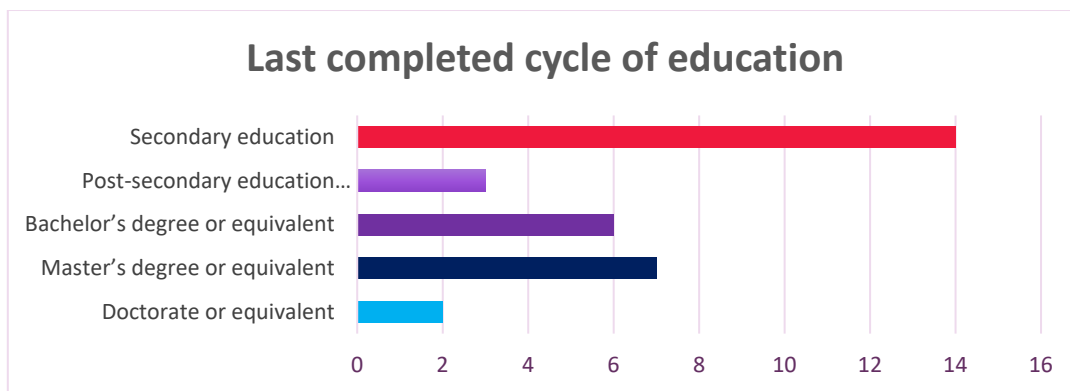
These challenges offer valuable lessons for future actions such as:

- *always provide a paper-based option for those who may struggle with digital formats;*
- *split the survey into two parts (pre- and post-event) to ensure partial responses are not lost;*
- *use shorter, more concise questions to maintain respondents' motivation and engagement throughout the survey.*

Profile of the respondents

As regards to the profile of participants in terms of age, gender, studies and profession; The majority of participants were young adults aged 18-25 (65.6%), with a predominantly women representation (65.6%). In terms of education, the largest group completed secondary education (44%), with a significant number also holding bachelor's degrees and master's degrees or higher (41%). The participant pool was largely made up of students (66%), since the majority of the activities were conducted within the University of Palermo.





Survey analysis;

The analysis of the results from the Impact Assessment survey is subdivided into 3 key areas: participants' knowledge, attitudes, and intentions. These areas were measured both before and after their engagement in activities, thus providing a comprehensive overview of the impact of the interventions.

Knowledge domain

The survey responses on gender equality and equity in politics show a mixed understanding of these concepts. For example, in questions like S2.1 (meaning of "gender equality" in politics) and S2.2 (meaning of "gender equity" in politics), many respondents indicated accurate knowledge of these terms, associating them with equal opportunities and fair treatment based on needs. However, some

answers highlighted confusion between equality and equity, showing a need for further clarification on these similar but different concepts.

Regarding knowledge about practical measures, such as **gender quotas** (S2.4) and **gender mainstreaming** (S2.5), the majority recognised their importance in promoting women's participation in politics. Responses to questions like **S2.7**, about the percentage of women in European parliaments, and **S2.6** (the Gender Equality Index), revealed a lack of familiarity with concrete statistics and indicators, signaling a gap in detailed awareness of gender policy tools.

Similarly, **intersections of identity** and their impact on gender equality (S2.8) are recognised, with many understanding the concept of intersectionality. However, there are still knowledge gaps, particularly with respondents who selected "Don't know" or offered unclear definitions, indicating an incomplete understanding of the interplay between ethnicity, class, gender, ability, etc.

Attitudes domain

Most participants agreed that women possess the same leadership capabilities as men (S3.1) and that **gender quotas** are essential for ensuring women's representation (S3.2). Respondents strongly supported the idea that **equal representation of women in political decision-making benefits society** (S3.4).

However, attitudes are not uniform across all questions. For instance, **S3.2** (the belief that women are as capable as men in decision-making roles) still saw disagreement from a minority, revealing that some stereotypes persist. And almost 15% of respondents disagreed on the positive effects of gender quotas.

A consistent pattern across attitude questions shows strong opposition to traditional gender roles, especially the view that men are inherently better suited for leadership (as indicated by strong disagreement with S3.3). Overall, the data suggests a positive trend in attitudes toward gender equality-

Intentions to act domain

Most respondents indicated that they are **likely to vote for women candidates** in future elections (S4.1) and would **actively support gender equality initiatives** (S4.2). Similarly, there is strong likelihood among respondents to **engage in conversations** on gender equality (S4.3) and challenge stereotypes within their personal and professional circles (S4.4).

This reflects a willingness not only to support gender equality in principle but also to take concrete actions that promote women's political participation both in professional and personal life.

Self-assessment and key messages from participants

A significant number of respondents rated the events highly (72% with a 5/5 and 25% with a 4/5), indicating that they felt more knowledgeable after attending. The workshops and seminars seemed to foster an environment conducive to learning.

The key concepts and terms highlighted during the events revolved around **gender equality** and the **challenges women face in politics**. Participants discussed the importance of creating **informative and empowering spaces** that foster **education, networking, and empowerment** for women.

A recurring theme was the recognition that, while progress has been made, **significant gender disparities** still exist, particularly in political participation. The **gender gap** and barriers to women's political involvement remain crucial issues, and the historical context shows that these struggles have persisted for decades. Despite this, women have continuously organized and **reclaimed their public roles**.

Gender quotas were frequently cited as an important strategy for increasing women's political representation. However, it was noted that these quotas are only part of a larger effort to address **systemic inequalities**. **Feminism** was discussed as a driving force in the pursuit of both **gender equality and equity**, and participants emphasized the need to challenge **gender stereotypes and social norms**.

The events also stressed the importance of **inclusivity** in political representation and policy-making, with a call for **diverse perspectives** to be included in the conversation on gender equality. **Equity**—the fair treatment of all genders based on their specific needs—was identified as a critical principle in these discussions.

Open-ended responses

The analysis of responses related to what participants appreciated about the events, suggestions for improvement, and additional comments highlights several key aspects of their experience.



Many participants appreciated the **participatory methodology** and the **authenticity of the discussions**. The way in which the speakers encouraged active involvement from the audience was highly valued.

The **high-quality discussions** between participants and the trainers were praised, with special mention of the **clarity of the tutor** and the preparation of the speakers.

The **diversity** of participants was seen as a strength, fostering a richer exchange of perspectives.

The **debate** was one of the most appreciated elements, especially for its ability to engage and stimulate reflection.

Participants appreciated the opportunity to interact with people who shared their **direct experiences**, such as activists or researchers, adding depth and authenticity to the topics discussed.

One of the most frequent areas for improvement was the **management of time**. Many participants suggested the need for **more time for debate**, which was considered a central part of the event.

Some participants suggested increasing the **frequency of meetings**, with the addition of **open spaces** for further discussion, especially in university settings.

There was feedback regarding the need to **involve more young people** and to **increase male participation**.

Some participants expressed a desire to see more women's perspectives, including those with differing opinions, and to include **more diverse viewpoints** in the debates.

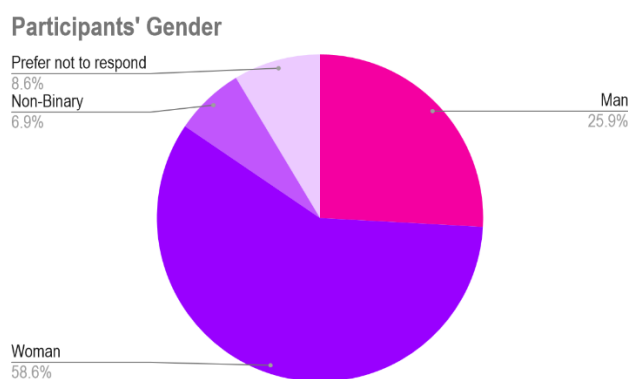
V. Spain, La Xixa

Questionnaire's results overview

In total, **59 participants** of our Spanish National Strategy implementation activities responded to the questionnaire. For the workshop and the first event, questionnaires were only reachable online through QR-Code posters. For the last event, which took place in public space, constating the difficulties we were confronted previously regarding questionnaires filling by participants, we decided to print questionnaires to offer both online and paper options to participants. Even so, 7 paper questionnaires still needed to be finished, and participants gave them back to us without answering the majority of the questions. Also, as we dedicated time during each event and workshop before and after the activity, we can surely say that a lot of participants didn't finish their online questionnaires. Some of them commented that the format wasn't adapted to them, nor to some participatory activities.

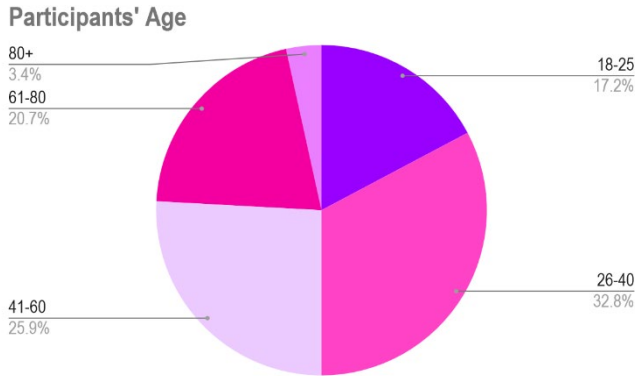
Respondents' profile summary

The **wide majority of respondents were women**, with a balanced repartition between generations, and with a majority of education level superior to secondary education. Almost 30% of the respondents have completed post-secondary education, 30% a Bachelor's Degree and 30% a Master's Degree. This repartition is quite representative of the participants we recruited for the activities of La Xixa.

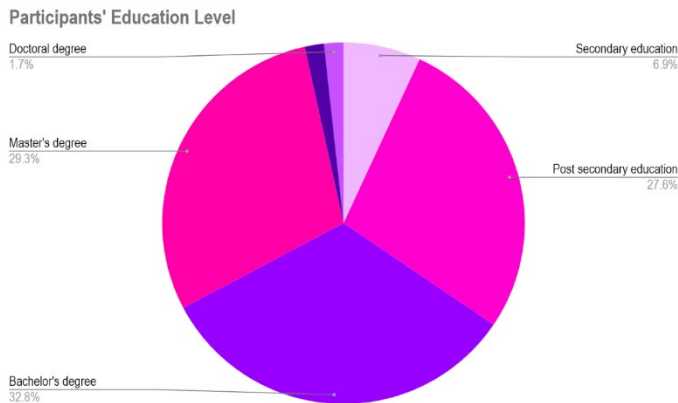


La Xixa didn't implement women-only activities but in each event - particularly the workshop -, the number of participants identifying as male was a minority.

La Xixa advocates in favour of intergenerational activities, particularly concerning implementing the National Strategy objectives for Spain, a country that has a large tradition of feminism reaching beyond generations. Thanks to the experience gained in implementing activities fostering social transformation, La Xixa identified that intergenerational contexts proved to be nourishing, and constructive peer-learning environments.



Concerning political orientations, most participants didn't answer the question, but those who did, indicated a left orientation from centre-left to radical left wing. The rather balanced education level also corresponds to the audience and participants we were working with during the implementation activities, considering that a group was composed only of Master students.



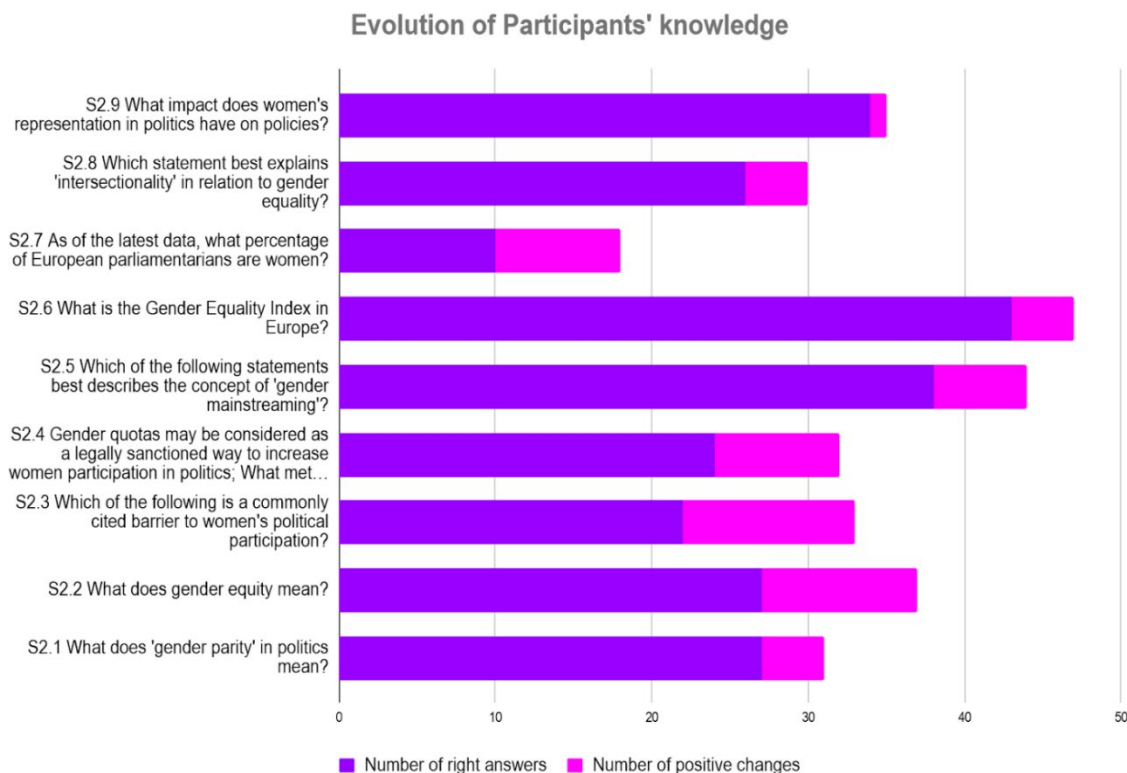
Survey analysis

As an introduction, it is important to mention that La Xixa as a non-formal and informal education expert influence more on behaviours, beliefs, attitudes, and stereotypes, than on formal knowledge. The social and political changes in individuals are generally evolutions that can be observed over a larger period, and the administration of these questionnaires enabled to highlight this reality. While taking this point into account, we were nevertheless able to observe positive changes after the events and workshop, which deserve to be celebrated.

This survey reports the changes in knowledge, beliefs, and behavioural intentions we could detect thanks to the questionnaire in the two events and one workshop organized by La Xixa to implement the Spanish National Strategy and reach the FEM-ABLE objectives.

“I believe that the play, rather than disseminating knowledge about gender equality policies, aimed to give visibility to and encourage change in the attitudes of the participants, an objective that it achieved.”

A participant of the first event

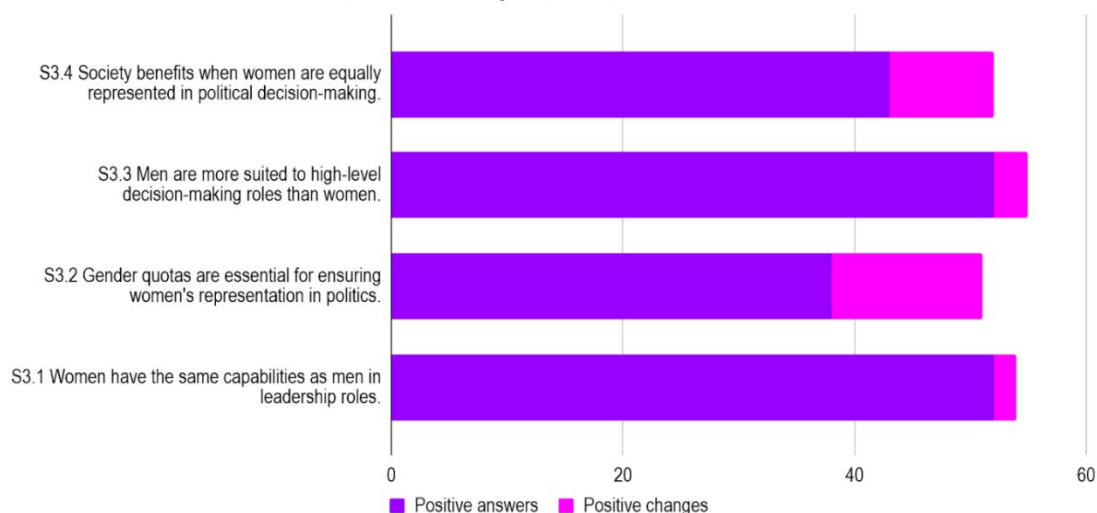


The first part of the questionnaire evaluated participants' basic knowledge of women's political participation and representation. We can see a significant impact of the event or workshop on participants, especially regarding two questions: The meaning of gender equity (S2.2), and the commonly cited barrier to women's political participation (S2.5), which is the question that saw the major positive changes in participants' answers.

The correct answer to this question was "Gender stereotypes and societal norms", topics constantly addressed in activities. The question that received the least right answers was the percentage of female European parliamentarians (S2.7), which can be interpreted maybe as data that seems less accessible to participants.

Finally, we wanted to highlight the high number of "I don't know" responses (35 of 78 total "I don't know" answers) that after the event changed to another answer, indicating a self-legitimation on these topics. In general, the "I don't know" answer can indicate that some of the questions made participants feel unsure. However, this basic knowledge assessment gives an interpretation of the impact that events can have on participants and offers a picture of shared bases to speak about women's political participation.

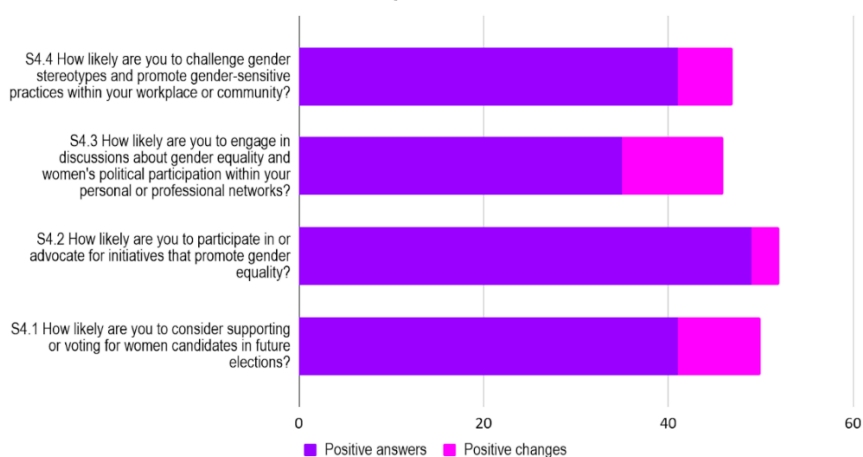
Evolution in Participants' Beliefs and Attitudes



This second part of the questionnaire interrogated the beliefs and attitudes of participants with four assumptions to which participants were invited to react on a 5-step scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. It is important to note that the S3.3 was analysed using the answers “strongly disagree” and “disagree”, while we reported the “strongly agree” and “agree” answers for all other sentences.

The results of this section are very encouraging as we can see a wide range of positive answers. The answers post-event highlight more positive evolutions than in the first part, especially regarding the second sentence “Gender quotas are essential for ensuring women's representation in politics.”, where 13 participants reported a greater adherence than before the event. The second sentence receiving the highest positive changes is the fourth “Society benefits when women are equally represented in political decision-making.” If we want to further analyse these results, we could bind these two phrases, one assuming and recognizing the positive effect of women presence in politics, and the other in favour of quotas in politics, both sentences going in the direction to a more egalitarian society and political arena, not only by more female political representation but also meaningfully appreciating the necessity of it.

Evolution in Participants' behavioral Intentions



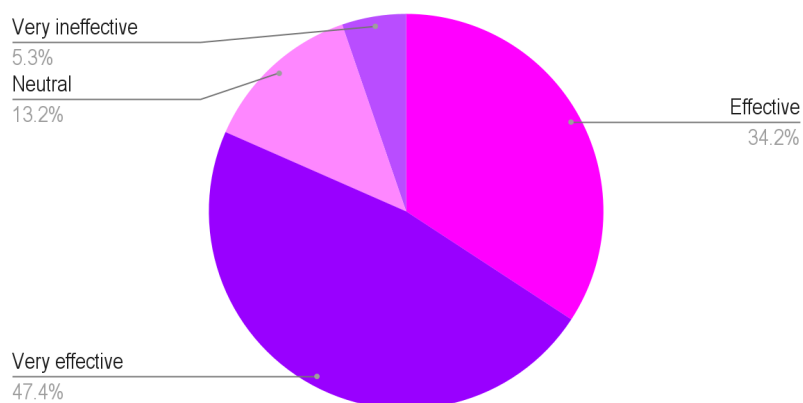
The last part of the questionnaire investigated the behavioural intentions of participants, measuring their engagement with FEM-ABLE values and ability to feel actor/actress of change in women's political participation and representation. As for the previous part, the majority of participants declared intentions to act at their level, within their community, or in daily and professional life. The chart above presents the answers considered as "positive" - "Very likely" and "Likely" - and the changes that presented a higher engagement on the 5-steps scale from "Very likely" to "Very unlikely". This section of the questionnaire is highly interesting, as it shows at the same time the answers of participants and the potential actions that they could take to advocate for a better political future, **empowering them as active citizens whose voices count**.

The results of this section can be analysed with diverse approaches but we can start by speaking about the highest positive changes rate, corresponding to the S4.3 question. Even if it is not the question with the major number of positive responses, the changes observed emphasise the impact that Forum Theatre events can have by directly empowering participants to speak and share their opinion and feelings, which is the fundament of what makes our society a political space and a person a citizen. The capacity to express an opinion respectfully and openly is the first step for political change and active and renewed citizenship.

Curiously, the question that received the highest number of positive answers is the same that received fewer positive changes, maybe because the large majority participants were already motivated to advocate for initiatives promoting gender equality (S4.2).

Lastly, we would like to stress the positive changes regarding the consideration to vote for women in the next elections, and the high scores of this question. This question summarises the core of the FEM-ABLE project: Having a more diverse and larger female political representation and participation.

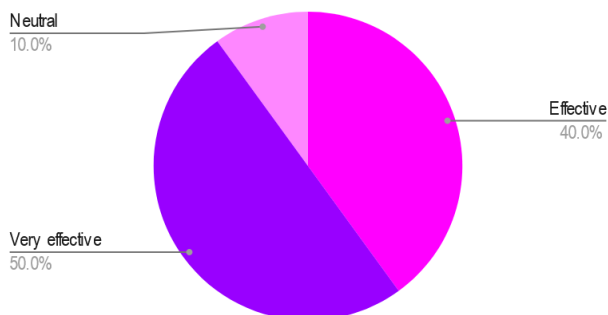
Effectiveness of the activity in increasing participants' understanding of the topics



81% of the respondents identified the workshop and events as effective or very effective for their understanding of the topics cited, the answer "Very effective" reaching almost half of the responding participants. Seeing the details for each activity implemented we can conclude that the first and the second events were the most effective for participants. The workshop, even if it offered a real empowerment process, did not dedicate sufficient time to discuss deeply enough the specific

questions addressed by the knowledge assessment and created some misunderstandings with participants.

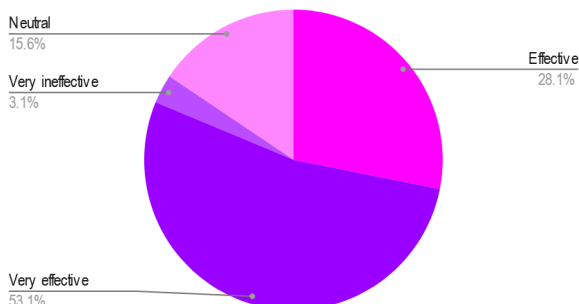
First event's effectiveness



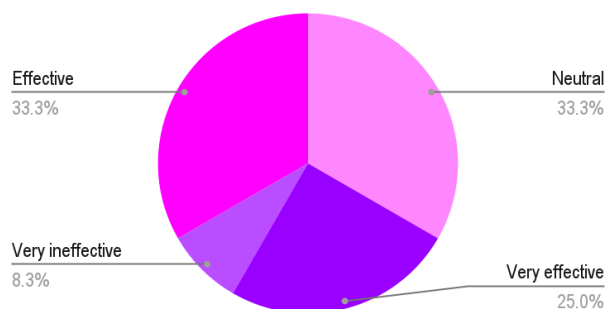
"[I am taking with me] a reflection especially about the spaces where we are involved in one way or another, about the union of the people which is the strength against what oppresses us in society."

"[I am taking with me the following point:] The relevance and urgency for us to participate in the political space beyond the immediate work, but also to encourage structural changes."

Second event's effectiveness



Workshop's effectiveness



"I feel that this kind of event allows us to open a dialogue in a public space on sensitive issues, and this doesn't happen that often. [...] I really liked the fact that this event is accessible to everyone, including people who usually don't go to theatres, for example."

VI. Cyprus, CSI

Questionnaire's results overview

In Cyprus, both the Greek and English versions of the survey were distributed to participants, yielding a total of **18 responses**. Based on the feedback received and the number of responses, the effectiveness of the impact assessment survey could have been improved by implementing several key enhancements. The survey could have featured simplified questions and fewer numerical queries.

Additionally, it might have been beneficial to split it into two distinct surveys (pre-event and post-event). These changes could have encouraged participation, reduced fatigue and ensured that participants remained engaged. Simplifying the language used in the survey, could have further enhanced understanding, which would also be reflected in the translated Greek version. Furthermore,

not specifying a reasonable time frame for completion negatively impacted respondents' commitment, leading to feelings of rush and frustration.

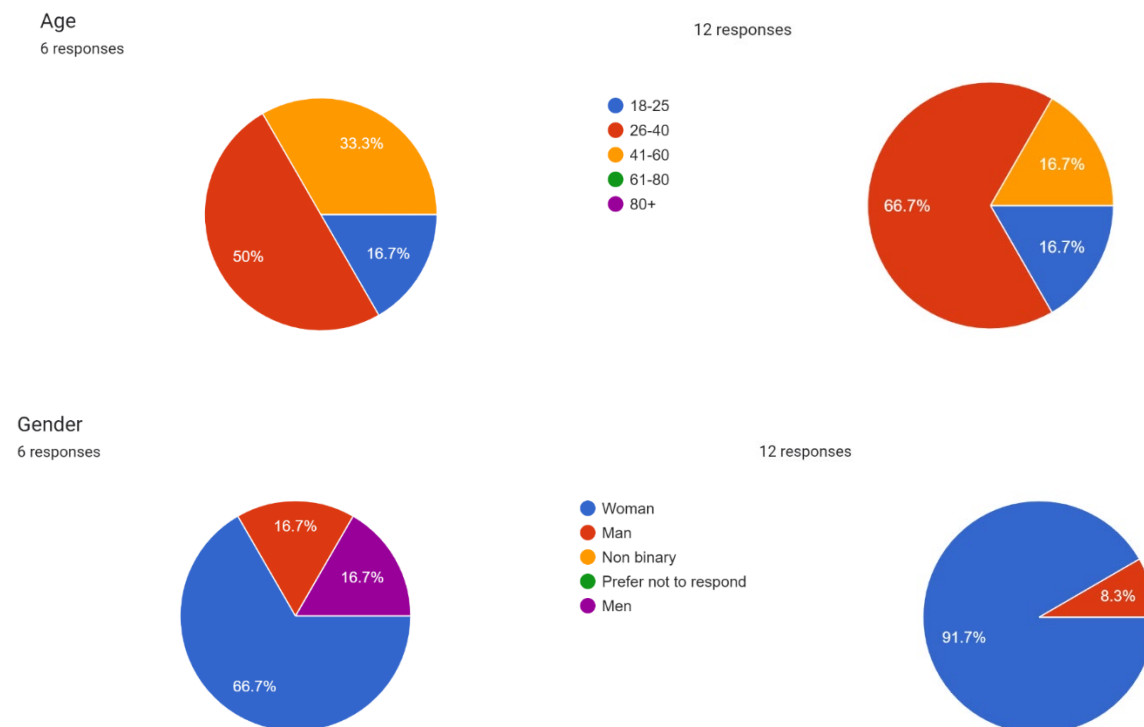
Lastly, the titles of events in the surveys ('workshops & seminars' and 'hybrid events') caused further confusions to the participants, leading to inaccurate data on attendee numbers and percentages for the specific question about the type of event they attended. Overall, these adjustments would foster higher response rates and provide more accurate reflections of participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the two events executed. As a result, these factors led to a low number of responses, with many participants only completing the first half of the survey and several not returning to finalise the surveys after the events concluded.

From these insights, we understand that **simplifying the survey and its questions, clarifying event types, reducing its length and providing a clear time frame for completion** are crucial for future events. By **breaking the survey into two distinct surveys**; pre-event and post-event and using **simplified language**, we can enhance participant engagement and increase the number of completed responses. These adjustments will advance in gathering more accurate data and better reflect participants' experiences.

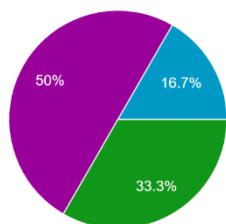
Survey analysis

The results presented consisted of a compilation of all answers collected from both the Greek and English surveys. The analysis of the results is split into three sections: **1. Biographical information, 2. Comparison of questions shared pre- and post the events, 3. Key event insights:**

Biographical information:

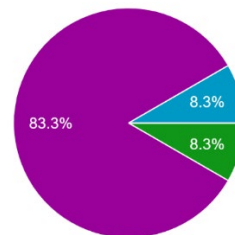


Last completed education cycle
6 responses



- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Post secondary education (technical degrees and/or vocational education and training)
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent
- Master's degree or equivalent
- Doctoral degree or equivalent

12 responses



Employment profiles

Grants development officer	Counsellor	Professor/Project Coordinator
Lecturer	Podcaster-former parliamentary associate	Intern
Data analyst	Project Manager	Administrative Director
Teacher	Lawyer	Procurement specialist
Actress and ex-EU candidate	Private employee	Regional manager
Principal KPMG	Lawyer	Clinical Dietitian

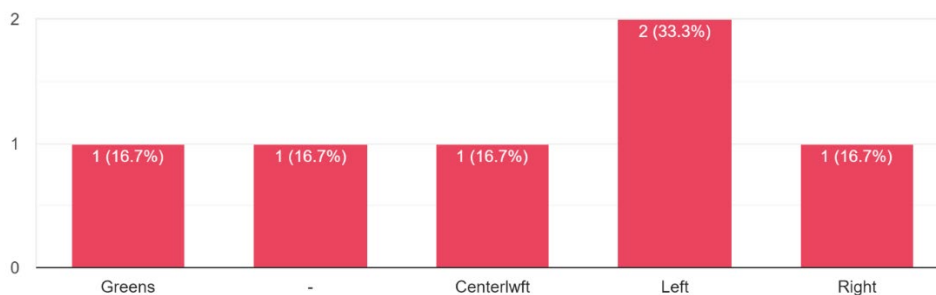
Political affiliation and/or endorsement and/or preference in the political spectrum (answer optional)

2 responses

Left wing. Member of Socialist Party.

I don't have actually

6 responses



Overall, from the total responses collected across both surveys, most respondents were **women** aged between **26-40 years**, with an education level up to a **master's degree or equivalent**. In terms of political affiliations, the majority of those who answered this question identified as **center-left or left-leaning**, representing **diverse employment fields and levels**.

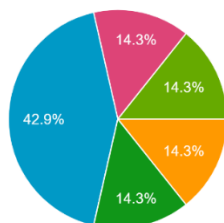
Comparison of questions shared pre and post the events

Knowledge assessment

Pre-event questions:

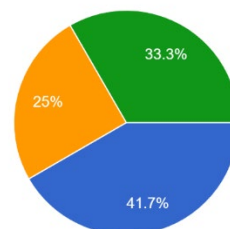
S2.1 What does 'gender parity' mean?

6 responses



- (A) Having an equal number of men and women in political sphere
- (B) Men and women having equal rights to vote
- (C) Men and women having equal access and opportunities in politics
- (D) All of the above
- (E) None of the above
- (F) I don't know

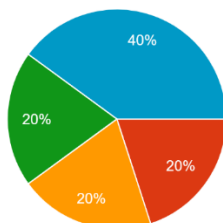
12 responses



Post-event questions:

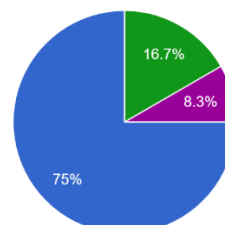
S6.1 What does 'gender parity' in politics mean?

5 responses



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- (F) I don't know

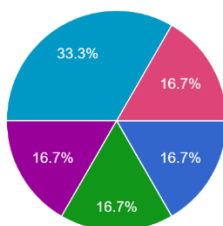
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

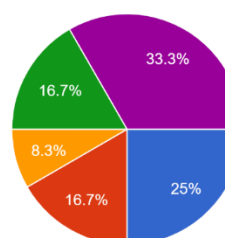
S2.2 What does 'gender equity' in politics mean?

6 responses



- (A) It means the fair treatment of all genders according to their respective...
- (B) It involves political representation for all genders.
- (C) It's the same as gender equality.
- (D) Men and Women being equally considered and interpreted as candida...
- (E) All of the above
- (F) I don't know

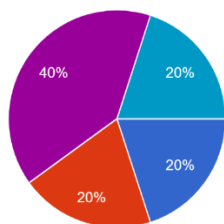
12 responses



Post-event questions:

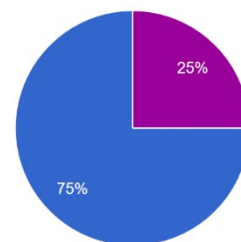
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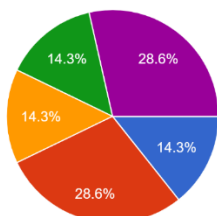
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

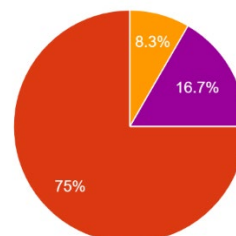
S2.3 Which of the following is a commonly cited barrier to women's political participation?

6 responses



- (A) Lack of interest in politics
- (B) Gender stereotypes and societal norms
- (C) Women's lack of education compared to men
- (D) Lack of supportive facilities
- (E) All of the above are equally significant barriers
- (F) I don't know

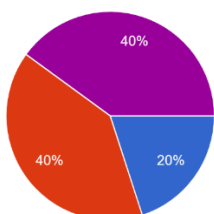
12 responses



Post-event questions:

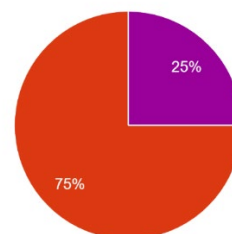
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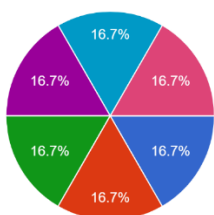
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

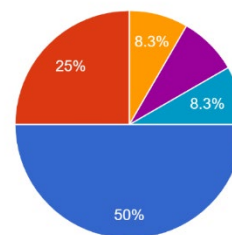
S2.4 Gender quotas may be considered as a legally sanctioned way to increase women participation in politics; What method can be used to implement gender quotas in politics?

6 responses



- (A) Reserving a set percentage of candidacies for women
- (B) Ensuring an equal number of male and female voters
- (C) Limiting the number of male politicians
- (D) Providing financial incentives to pa...
- (E) All of the above
- (F) I don't know

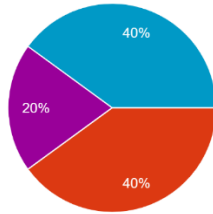
12 responses



Post-event questions:

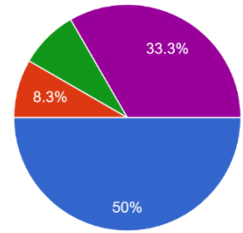
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- (C) Limiting the number of male politicians
- (D) Providing financial incentives to parties for more women representatives
- (E) All of the above
- (F) I don't know

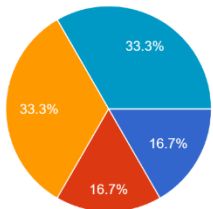
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

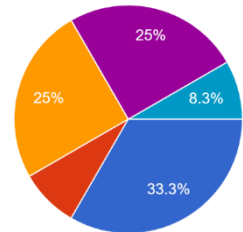
S2.5 Which of the following statements best describes the concept of 'gender mainstreaming'?

6 responses



- (A) The integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy...
- (B) Mainstream media's approach to reporting on gender issues.
- (C) A strategy for making women the central focus of all political decisions.
- (D) A method for increasing women's participation in sports.
- (E) All of the above
- (F) I don't know

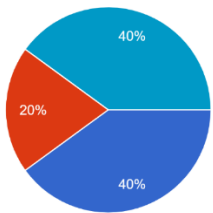
12 responses



Post-event questions:

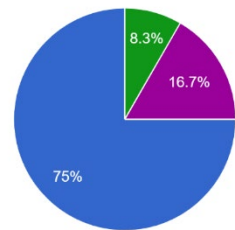
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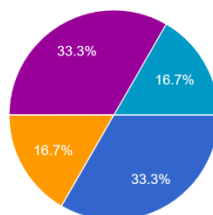
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

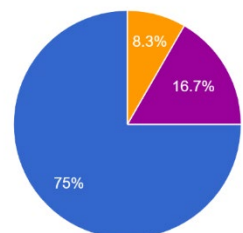
S2.6 What is the Gender Equality Index in Europe?

6 responses



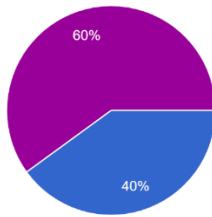
- (A) An index assessing disparities in areas such as economic participation...
- (B) A survey analysing overall happiness in Europe, considering gender differen...
- (C) A measure of how resources are distributed between men and women...
- (D) None of the above
- (E) I don't know
- (F) A measure of gender-based disparities in economic participation a...

12 responses



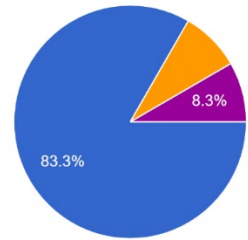
Post-event questions:

S6.6 What is the Gender Equality Index in Europe?
5 responses



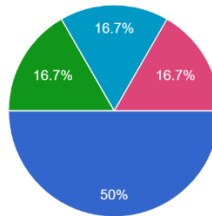
- (A) An index assessing disparities in areas such as economic participation and opportunity, education, health, and...
- (B) A survey analysing overall happiness in Europe, considering gender differences.
- (C) A measure of how resources are distributed between men and women...
- (D) None of the above
- (E) I don't know

12 responses



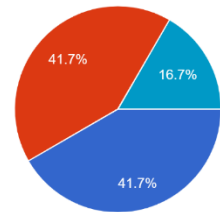
Pre-event questions:

S2.7 As of the latest data, what percentage of European parliamentarians are women?
6 responses



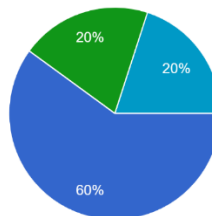
- (A) About 25%
- (B) About 40%
- (C) About 50%
- (D) About 60%
- (E) None of the above
- (F) I don't know
- (E) I don't know

12 responses



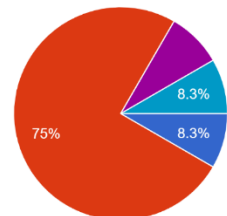
Post-event questions:

S6.7 As of the latest data, what percentage of European parliamentarians are women?
5 responses



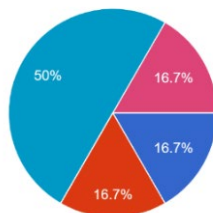
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- (C) About 50%
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- (E) None of the above
- (F) I don't know

12 responses



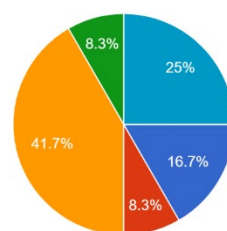
Pre-event questions:

S2.8 Which statement best describes the term 'intersectionality' in the context of gender equality?
6 responses



- (A) The policy-making process that considers gender among other societal factors
- (B) The cultural analysis of gender roles and expectations
- (C) The examination of how different aspects of a person's identity, like race, class, and sexual orientation, intersect
- (D) The role of gender perspectives in society
- (E) None of the above
- (F) I don't know
- (C) The interconnected nature of social identities

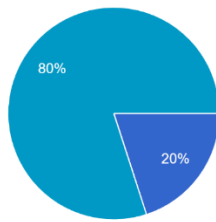
12 responses



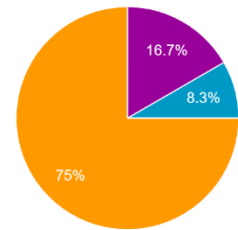
Post-event questions:

S6.8 Which statement best describes the term 'intersectionality' in the context of gender equality?
5 responses

12 responses



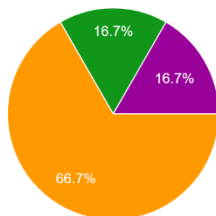
- (A) The policy-making process that considers gender among other societal factors
- (B) The cultural analysis of gender roles and expectations
- (C) The examination of how different aspects of a person's identity, like race, intersect
- (D) The role of gender perspectives in environmental conservation efforts
- (E) None of the above
- (F) I don't know



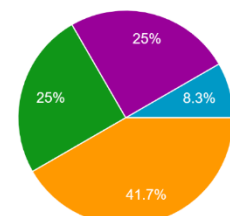
Pre-event questions:

S2.9 What impact does women's representation in politics have on policies?
6 responses

12 responses



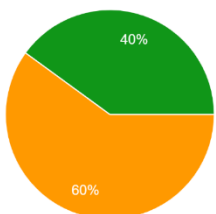
- (A) No significant impact has been observed
- (B) Policies tend to become more focused on defense and security
- (C) There is an increased focus on social welfare, including health and education
- (D) Policies are less likely to be passed in legislative bodies
- (E) All of the above
- (F) I don't know



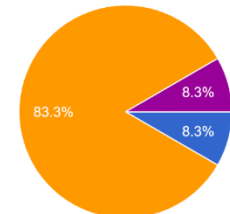
Post-event questions:

S6.9 What impact does women's representation in politics have on policies?
5 responses

12 responses



- (A) No significant impact has been observed
- (B) Policies tend to become more focused on defense and security
- (C) There is an increased focus on social welfare, including health and education
- (D) Policies are less likely to be passed in legislative bodies
- (E) All of the above
- (F) I don't know



Overall, a significant shift in responses is observed between the pre- and post-event questions, with the greatest percentage differences seen in participants identifying the correct answers. This highlights the clarity, engagement, and impact of the events. Additionally, many correct answers were provided in the pre-event questions, indicating that the audience already had a solid understanding of key terminologies related to women in politics and the broader concept of gender equality, which is a positive indicator.

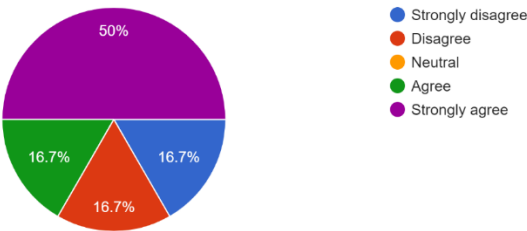
More specifically, questions with the highest percentage of correct answers, especially after the events, included topics such as barriers faced by women, gender mainstreaming, the Gender Equality Index, the percentage of women's representation in the EU Parliament and the impact of women's representation. Significant improvements in post-event responses were observed for questions about gender parity and gender equality.

However, mixed responses, indicating ongoing confusion, were found in questions related to quotas and intersectionality, despite a higher percentage of correct answers in the post-event responses. Overall, the events had a clear positive impact, significantly increasing participants' understanding of key concepts related to women's representation and gender equality, while also highlighting areas where further clarification, raising of awareness and education are needed.

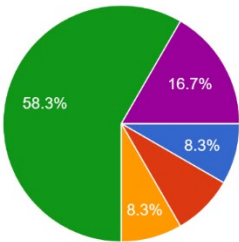
Attitudes & beliefs:

Pre-event questions:

S3.1 Women have the same capabilities as men in leadership roles.
6 responses

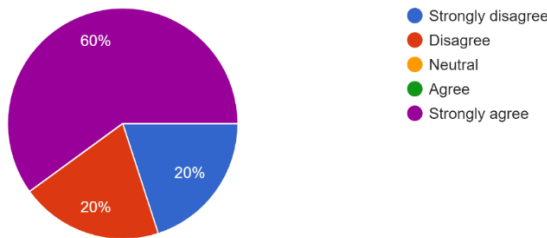


12 responses

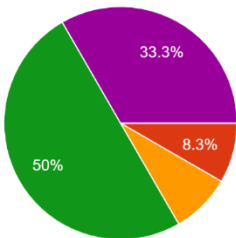


Post-event questions:

S7.1 Women have the same capabilities as men in leadership roles.
5 responses

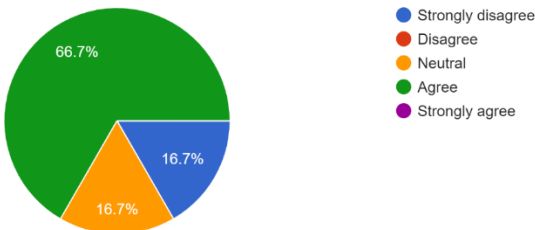


12 responses

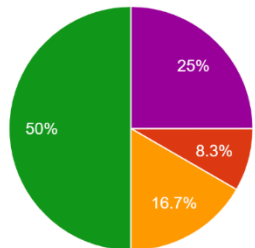


Pre-event questions:

S3.2 Gender quotas are essential for ensuring women's representation in politics.
6 responses



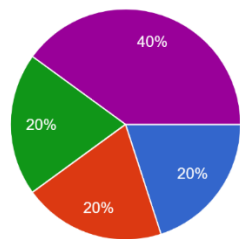
12 responses



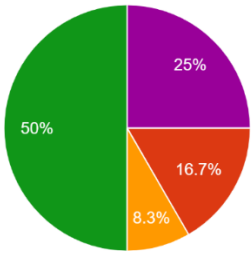
Post-event questions:

S7.2 Gender quotas are essential for ensuring women's representation in politics.
5 responses

12 responses



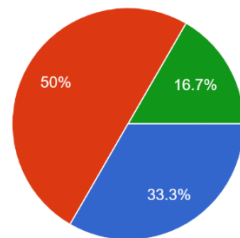
● Strongly disagree
● Disagree
● Neutral
● Agree
● Strongly agree



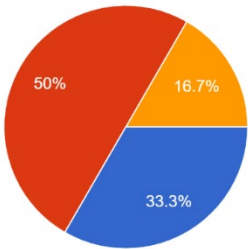
Pre-event questions:

S3.3 Men are more suited to high-level decision-making roles than women.
6 responses

12 responses



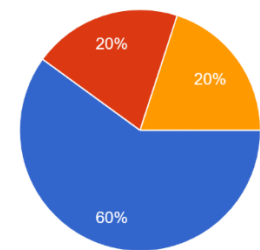
● Strongly disagree
● Disagree
● Neutral
● Agree
● Strongly agree



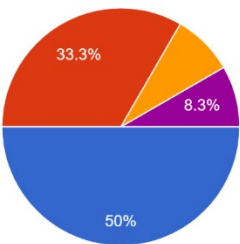
Post-event questions:

S7.3 Men are more suited to high-level decision-making roles than women.
5 responses

12 responses



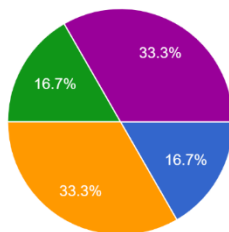
● Strongly disagree
● Disagree
● Neutral
● Agree
● Strongly agree



Pre-event questions:

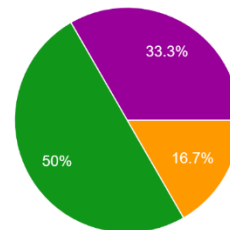
S3.4 Society benefits when women are equally represented in political decision-making.

6 responses



Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

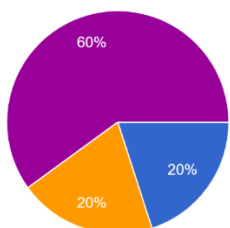
12 responses



Post-event questions:

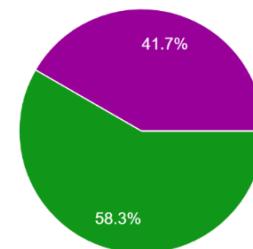
S7.4 Society benefits when women are equally represented in political decision-making.

5 responses



Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

12 responses



Overall, there is a noticeable shift in attitudes and beliefs across all responses. For example, the percentage of participants who 'strongly agree' that women have the same capabilities as men increased compared to pre-event responses, noting 'agree'. A similar trend is observed in the question regarding the societal benefits of equal representation of women in political decision-making.

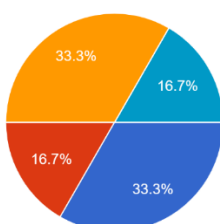
Additionally, a significant shift from 'disagree' to 'strongly disagree' in post event responses is seen in the question about whether men are more suited for high-level decision-making roles than women. In conclusion, the events effectively shifted participants' attitudes and beliefs towards greater support for gender equality, demonstrating a deeper understanding and stronger commitment to the equal representation of women in decision-making roles.

Behavioural intentions:

Pre-event questions:

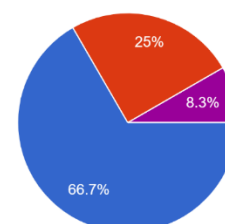
S4.1 How likely are you to consider supporting or voting for women candidates in future elections?

6 responses



Very likely
Somewhat likely
Unsure
Somewhat unlikely
Very unlikely
Maybe

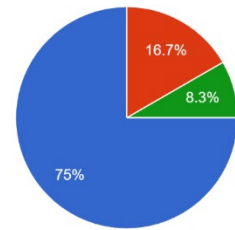
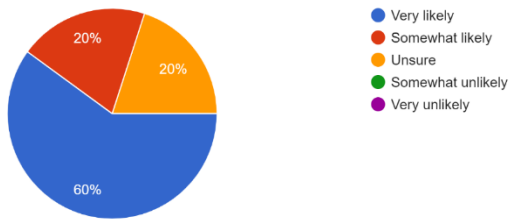
12 responses



Post-event questions:

S8.1 How likely are you to consider supporting or voting for women candidates in future elections?
5 responses

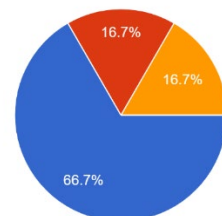
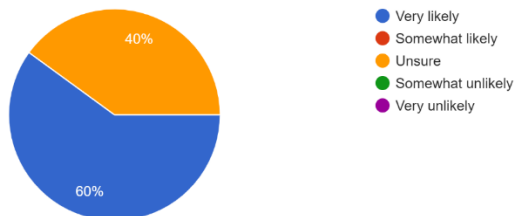
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

S4.2 How likely are you to participate in or advocate for initiatives that promote gender equality?
5 responses

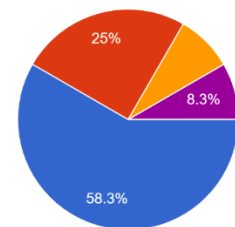
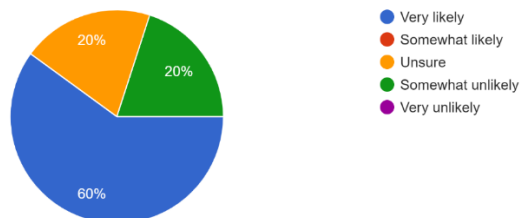
12 responses



Post-event questions:

S8.2 How likely are you to participate in or advocate for initiatives that promote gender equality?
5 responses

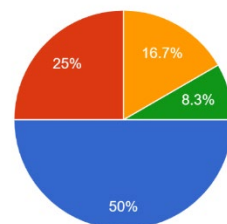
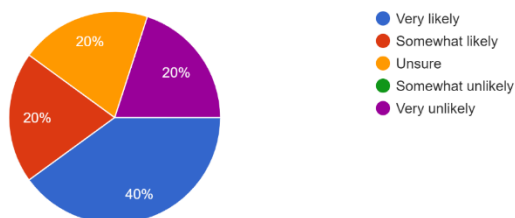
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

S4.3 How likely are you to engage in discussions about gender equality and women's political participation within your personal or professional networks?
5 responses

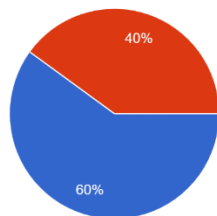
12 responses



Post-event questions:

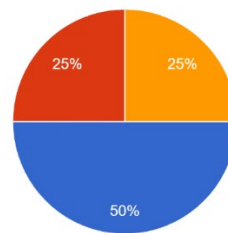
S8.3 How likely are you to engage in discussions about gender equality and women's political participation within your personal or professional networks?

5 responses



Very likely
Somewhat likely
Unsure
Somewhat unlikely
Very unlikely

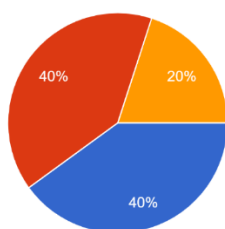
12 responses



Pre-event questions:

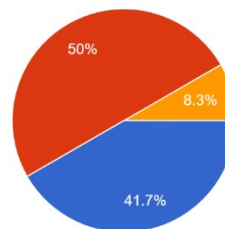
S4.4 How likely are you to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender-sensitive practices within your workplace or community?

5 responses



Very likely
Somewhat likely
Unsure
Somewhat unlikely
Very unlikely

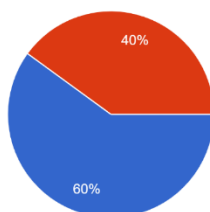
12 responses



Post-event questions:

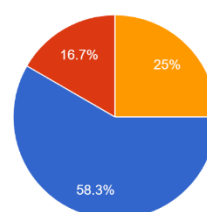
S8.4 How likely are you to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender-sensitive practices within your workplace or community?

5 responses



Very likely
Somewhat likely
Unsure
Somewhat unlikely
Very unlikely

12 responses



Regarding behavioural intentions, the percentage of positive responses about voting for women candidates in future elections increased significantly in the post-event questions, with even higher percentages compared to pre-event responses. Interestingly, some participants moved from 'very unlikely' (pre-event) to 'likely' (post-event), further indicating an overall improvement in knowledge, attitudes and intentions within this thematic area.

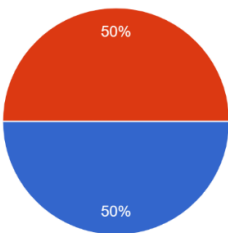
High positive responses, both before and after the events, were also observed in questions about participation in initiatives promoting gender equality, engagement in public discourses and

challenging gender stereotypes. In conclusion, the events successfully influenced participants' behavioral intentions, fostering stronger commitments to supporting women candidates, engaging in gender equality initiatives and challenging stereotypes, further demonstrating the events' positive impact on knowledge, attitudes and actions.

Key event insights

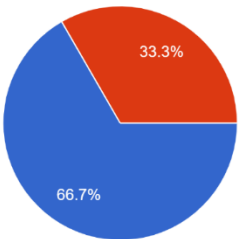
Percentage of responses from the Workshops & Seminars and Hybrid events:

S5.1 Which event did you attend?
6 responses

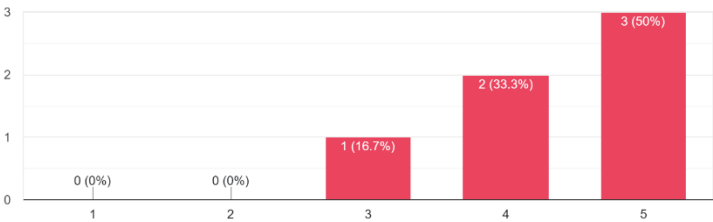


12 responses

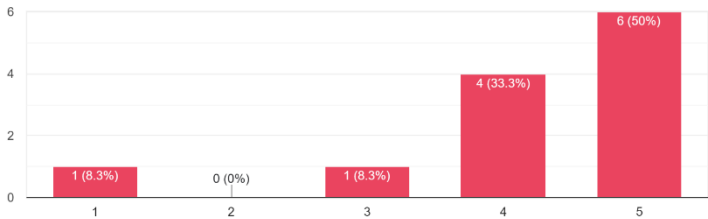
● Workshops & seminars
● Hybrid events



S5.2 Rate the effectiveness of the event in increasing your understanding of the topics.
6 responses



12 responses



S9.1 What did you like most about the events?

2 responses

Networking
Statistics

S9.3 Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

2 responses

I agree with the stereotypes because they came to be for a reason, mainly through our biological needs, BUT not everyone is the same, so an employer shouldn't make implement their assumptions without knowing.

Yes

9 responses

open conversation with people from different political backgrounds

Nice chat between all ladies! Very interesting and easygoing

Ola

interactivity, educational

plethora of information shared

panels

discussion on the specific thematic area

thematic area and focus of discussion

discussion flow

In summary, the key insights from the events reveal a positive and meaningful shift in participants' understanding, attitudes, and intentions regarding gender equality, showcasing the effectiveness of the initiatives in fostering greater awareness, engagement, and commitment to empowering women in leadership and decision-making roles.

The events demonstrated a significant positive impact on participants' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to gender equality and women's representation. A clear shift in responses between pre- and post-event questions highlighted participants' increased understanding of key concepts. Behavioural intentions also shifted positively and the events further highlighted areas where continued education is needed, though the overall effect was clear: the events strengthened participants' support for gender equality, their understanding of its significance, and their commitment to challenging stereotypes.

It is understood that the outcomes of these events point to meaningful changes in attitudes and behaviours, fostering broader awareness and engagement on a national level, while also emphasising the need for further efforts in raising awareness about specific areas of gender equality.

In summary, the implementation of the National Gender Equality Strategy has led to significant improvements in public perception, reaching positive outcomes directly related to gender equality and women's representation. The events played a crucial role in raising awareness and broadening participants' understanding of key concepts. The increased knowledge and shifts in attitudes observed after the events highlight the importance of National Gender Equality Strategies in addressing gender equality and breaking down barriers for women in leadership roles.

Furthermore, the application of the National Gender Equality Strategy has fostered greater engagement in gender equality initiatives and has also promoted more inclusive practices at both the local and national levels. These outcomes underscore the effectiveness of the National Gender Equality Strategies (and in general National Strategies) in driving meaningful changes and its vital role in shaping future gender equality efforts.

VII. Sweden, RBV

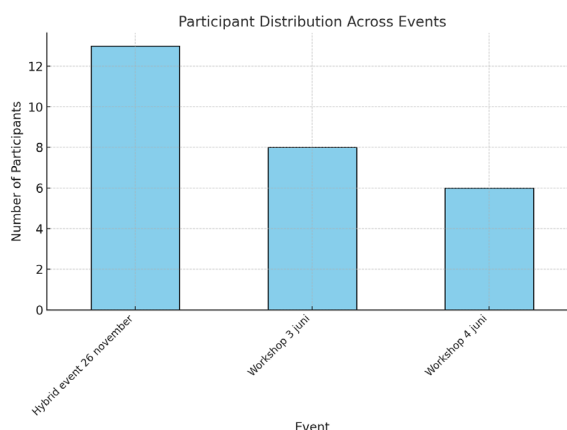
Questionnaire's results overview

The impact assessment surveys conducted across the hybrid event and workshops in Västerbotten served as a critical tool for evaluating the effectiveness of the activities under the FEM-ABLE project. These surveys not only measured the knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral intentions of participants but also provided valuable feedback for identifying areas of improvement and refining future initiatives.

The survey outcomes were analyzed to assess the national-level impacts of implementing the FEM-ABLE Toolkit, emphasizing significant changes and benefits observed as part of Sweden's National Gender Equality Strategy. Unfortunately, not all participants did answer the whole survey, however, more than 50 % of the participants did.

Profile of the respondents

- **Age distribution:** Respondents included a mix of younger professionals and mid-career participants, aligning with the event's focus on fostering youth and community engagement. Most participants fell within the 20–40 age range, suggesting successful outreach to active contributors in political and civic spaces.
- **Gender balance:** The majority of survey respondents identified as women, reflecting the focus on female empowerment and participation. However, the lower male engagement (less than 25% of participants) signals a need to improve inclusivity in future events to emphasize the shared societal benefits of gender equality.
- **Educational background:** Most participants had tertiary-level education, indicating that the content resonated well with an audience accustomed to structured discussions. However, the limited representation of individuals with lower education levels highlights an opportunity for future events to broaden their accessibility and inclusivity.



Survey analysis;

Knowledge domain

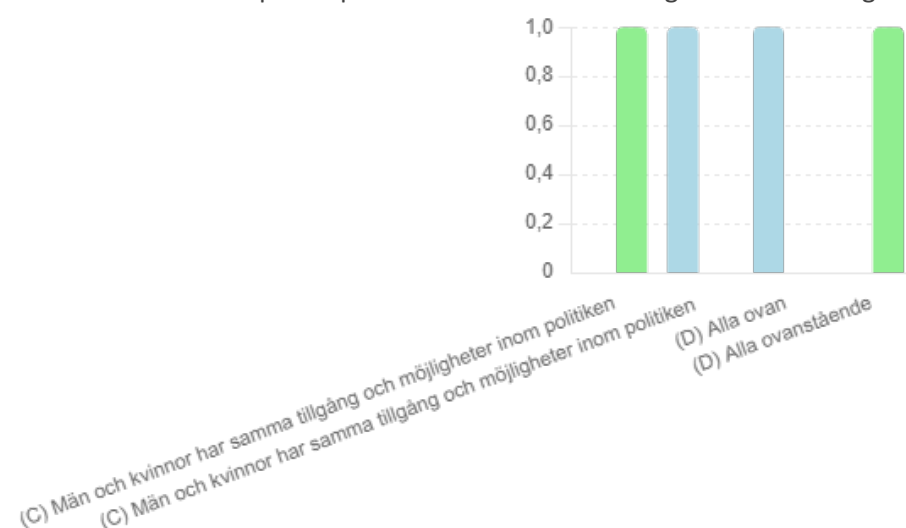
The events significantly enhanced participants' understanding of key gender equality concepts. Survey results show a substantial increase in the number of correct responses on questions about:

Gender mainstreaming: Post-event data revealed a 30% improvement in awareness about integrating gender perspectives into political processes.

Representation in European Parliaments: Attendees left with a deeper understanding of structural barriers to women's participation in decision-making roles.

Reflection: This outcome validates the educational design of the activities, particularly the use of workshops to explore theoretical and practical dimensions of gender equality. However, the need for simplified content tailored to non-specialist audiences was noted, as some participants expressed difficulty with technical terms.

Knowledge gains A bar chart comparison of pre- and post-event responses illustrates the upward trend in participants' understanding of gender equality topics.



Attitudes domain

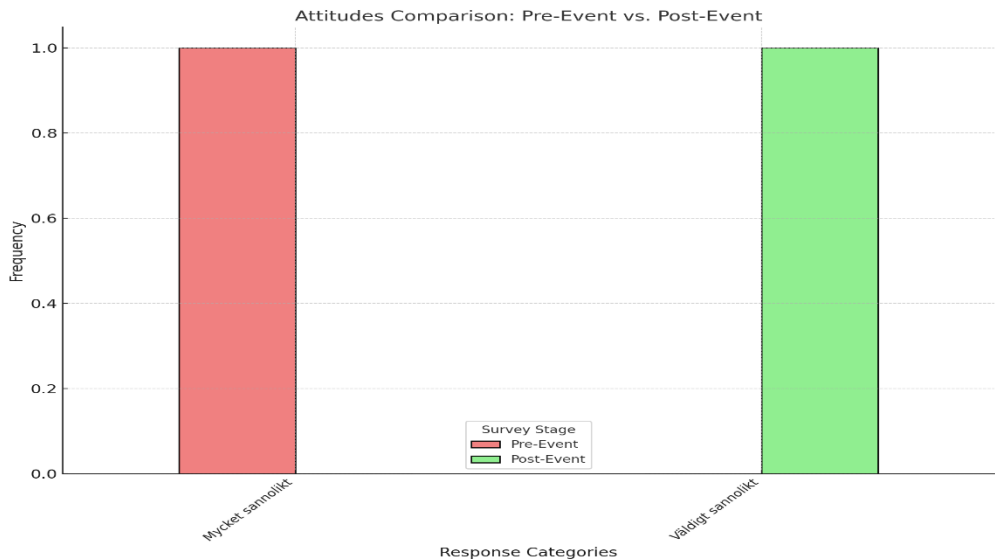
While most participants held progressive views on gender equality before the events, the surveys indicate that these attitudes were reinforced:

Support for female leadership: Over 90% of respondents expressed strong willingness to vote for female candidates, a slight increase from pre-event figures.

Recognition of systemic barriers: Participants consistently acknowledged the importance of addressing societal and institutional challenges to women's political participation.

Reflection: This finding underscores the success of the events in maintaining engagement and commitment among participants already aligned with gender equality principles. Future efforts could incorporate more interactive elements to challenge biases and deepen the understanding of intersectionality, particularly for participants less familiar with these concepts.

Attitude shifts A comparative chart demonstrates the stability of positive attitudes toward gender equality before and after the events.



Intentions to act domain

Behavioral intentions, such as advocating for gender parity or mentoring women in leadership roles, showed modest but encouraging improvements:

Engagement in gender advocacy: Participants expressed a stronger desire to actively support gender equality initiatives within their communities.

Mentorship programs: Respondents highlighted their willingness to participate in or establish mentorship networks for emerging women leaders.

Reflection: While knowledge and attitudes translated into some behavioral shifts, the survey suggests room for growth in empowering participants to take concrete actions. Incorporating follow-up mechanisms, such as goal-setting activities or community projects, could enhance the practical impact of future events.

Self-assessment and key messages from participants

The qualitative feedback collected provided valuable insights for refining future events:

Inclusive engagement: Attendees emphasized the importance of involving more male participants to foster allyship and shared responsibility in achieving gender parity.

Accessibility of content: Simplifying technical language and providing additional contextual examples were suggested to make the discussions more inclusive for diverse audiences.

Interactive formats: Participants praised the workshops’ interactive elements but recommended expanding these to include role-playing or real-life scenario analysis to deepen engagement.

A.3.3 Overall impact

Social demographics

With 201 answers, key findings reveal that the majority of respondents (61.2%) were women, with a significant portion leaning politically left (20.9% left, 3.0% far-left). Additionally, most respondents were young (38.3% aged 18-25) and highly educated, with 50.2% holding advanced degrees. These demographics suggest a sample inclined toward progressive views, likely emphasizing gender equity and systemic barriers to women's political participation. While these insights are valuable, the overrepresentation of women and left-leaning individuals limits generalizability.



Evolution of Participant's Knowledge

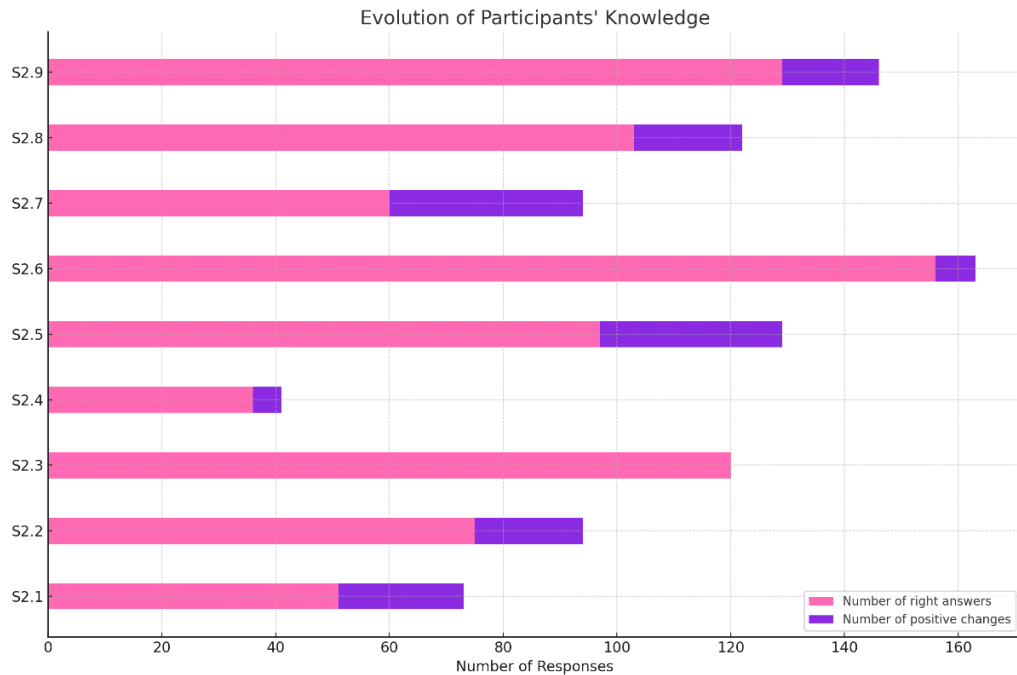
The chart below presents an analysis of 201 responses to the series of questions - S2.x and S6.x - designed to evaluate participants' knowledge before (S2.x) and after (S6.x) the events. The data highlights the number of correct answers (pink) and positive changes (purple), which indicate improvements in the accuracy of responses after the intervention.

Key Observations

Overall Performance: While most participants did not initially answer correctly for many of the questions, the presence of positive changes across multiple questions suggests that learning occurred. This trend is particularly promising, as it reflects participants' ability to absorb and apply new information.

Technical Terminology and Errors: Questions involving more technical or abstract terms, such as those related to "intersectionality" or "gender equity," appear to have higher rates of incorrect responses. This indicates that such concepts may not be universally understood or may require more tailored explanations during educational activities.

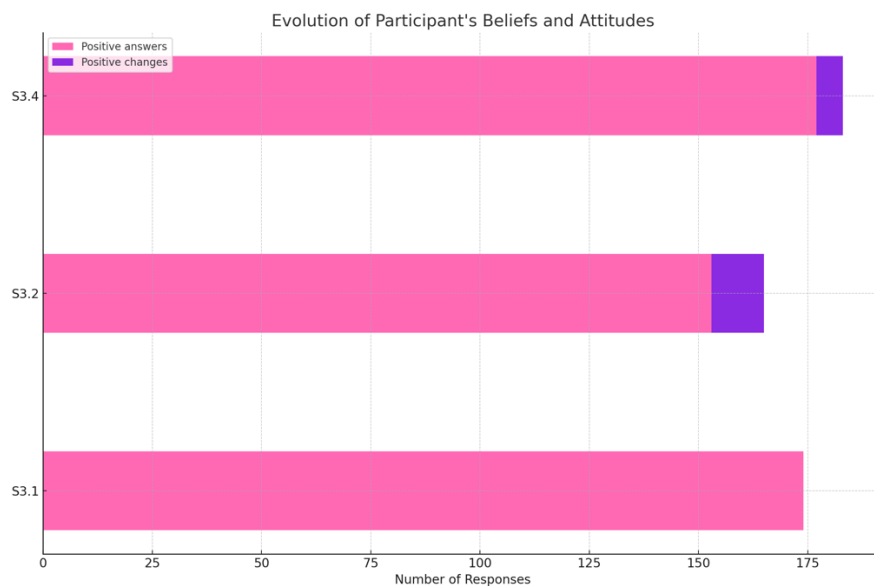
Positive Changes as a Source of Optimism: The purple extensions on the bars reveal that participants showed improvement, particularly in areas where initial understanding was low. This suggests that while baseline knowledge may be limited, interventions have the potential to close these gaps effectively.



This underscores the dual importance of identifying baseline knowledge gaps and celebrating positive changes as evidence of learning. While the initial number of correct responses was modest, the improvements captured in the chart demonstrate that targeted educational strategies can yield significant benefits. By refining approaches to address technical terminology and leveraging participant improvements, future interventions can continue to foster greater understanding and engagement with complex topics such as these.

Evolution of Participant's Beliefs and Attitudes

The S3 series demonstrates a high percentage of positive responses across the board, with 87% of respondents answering positively on average. This is a promising indicator, suggesting that participants are generally supportive of women's political participation and aligned with progressive attitudes. However, this result is likely influenced by the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Most participants were women, as well as individuals with left-leaning political orientations, groups that historically demonstrate greater support for gender equity and systemic reforms.



Despite the high initial positivity, the S7 series shows relatively few positive changes. This indicates that the intervention—whether a workshop, hybrid event, or similar activity—had a limited impact on altering deeply held beliefs or attitudes. This aligns with broader research on social and political attitudes, which highlights that such beliefs are often deeply ingrained and require sustained, multi-faceted efforts to shift significantly.

The high level of positive responses in this study is a testament to the progressive attitudes of the participants. However, the limited observable changes in beliefs highlight the challenges of fostering significant shifts in deeply held attitudes through short-term interventions.

Evolution of Participants' Behavioural Intentions

The S4 series demonstrates a consistently high level of positive responses across all four questions, with the majority of participants expressing intentions aligned with supporting gender equity. For instance, responses to S4.1 through S4.4 indicate that 85–90% of participants reported positive intentions, reflecting an encouraging baseline of progressive attitudes. This high level of initial positivity may be partially attributed to the demographic composition of the respondent pool, which likely included individuals already aligned with the goals of the intervention. The overrepresentation of women and left-leaning participants in the sample further supports this explanation.

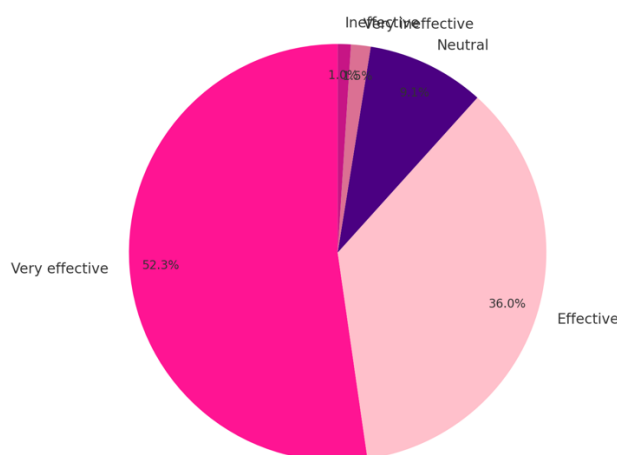
Despite the high baseline positivity, the S8 series reveals minimal changes in behavioral intentions. Only one measurable improvement was observed in S8.1, while no significant changes occurred in S8.2, S8.3, and S8.4. This lack of positive changes highlights the inherent difficulty of influencing entrenched behavioral patterns through isolated workshops or hybrid events. Unlike knowledge or attitudes, behavioral intentions are often tied to deep-seated beliefs and societal norms, which require sustained efforts to shift.



The high baseline of positive responses in the S4 series reflects the promise of engaging participants who are already supportive of gender equity. However, the limited positive changes observed in the S8 series highlight the challenge of shifting deeply rooted behavioral intentions. Future interventions should aim to combine sustained engagement, diverse participation, and structural reinforcement to maximize their impact. To foster significant positive changes in participants' behavioral intentions, interventions must go beyond single events to address societal, emotional, and structural factors. By combining long-term engagement, experiential learning, and tailored approaches, we can create conditions where positive changes not only occur but are sustained, fostering long-lasting support for women's participation in politics and society.

Effectiveness of the Events in Increasing Participants' Understanding of the Topics

Effectiveness of the events in increasing participants' understanding of the topics



The chart illustrates the distribution of participants' evaluations regarding the effectiveness of the events in enhancing their understanding of the topics, based on a 1 to 5 scale. This scale ranged from 1 ("Very ineffective") to 5 ("Very Effective"), with participants rating the event according to how well it increased their comprehension of the subject matter.

The largest portion of responses (52.3%) fall under the "Very effective" category, highlighted in hot pink. This suggests that over half of the participants found the event to be effective in improving their understanding, which is a promising result. The considerable portion of positive evaluations implies that the event was successful in delivering key insights and knowledge to the participants.

Additionally, the "Effective" category, which represents 36.0% of responses, is marked in light pink. While smaller in comparison to "Very effective," this result still indicates that a significant subset of participants found the event highly beneficial. This aligns with the idea that certain individuals may have experienced substantial improvements in their knowledge.

The remaining categories, including "Neutral", "Ineffective" and "Very ineffective" constitute a smaller proportion of the responses. Importantly, the relatively low percentage of negative or neutral feedback suggests that, overall, the event was viewed positively, with limited dissatisfaction.

Conclusion

The series of charts presented collectively offer a comprehensive view of the participants' responses to various aspects of the events, including their understanding, beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. While the data from the "Effectiveness of the Events" chart indicates that a substantial number of participants found the event effective, it also highlights that true behavioral change requires more than just short-term interventions. The positive response in understanding was significant, particularly with respect to attitudes toward gender equity, but only modest improvements in behavioral intentions were observed.

This pattern is consistent across other metrics—while knowledge shifted positively, beliefs and behavioral changes were more difficult to achieve. This suggests that beliefs about gender equality and political participation are deeply entrenched, and substantial shifts in behavior may require sustained engagement over time. The positive changes observed, while limited, demonstrate the potential for interventions to foster shifts in beliefs and attitudes, though these changes are not easily translated into behavior without further, more intensive work.

In conclusion, these findings highlight the importance of long-term strategies for addressing gender equity, especially in contexts such as political participation, where social norms and deep-seated values play a significant role in shaping individuals' actions. The effectiveness of events like the ones analyzed here is evident in the improvement in understanding, but broader, sustained efforts are necessary to drive lasting changes in behavior.

A.4 CONCLUSIONS

The FEM-ABLE project took a dynamic and innovative approach to promoting gender equality, emphasising **interactive and participatory methods** to drive meaningful change. From **May to October 2024**, the national strategies developed were implemented across **7 European countries**, reaching a total of **610 participants** through **10 workshops** and **10 public events**.

- The **workshops** engaged **96 participants**, including **local government officials, educators, researchers, women politicians, and activists**. These sessions provided practical tools and strategies to integrate gender equality into decision-making processes, offering a space for reflection, discussion, and actionable insights.
- The **public events** welcomed **514 attendees** from diverse backgrounds, such as **students, entrepreneurs, civil society members, and community leaders**. These events fostered open dialogue, raised awareness, and encouraged community-driven initiatives to support women's participation in politics and leadership roles.

By employing a variety of methodologies—ranging from **documentary screenings and panel discussions** to **social experiments, debates, forum theatre, and storytelling**—the project adapted to different contexts and needs. This diversity of approaches ensured that the strategies were relatable, impactful, and actionable for each audience.

The results speak for themselves: participants reported a **greater awareness** of gender dynamics, **shifts in attitudes**, and a renewed motivation to support women's political participation. The project demonstrated that when people are actively engaged in learning and dialogue, the potential for real change increases exponentially.

In total, through **20 interactive sessions** and the participation of over 600 individuals, the FEM-ABLE project highlighted the power of collaboration, education, and community engagement in breaking down barriers and fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

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A.6. ANNEXES

Impact Assessment Survey - D4.4

The Impact Assessment Survey serves to evaluate participants' knowledge *before and after* their engagement in workshops, seminars, and hybrid events on women's political participation, representation, and gender equality in decision-making. The goal of this survey is to measure changes in participants' awareness, understanding, attitudes, and potentially their intentions to act based on what they have learned.

English version:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1k44LL7liaMiAlxmGg-N0qD7qjO3leMSM2p81iMtbsGU/edit>

See below the questionnaire text:

Introduction

This survey is conducted as part of the [FEM-ABLE project](#), which aims to promote women's participation in the political domain. The objective of the questionnaire is to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and intended behaviors of participants before and after attending our series of workshops, seminars, and events on gender equality and women's political participation. Your responses will significantly contribute to assessing the impact of these events and guiding future improvements.

The questionnaire is divided into 2 main sections (PRE-EVENT), which should be completed before the project activity, and (POST-EVENT), to be filled at the end of the event. It should take approximately 5 minutes to complete each section.

Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous, and the data collected will only be used for research purposes related to the FEM-ABLE project. We appreciate your participation and thank you in advance for your valuable contribution to the FEM-ABLE project.

Please note that your responses will be kept confidential and used only for the purposes of the project.

Thank you for participating in FEMABLE project!

*All themes identified in the sections below were extrapolations from all National Strategies developed by the countries participating in this EU project. There was no subjective categorization nor selection of themes by any partners individuals involved in developing this survey, or in any activities related to the project.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. [Project Number: 101088295].

Section 1: Demographic information

Age

Gender (Woman/Man/Non-binary/Prefer not to respond)

Education Level

Occupation

Political affiliation and/or endorsement and/or preference in the political spectrum (answer optional)

PRE-EVENT questions

Section 2: Knowledge assessment

Questions in this section will assess baseline knowledge on key topics, using *single-choice questions*:

S2.1 What does 'gender parity' in politics mean?

- Having an equal number of men and women in political sphere
- Men and women having equal rights to vote
- Men and women having equal access and opportunities in politics
- All of the above
- None of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (A), having an equal number of men and women in political office. Gender parity refers to the equal representation of women and men in decision-making positions, not just the legal right to participate.

Supporting source data: EIGE definition of “Gender parity” https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1258?language_content_entity=en and “Gender equality” <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1059>. See also OECD definition of “Gender equality in politics” [Gender equality in politics | Government at a Glance 2021 | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/government-at-a-glance/2021/gender-equality-in-politics).

S2.2 What does gender equity mean?

- It means the fair treatment of all genders according to their respective needs.
- It involves political representation for all genders.
- It's the same as gender equality.
- Men and Women being equally considered and interpreted as candidates
- All of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (A), treating everyone fairly based on their needs. Gender equity is about recognizing that different people have different needs and circumstances, and ensuring fairness by addressing these differences. It's not just about providing equal opportunities (as in gender equality) but about taking extra steps to ensure everyone has access to the same outcomes.

Supporting source data: EIGE definition of “Gender equity” <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1262>

S2.3 Which of the following is a commonly cited barrier to women's political participation?

- Lack of interest in politics
- Gender stereotypes and societal norms
- Women's lack of education compared to men
- Lack of supportive facilities
- All of the above are equally significant barriers
- I don't know

Correct answer: (B) Gender stereotypes and societal norms

Supporting source data: Women in politics in the EU, state of play [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/739383/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)739383_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/739383/EPRS_BRI(2023)739383_EN.pdf) *“analyses find that three inter-related sets of factors contribute towards women's underrepresentation. First, there are barriers that block the 'supply' of women entering politics. These include women's individual perceptions of their own abilities and of the costs and risks of running for office, together with broader factors that can shape their choices and discourage them from doing so, such as: unequal access to key resources such as time, money, and political networks; unequal family responsibilities; male-dominated political cultures in parties and parliaments; gender roles and stereotypes in wider society; and an absence of female role models.”*

S2.4 Gender quotas may be considered as a legally sanctioned way to increase women participation in politics; What method can be used to implement gender quotas in politics?

- Reserving a set percentage of candidacies for women
- Ensuring an equal number of male and female voters
- Limiting the number of male politicians
- Providing financial incentives to parties for more women representatives
- All of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (A), reserving a set percentage of candidacies for women. This approach directly aims to increase female representation by ensuring that a certain proportion of candidates are women, thereby promoting gender equality in political representation.

Supporting source data: Women in politics in the EU, state of play [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/739383/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)739383_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/739383/EPRS_BRI(2023)739383_EN.pdf) *“Various forms of gender quotas have been found to be an effective way of boosting the share of women candidates – and getting more women elected. Research has shown that in some EU countries, the introduction of gender quotas led to immediate major leaps (increases of more than 10 percentage points) in women's representation in national parliaments, but in others, the results were slower or less successful. It concluded that quotas can increase women's representation but, to be effective, they must be designed to fit the electoral system, and include rules on the placing of candidates in 'winnable' seats and effective sanctions for non-compliance. [...] Overall, when comparing recent progress in all EU countries, binding quotas appear to effectively speed up progress towards gender equality in political representation significantly.”*

S2.5 Which of the following statements best describes the concept of 'gender mainstreaming'?

- The integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy processes.
- Mainstream media's approach to reporting on gender issues.
- A strategy for making women the central focus of all political decisions.
- A method for increasing women's participation in sports.
- All of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (A)

Supporting source data: EIGE definition of "Gender mainstreaming" <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1070>

S2.6 What is the Gender Equality Index in Europe?

- An index assessing disparities in areas such as economic participation and opportunity, education, health, and political empowerment within European countries.
- A survey analyzing overall happiness in Europe, considering gender differences.
- A measure of how resources are distributed between men and women globally.
- None of the above.
- I don't know

Correct answer: (A), an index assessing disparities in areas such as economic participation and opportunity, education, health, and political empowerment within European countries. This index specifically focuses on evaluating gender equality in various critical aspects of life across European nations, aiming to highlight areas of progress and those needing improvement.

Supporting source data: EIGE definition of "Gender Equality Index" <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/about>

S2.7 As of the latest data, what percentage of European parliamentarians are women?

- About 25%
- About 40%
- About 50%
- About 60%
- None of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (B) about 40%. Currently, as of Feb 2024, the share of women elected in the EU parliament is 39.8%.

Supporting source data: Women in politics in the EU, state of play [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/739383/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)739383_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2023/739383/EPRS_BRI(2023)739383_EN.pdf)

S2.8 Which statement best explains 'intersectionality' in relation to gender equality?

- The policy-making process that considers gender among other societal issues
- The cultural analysis of gender roles and expectations
- The examination of how different aspects of a person's identity, like race, class, and gender, combine to affect their life experiences
- The role of gender perspectives in environmental conservation efforts
- None of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (C), the essence of intersectionality focuses on the intertwined nature of identity factors and their impact on individuals' experiences. It articulates the idea that people's social identities and the discrimination or advantages they encounter are complexly layered and interconnected.

Supporting source data: EIGE definition of "Intersectionality" <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1050>

S2.9 What impact does women's representation in politics have on policies?

- No significant impact has been observed
- Policies tend to become more focused on defence and security
- There is an increased focus on social welfare, including health and education
- Policies are less likely to be passed in legislative bodies
- All of the above
- I don't know

Correct answer: (C) There is an increased focus on social welfare, including health and education

Supporting source data: De Siano, Rita & Chiariello, Valentina. (2021). Women's political empowerment and welfare policy decisions: a spatial analysis of European countries. Spatial Economic Analysis. 17. 1-26. 10.1080/17421772.2021.1905173. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17421772.2021.1905173>

"This study analyses the impact of female political empowerment on European countries' welfare policies. Following a spatial econometric approach, the results reveal the presence of a spatial dependence across countries and a consistent gender effect. In particular, the descriptive representation seems to favour a higher distribution of resources to sectors in which women are disproportionately active (health, family, housing, elderly care). Moreover, the study reveals positive spatial spillovers arising from women's political empowerment in neighbouring countries that suggest the existence of an active and visible role model crossing national jurisdictions. These outcomes are robust to different metrics of neighbourliness."

Section 3: Attitudes and beliefs: Using a Likert scale questions (strongly agree to strongly disagree) to gauge attitudes and beliefs.

S3.1 Women have the same capabilities as men in leadership roles.

S3.2 Gender quotas are essential for ensuring women's representation in politics.

S3.3 Men are more suited to high-level decision-making roles than women.

S3.4 Society benefits when women are equally represented in political decision-making.

Section 4: Behavioral intentions: Includes questions to assess the likelihood (Very likely / Somewhat likely / Unsure / Somewhat unlikely / Very unlikely) of participants engaging in activities that promote gender equality and women's political participation.

S4.1 How likely are you to consider supporting or voting for women candidates in future elections?

S4.2 How likely are you to participate in or advocate for initiatives that promote gender equality?

S4.3 How likely are you to engage in discussions about gender equality and women's political participation within your personal or professional networks?

S4.4 How likely are you to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender-sensitive practices within your workplace or community?

POST-event questions

The post-event survey should mirror the pre-event survey to directly compare responses. However, the following sections have been added to assess the immediate impact of the event and any plans for future action.

Section 5: Event-specific questions

S5.1 Which event(s) did you attend? (List the specific event dates and type: workshops, seminars, hybrid events)

S5.2 Rate the effectiveness of each event in increasing your understanding of the topics.

S5.3 What are the key takeaways from the events you attended?

Section 6: Post-event knowledge assessment: Repeat the previously asked questions from the pre-event survey to measure changes in knowledge.

Section 7: Post-event attitudes and beliefs: Repeat the previously asked questions to measure any shifts in attitudes.

Section 8: Post-event behavioral intentions: Repeat the previously asked questions to evaluate any changes in intended behaviors.

Section 9: Open Feedback

S9.1 What did you like most about the events?

S9.2 What could be improved?

S9.3 Any additional comments or suggestions?

Survey Conclusion

This survey provides a comprehensive tool for assessing the impact of educational events on participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding women's political participation and gender equality in decision-making.

Thank you so much for your valuable time and insights!

TRACK CHANGES

See below the amendments made to the reviewed version of the questionnaire.

The EU disclaimer has been added to the introductory note;

“Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them [Project Number: 101088295].”

The following questions & answers from Section 2 have been reformulated or replaced to enhance clarity and avoid confusion:

S2.1 (C) Women having more representation in politics than men **was replaced by** Men and women having equal access and opportunities in politics

S2.2 (D) It's a concept in sociology that differs from legal frameworks **was replaced by** Men and Women being equally considered and interpreted as candidates

S2.3 **Additional question** included (D) Lack of supportive facilities

S2.4 The initial question “Which method is a way to implement gender quotas in politics?” **has been reformulated to avoid misunderstandings** to “Gender quotas may be considered as a legally sanctioned way to increase women participation in politics; What method can be used to implement gender quotas in politics?”

For all questions pertaining to S2, the following answer options have been included to standardise the responses; “All/None of the above” and “I don’t know”.

Questions with multiple choices have been simplified to single-choice options, making it easier for participants to respond. The below Q has been reformulated

How can gender quotas be implemented in politics?

- By reserving a certain percentage of candidacies for women
- By ensuring an equal number of male and female voters
- By limiting the number of male politicians
- By providing financial incentives to political parties with more female candidates
- I don't know

Correct answers: (A) By reserving a certain percentage of candidacies for women, and D) By providing financial incentives to political parties with more female candidates can also be a method in some contexts.

Some questions have been revised to specifically address the EU context, ensuring a focused approach. The below Q has been deleted and replaced.

What is the Global Gender Gap Index?

- A measure of gender-based disparities in economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment across countries.
- A survey that assesses global happiness levels, including gender as a variable.
- An index measuring the global distribution of resources between men and women.
- None of the above.

Correct answer: (A)

Some questions have been either removed or rephrased to better match the audience's level of understanding. The following Q have been reformulated

What is the difference between gender equality and gender equity?

- Gender equality focuses on providing the same opportunities and rights for all genders, while gender equity involves the fair treatment of all genders according to their respective needs.
- Gender equality is about economic participation, whereas gender equity is about political representation.
- There is no difference; both terms can be used interchangeably.
- Gender equality is a legal framework, while gender equity is a concept in sociology.
- I don't know

Correct answer: A) Gender equality focuses on providing the same opportunities and rights for all genders, while gender equity involves the fair treatment of all genders according to their respective needs. This distinction highlights that equity may require different approaches or resources for different genders to achieve an equitable outcome, acknowledging and addressing inequalities.

Which statement best describes the term 'intersectionality' in the context of gender equality?

- The intersection of major roads in urban areas
- The study of intersections in mathematics and geometry

- The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group
- A concept in physics related to the intersection of forces
- I don't know

Correct answer: C) The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group

The section on Behavioral Intentions has been modified to present questions in a more indirect manner. As part of this change, the scale of responses has been adjusted accordingly. See below the original text:

Section 4: Behavioral intentions: Includes questions to assess the likelihood of participants engaging in activities that promote gender equality and women's political participation.

Are you planning to support or vote for women candidates in future elections? Yes/No/Maybe

Do you intend to participate in or advocate for initiatives that promote gender equality? Yes/No/Maybe

Do you plan to engage in discussions about gender equality and women's political participation within your personal or professional networks? Yes/No/Maybe

Do you intend to challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender-sensitive practices within your workplace or community? Yes/No/Maybe