

Statement of CEMR Standing Committee for Equality, adopted at the #InvolveMen seminar on men and gender equality

Brussels, 19/11/2019

The quest for gender equality is founded on women's battle for equal rights and opportunities. But since gender inequality is the outcome of a historical power imbalance between men as a group and women as a group, gender equality work must also involve boys and men, and challenge certain notions of masculinity (as well as norms for femininity) that are a barrier to true equality.

There are notions about how boys and men act and how they should act, which counteract the trend towards gender equality and adversely affects both men's and women's circumstances and conditions.

In recent decades, research on men, masculinities and power has developed dramatically. There are also a number of successful, practical processes promoting change concerning men, boys and masculinity norms, which promote gender equality and contribute to better fulfilment of goals in various European and international frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) has therefore taken an initiative to organise a seminar on the importance of redefining masculinities and to #InvolveMen in gender equality work.

We, representatives of local and regional governments in Europe and members of CEMR's Standing Committee for Equality, look forward to contributing to the implementation of a new, holistic, European Gender Equality Strategy that also involves men, boys and masculinities in the work for gender equality.

We call for such a Strategy to recognise the important work already being done by municipalities and civil society in this respect by ensuring continued political and material support for their actions.

We commit ourselves at CEMR to follow up this first seminar and continue working in this direction to address the issue of men and gender equality.