



# Supporting materials – SES and gender

Enhancing quality of education and training in SEE - EQET SEE

Dr Dragan Stanojević

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**Hotel Budva** (Slovenska obala, Budva, Montenegro)

# Structure of the presentation

## **1. Supporting material**

- 1. Socio-economic status of students in VET**
- 2. Gender in VET**

## **2. General study/guide**

**Understanding and reducing social inequalities in the education process**

**Equal opportunities for all:  
socio-economic status of  
students in VET**

- Socio-economic inequalities associated with VET can be viewed in two ways:
- 1. as **inequalities in access to secondary education**, where children from poorer families and lower classes choose VET more often because their parents anticipate that they will not have enough funds.
- 2. as **inequality between students** who are in the VET system, and refers to differences in socio-economic status that can affect the success of students during and after education.

## Equality



The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is equal treatment.

## Equity



**Everyone gets the supports they need** (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

## Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.

# Necessary (soft) skills for the XXI century

- **Communication skills:** *the ability to effectively express ideas whether verbally or in writing. It also includes the ability to build positive relationships, allowing for productive interactions with others while maintaining mutual respect.*
- **Negotiation skills:** *the ability to achieve mutually beneficial agreements through effective communication and conflict resolution.*
- **Critical thinking:** *the ability to analyse and evaluate information in order to form opinions and make informed and practical decisions.*
- **Teamwork skills:** *the ability to collaborate with others and contribute to the success of a team.*
- **Problem-solving skills:** *the ability to analyse and solve complex issues.*
- **Time management skills:** *the ability to effectively plan and prioritize tasks.*
- **Adaptability:** *the ability to adjust to new circumstances and a changing environment*



# Workshops on communication and active listening

- Public presentation
- Strengthening self-confidence

***Explain to the students what active listening is.*** Active listening is a way of participating in communication with others where we try to listen and fully understand their messages.

***Tips for students:*** a) take a friendly attitude, b) do not interrupt, c) ask if something is not clear, d) try to sum up the important things in the conversation together (what are the conclusions of the conversation).

***Divide the students into pairs*** and give them the following tasks. Each couple can go through one of the following scenarios, or come up with a topic that is meaningful to them.

1. scenario - practical class. A student explains to a classmate what challenges he has while performing practical tasks. Challenges include problems with teachers or instructors, content, practical assignments, or personal interests.
2. scenario - challenges in class. A student explains to a classmate what problems he is having with his friends, what he thinks about it and how he feels. It can include conflicts, misunderstandings, avoidance, likes, dislikes .

# Teamwork exercise

## Conflict resolution

- **Step 1:** Ask the students to think about the conflicts they have encountered so far, either individually or in a group. Everyone should recall an individual conflict and rate it in their notebook: 1 = I resolved the conflict well, 2 = The conflict I resolved so-so, 3 = The conflict I resolved poorly.
- **Step 2:** Ask them to think individually and then discuss in pairs or groups of three the following questions: What were the reactions during the conflict? What behaviours were effective in resolving conflict? What behaviours were ineffective in resolving the conflict?
- **Step 3:** Based on the small group discussion, ask each person to come up with 2-3 tips for effective conflict resolution that the class could follow if conflicts arise. Ask everyone to share their tips with the whole group and agree on a set of instructions for the class to follow.



# Professional interaction

- **During the discussion, you can give them the following tips:**
- **First contact with the client :** Greet the client politely when meeting. You can also shake hands if that is customary. State your first and last name, the company you work for, and state the reason you came.
- **Conversational tone:** communicate with the client in a calm and convincing voice. Try to calm him down and explain to him that this happens to others as well. Don't make jokes about the situation.
- **Be honest about time :** Explain to the client how long it will take you to get to them and get the job done.
- **Be honest about the price of the service :** Estimate how much the service will cost and what options the client has when paying -
- **Communication with the client:** Ask a question about the reason for your engagement. Ask for all the necessary information at the very beginning of the job. Actively listen to what the client has to say. Do not judge if the client does not have enough knowledge in your field, or if he does not maintain locks and other things that you are experts in adequately. Finally, ask the customer if he is satisfied and if he has any questions about maintenance or potential problems with the product .
- **Proximity and distance:** The conversation should have a professional but also pleasant tone.
- **Gender:** There should be no differences in approach between clients in relation to gender.

# Time management exercise

1. Divide students into groups of 4 to 5 and give each group a sheet of paper and coloured pencils.
2. Give them 10-15 minutes to make a list of tasks that can be part of their homework or activities during the practical class. For example, how to organize the preparation of materials, machines and the execution of work.
3. Ask them to prioritize each individual task based on the importance of each task and the logic of work process.
4. Finally, ask group members to give feedback to the rest of the class



# Critical review (of sources)

When searching the Internet about a topic when a piece of news or information strikes you as extreme (very good or very bad), check the following:

1. Check whether the same information or news is shared on other web sites and portals
2. Check the credibility of the source. You can rank sources according to credibility as follows:
  - a. *Scientific and professional sources .*
  - b. *Regulations and standards of institutions .*
  - c. *Textbooks.*
  - d. *Material standards and machine usage standards.*
  - e. *Pages of news agencies.*
  - f. *The social network.*

***Exercise for critical review of expert sources***

***Exercise in critically examining information on the Internet***



# Digital skills

To help students develop digital skills and literacy you can do some of the following:

1. One of the assignments could be to find online video resources about the techniques they are learning about.
2. Give them homework to create a text file (for example in *.doc* format) and send it to you via email. In this way, they will learn how to format text, but also how to adequately compose and send an email.
3. Structure some of the assignments to include a presentation (e.g. ppt) that students will present to the class individually or in groups. Presentations could include text, images, audio, and video material.
4. You can ask students to consult various sources on the Internet when preparing for class. In this way, they will learn to search different sources but also to critically assess their value.
5. Help them find useful learning apps, and encourage them to search for and use them themselves.



# Tips to reduce gender bias and social exclusion in the classroom

## **Selection of students who will answer the questions**

- It is good that the teacher, regardless of the topic, includes all students equally, regardless of their grades, gender, SES, ethnicity.

## **Feedback from teachers**

- Before you give feedback to a student, think about whether your answer would be the same if it were a student of the opposite sex, or a student whose parents are highly educated / low educated, or a student who belongs to an ethnic minority/majority. If the answer is no, then think and reformulate your answer.

# Rhythm of the class

- When you ask a question, wait a few seconds and you'll see more students will be ready to answer.
- You choose who answers.
- Don't "force" them to join but say something like "what does he/she think about this..." and if he/she doesn't have an opinion on the matter or is too shy to say it, you can say "it's ok, next time".
- Try to involve as many students as possible, because when they dare to say something, it encourages them to get involved again later.

# Encourage those who are withdrawn and inactive

- There is a proverb "silence is gold" which shows that some people are silent not because they have nothing to say, but because they are more comfortable doing so. When you ask them a question, find some aspect of their answer that is interesting and praise it. You, as a teacher, are the authority who has the power to treat all students in the same way and thereby give them a sense of dignity and self-worth



# **Gender in the VET education**

Social expectations and stereotypes about gender roles can significantly influence the choice of educational program and career path, often leading young people to give up on certain occupations.



- There is a prejudice that girls cannot be good at managing or repairing machinery, while boys cannot be good at providing beauty-related services.
- Stereotypes about women's occupations are usually associated with care and nurturing, while men's occupations require strength, rational thinking, and authority.
- Most occupations today are no longer categorized as male or female but rather performed by skilled individuals regardless of gender.
- Technological advancements have reduced the physical demands of many occupations, shifting the focus to knowledge

# Basic concepts

- **Sex** refers to the biological characteristics - we classify people into men and women.
- **Gender** refers to the social and cultural characteristics associated with being male, female, or non-binary.
- **Gender roles** refer to the expectations from individuals depending on the gender.
- **Gender inequality** refers to the unequal treatment or perception of individuals based on their gender.
- **Gender stereotypes** are simplified representations or prejudices about the characteristics that men and women possess. (Malti - Douglas, 2007) .

# Why is it important to emphasize the connections between occupations and gender?

- To open up these occupations to women
- To equip men with attitudes and skills for a world with more than one gender.



# The classroom – a few advices

- 1. **Use gender neutral language.** When something needs to be done, for example to bring or take something away, say "Can **someone in the class** take this?" rather than "Is there a **student / boy** who would take this?"
- 2. If boys are in charge of maintaining discipline in the case of a short teacher's absence during class, that role should be alternately assigned to girls. If girls are primarily involved in activities such as decorating or arranging school premises (for example during celebrations), then boys should be included in these activities to the same extent.



# Challenging gender stereotypes

There are two ways in which students can learn:

1. by following the positive examples
2. by receiving instructions from the teacher.





# Examples from the past

World War II resulted in the mass mobilization of men in numerous countries, leading to a significant decrease in the available workforce. Simultaneously, the economy had to ensure the provision of all necessities for the war effort, including ammunition, weaponry, and other supplies for the military, while also maintaining uninterrupted production of food and consumer goods for the general population. To compensate for the labor shortage, women stepped in and began working in factories, undertaking roles that were traditionally deemed suitable only for men. Many women took on tasks such as metalworking, including welding. The fact that women proved equally capable of performing these jobs effectively led to a substantial increase in female labor force participation after the war, with women being employed across various industries and in different positions.



Eugenia Deas

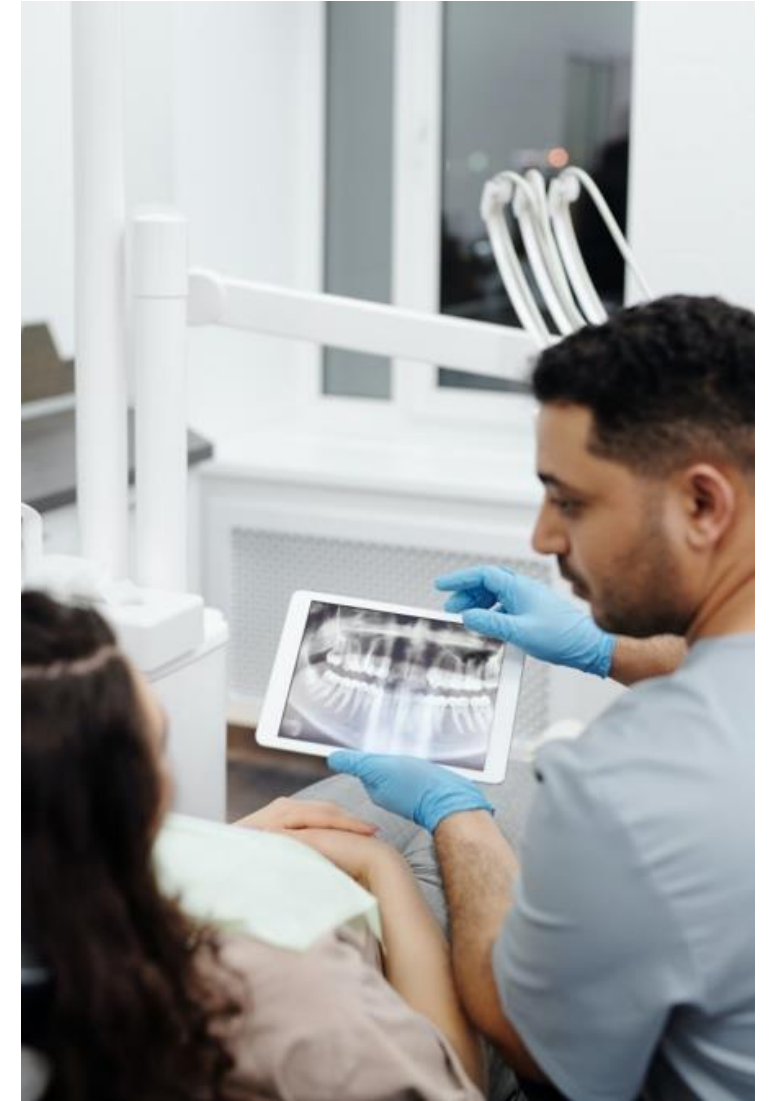


Gladys Theus

During World War II, two remarkable women, Eugenia Powell Deas and Gladys Theus, worked at a shipyard and gained recognition for their exceptional speed and skill in welding various parts of the ships.

# Examples from the past

Today, healthcare is provided to patients by nurses, and although it is now common for women to perform these roles, in the past, when this profession was just emerging, it was exclusively carried out by men. In fact, Hippocrates testifies that in ancient Greece, men were the ones who fulfilled these duties. A similar situation occurred in India and ancient Rome, where soldiers provided the best care to the sick ([Keith Rischer](#)).



# Examples from the past

**Did you know that high-heeled shoes were initially worn by men?**

They were invented in the 15th century in Persia and later introduced to Europe by traders. The aristocracy quickly developed a fondness for them as they provided added height to men. Eventually, women began adopting this fashion trend, while it gradually fell out of favour among men.



# Workshop on gender and occupations

During a class, you can start a discussion about gender and occupation.

Ask if there is a gender difference and why. How was it in the past?

After that, ask them how these same jobs are done today. Let them notice that technology has advanced and made many jobs easier. In the past, they were part of the division of labour according to sex and age.

Then you can ask them if the division of labour according to gender is justified today.

# Workshop on gender and society

- At least one class lesson during the year could be devoted to gender topics.
- 1. Introducing / reminding students what sex, gender, gender roles, gender inequalities and gender stereotypes are.
- 2. Common recognition of where gender inequalities and/or gender discrimination occur in society, but also in school (between students).
- 3. Recognition of good practices examples. ([Gačanica et al., 2020](#)).
- It is crucial to break stereotypes and allow the different ways of expressing personality (and ultimately, both *masculinity and femininity*). **The teacher should set universal values that should be a guide for students, such as honesty, knowledge, empathy, solidarity, etc.**

# **Gender, harassment and violence**

- 1. Physical violence**
- 2. Sexual violence**
- 3. Psychological violence**
- 4. Economic violence**
- 5. Symbolic violence**
- 6. Digital violence**

**Connecting with  
colleagues and peers  
from other countries**



# ERASMUS+ program

Financial support in two ways:

- 1. to support **short-term projects for the mobility of students and staf**
- 2. to support **accredited projects for the mobility of students and staff**

# eTwinning

- eTwinning allows teachers and students to work together and be inspired by the work of their colleagues from other countries through joint projects and activities, either live or online.
- To get more information about the programs and the opportunities they provide, contact the ERASMUS+ office [in your country](#)

Understanding and reducing  
social inequalities in the  
education process

# Introduction

- The aim of this guide is to assist teaching and non-teaching staff, employees working in education-related agencies, quality assurance, etc., in understanding and recognizing social inequalities and to offer some solutions on how they can contribute to reducing them.
- This publication will serve as a foundation for:
  - Teacher trainings
  - Principal trainings
  - Trainings of instructors in companies
  - School coordinators
  - External evaluators

# Introduction

## The questions:

How do social inequalities arise?  
What are the causes of inequality?

How are social inequalities reproduced?

What are the consequences of social inequalities?

What is the role of education in this process?

**Key concepts** for understanding social inequalities, along with representative examples, will be presented.

1. Social stratification (social class, economic and social capital, power)
2. Social mobility
3. Cultural capital
4. Parental involvement
5. School culture/atmosphere
6. Achievement gap
7. Educational policies
8. Intersectionality
9. Equality, Equity, Justice,
10. Life course and the accumulation of inequality

# Theoretical Approaches

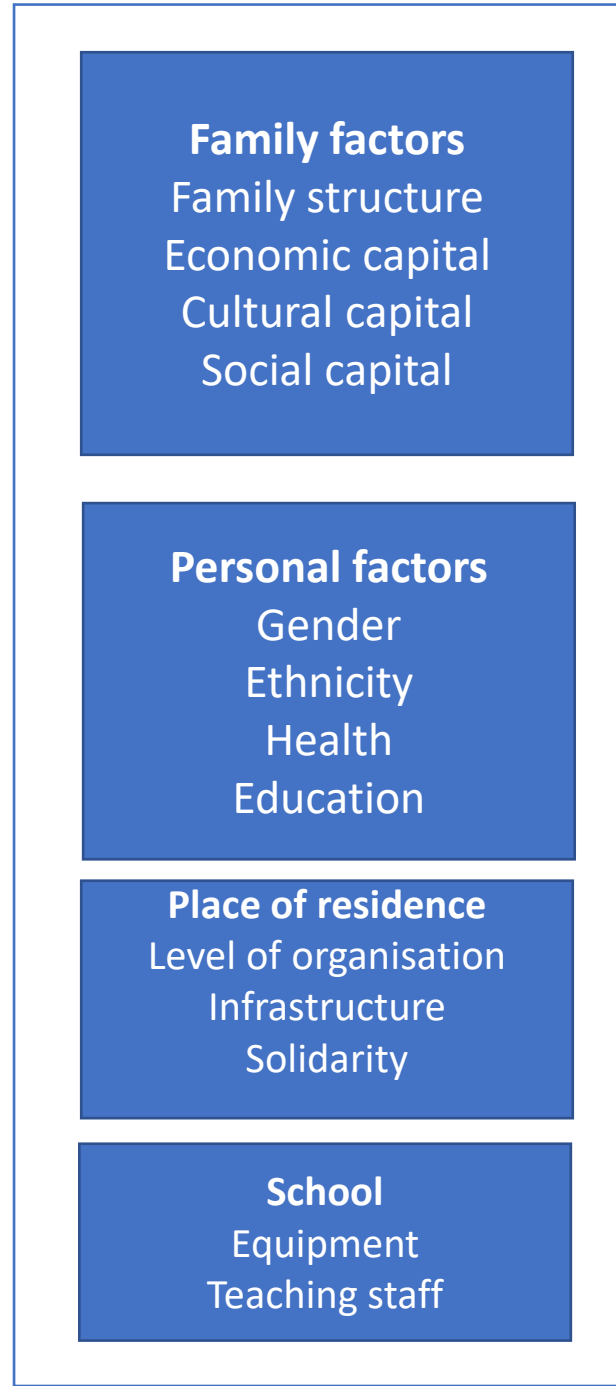
- In this chapter, we will present the current knowledge on educational inequalities, specifically addressing how we can explain the origins of these inequalities and their consequences.
  - Theories of (cultural) capital transmission (P. Bourdieu)
  - Theories of linguistic codes (B. Bernstein)
  - Rational choice theories (D. Checchi)
  - Theories of social reproduction (J. Collins)

**Policies  
(tax, income)**

**Educational  
policies**

**Social  
structure**

**Global  
processes**



**Access to  
education**

**Educational  
outcomes**

**Access to labour  
market**



# Dimensions of inequality in the educational process

1. Economic inequalities / SES of students and their families
  2. Gender inequalities
  3. Health difficulties - disabilities
  4. Ethnic inequalities
  5. Spatial inequalities
- How to recognize inequalities in school and the classroom?
  - How to reduce inequalities in school and the classroom?
  - How to raise awareness among students about inequalities outside of school (during leisure time and in the labour market)?

# Structure of the publication

## 1. Introduction

What do we mean when we talk about inequalities in education?

## 1. Theoretical approaches to studying inequality

## 2. Dimensions of inequality in the educational process

3.1. Economic inequalities / SES of students and their families

3.2. Gender inequalities

3.3. Health difficulties - disabilities

3.4. Ethnic inequalities

3.5. Spatial inequalities

Thank you for your  
attention!

# Discussion

## **1. Supporting material**

### **1. Socio-economic status of students in VET**

### **2. Gender in VET**

- Do you have good examples that should be part of the material?
- What is missing?
- What else should be here?

## **2. General study/guide**

### **Understanding and reducing social inequalities in the education process**

- Do you have good examples that should be part of the material?
- What is missing?
- What else should be here?