

**Report from the Nordic
MenEngage Conference 2017**

MAKING THE
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re[♂]form
RESOURCE CENTRE FOR MEN

**Transforming Social Norms among Boys & Men for GenderJustice in Practice.
Kuben Vocational Arena, Oslo, Norway. 16th of February 2017**

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Foreword

The social norms and practices of boys and men in the Nordic countries have a major impact on the lives of men, their families, and communities. The goal of the Nordic MenEngage Conference 2017 was to share and spread knowledge on how to work practically with boys and men to stop violence against girls, women, and others. The goal was also to exchange and develop knowledge on other practical issues in working with boys and men.

To this goal, activists, researchers, advisers and providers from organizations, campaigns, and services that work with boys and men, or have boys and men as recipients of their communications, took part in the conference. The participants included organizations working for the rights of women, children, and LGBTI-persons, human rights and social justice organizations, politicians, and engaged individuals. In all, the conference gathered 100 participants: 12 from Finland, six from Iceland, eight from Denmark, 42 from Norway, 26 from Sweden, and a dozen from Europe and beyond. In the plenary and parallel sessions, participants focused on gender justice in the Nordic

region and the specific national and local contexts that need to be taken into account. At the same time, the issues and experiences need to be shared and discussed across Europe and globally, and this was enabled by the participants from continental Europe and beyond.

The conference was organized by the Norwegian gender equality centre Reform in collaboration with Boys' House (Finland), Centre for Gender Equality (Iceland), DareGender (Denmark), MÅN (Sweden), MenEngage Global Alliance Secretariat and Profeminist Men (Finland).

By collecting in this report the highlights from the conference talks and discussions, we hope to inspire continued work for engaging boys and men in gender equality efforts.

Ole B. Nordfjell, project coordinator
Oslo, Norway, 2017

ABOUT NIKK AND THE NORDIC GENDER EQUALITY FUND

The conference was financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers' gender equality fund, which is administered by NIKK and finance projects in which Nordic countries cooperate to work for Nordic gender equality. NIKK (Nordic Information on Gender) is a cooperative body for the Nordic Council of Ministers. NIKK's mandate is to gather and share knowledge about policy and practice, facts, and research on gender equality throughout the Nordic countries and to a broad group of stakeholders. The aim is to provide knowledge that can serve as a basis for policy discussions in the Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the self-governing regions Greenland, Faroe Islands, and Åland Islands.

ABOUT REFORM

Reform is Norway's only resource centre working primarily with a male perspective on gender equality. The purpose of the foundation is to work for gender equality and against discrimination on the basis of gender, as well as to render visible men as a gender in society. Reform receives core funding from the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs (Bufdir).





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1 Opening Remarks

ARE SAASTAD (NO) Director,
Reform – Resource Centre for Men

KAI-MORTEN TERNING (NO) State Secretary
(Progress Party), Ministry of Children and Equality



State Secretary Kai-Morten Terning, to the right, receiving the recommendations from Are Saastad

Are Saastad, the director of Reform, welcomed the participants to the conference. At the end of his opening remarks, Saastad presented the State Secretary Kai-Morten Terning from the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality with *Dating Violence among Nordic Youth: Report and Recommendations from the 2016 Nordic Expert Conference on Violence in Adolescents' Intimate Relationships*. The report is the product of a Nordic collaborative project funded by the Nordic Gender Equality Fund in 2015, and it was developed by Reform together with Danish partners, Profeminist Men (FI) and Mån for Jämställdhet (SE), now MÅN. The primary recipient of the recommendations is the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality (MR-JÄM), of which Norway holds the presidency in 2017.

In his speech, State Secretary Terning addressed the need for men's involvement in working against violence and the importance of including and talking to children about sensitive issues. He said:

"Men and boys play a crucial role

when we talk about violence. Because this is not a matter that affects girls and women only, but also because men must be a part of the solution, not just the problem. Combating violence is a priority issue for the Norwegian government. It is also a priority issue in the Norwegian Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. I am looking forward to reading your recommendations, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Reform again for your work against violence.

I would also like to mention that the Norwegian government has appointed a committee of experts that will analyse cases of violence and sexual abuse against children and youth. The committee has access to confidential information from all public services. The objective is to uncover deficiencies and challenges in the public services' handling of the cases. I hope that this will lead to new insights on how to improve the system.

In my opinion, I think it is very important to inform children as early as possible, including about issues that are still shameful and considered ta-

boo. Children and youth are experts on their own lives, and they are able to contribute to the fight against violence. We need to involve them in our policy-making processes. We need to listen to them."

<https://reform.no/publikasjoner/dating-violence-among-nordic-youth/>

2 Panel: The Voices of Young Male Feminists from the Nordic Countries

PIV LA COUR FREIESLEBEN (DK) Co-Founder and activist, DareGender
SHANGA AZIZ (SE) Founder and activist, Locker Room Talk
LUCA DALEN ESPSETH (NO) Counsellor, FRI Gender Diversity
ALEXANDER BLUM BERTELSEN (DK) Student



From the left: Alexander Blum Bertelsen, Shanga Aziz, and Luca Dalen Espseth

The moderator of the panel, Piv la Cour Freiesleben, introduced the panel telling that, in recent years, more young men are promoting gender equality and are questioning and challenging stereotypes of gender and masculinity. We invited three young male feminists to debate challenges and perspectives on gender equality. Which shortcomings do they see? Which challenges do they experience as young men? And what do they think about the future?

Each of the panelists started with presenting themselves and what had triggered their engagement for gender equality and anti-discrimination. Aziz told the story of why he started the project Locker Room Talk, in which they go into sports clubs and locker rooms talking to boys aged 10 to 14 about gender and masculinities. For Aziz, the involvement started as a reaction to the negative attitude towards women and LGBT+ people that you can find in many locker rooms. Something needed to be done, he thought. "Women have fought for equality for more than 100 years, and now is the time for men to take responsibility for one of our biggest challenges," he said in the panel.

Speaking of his journey of growing up as a woman and starting to live as a man in his twenties, Espseth made the audience pay close attention. He gave several examples of how men, also outside the locker room, are blinded by their own gendered perceptions.

Having spent his adolescence in party politics, Bertelsen spoke of a different entry into the issue of gender equality. Gender equality and identities are very much part of youth politics, but is framed in a competitive and not very inclusive environment, with debates providing rock-solid answers. What he now is more interested in, Bertelsen said, is dialog and co-creating awareness and transforming firm power relations. An approach based on empathy and curiosity may open up identity politics.

TALKING TO YOUNG MEN ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY

The panel addressed the importance of reaching young men and talking to them about gender, gender equality, and identity, like in the project Locker Room Talk. The younger the boys are, the easier it is to make a positive

impact and for the boys to understand the importance of treating all genders equal. Talking to boys at the age of ten is often more beneficial, because the boys are more open to listening and have not yet been formed by the patriarchal language and way of thinking. This makes it easier to have a discussion about gender equality and the impact of talking negatively about girls or using gender stereotypes.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES

The panelists' different backgrounds and perspectives on how to transform social norms and obtain gender solidarity and gender justice made it clear that it is important to use different approaches to reach different groups of men. The target group men is far from one homogenous group, and what works for some people might not work for others.

In other words: We need both the angry feminist and the pedagogic feminist. They are equally important.

3 Key Note: Rethinking Intersectionality: Privilege, Diversity and Equality

THOMAS WALLE (NO)



Thomas Walle

My point of departure in this talk is: How do we engage men and boys in challenging structural hierarchies and develop masculinities that can promote gender justice?

An analytic concept growing out of the black feminist movement and subsequently adopted by the wider field of gender and ethnicity research, intersectionality has gained ever more prominence as diversity in gender expression and sexualities has been politically acknowledged. With its focus on discrimination and oppression, it could be argued that intersectionality is less well suited as a perspective to engage men and boys positively in equality work. Where is the space for boys and men to take a positive stand?

There are two risks in using the concept of intersectionality to engage men and boys in equality work. The first is a strategy that places all the blame for oppression and discrimination on individual members of a category. While discrimination is structural, that does not mean all individuals of a given group are involved in discriminatory practices. The second risk is a strategy that, by placing particular value on the participation of members of the given category, reinforces the hierarchical position that one sets out to challenge.

INEQUALITY IS STRUCTURAL

The way I see it, inequality is structurally manifested and have structural causes. Categories of people are affected. There is a shift in policies (in Norway, but also in many other countries) towards a more individualised understanding of inequality and discrimination, as something that happens to individuals and that have individual or particularistic causes.

Not *all* men are violent, but the structures that create a situation where men are the most violent are the responsibility of all (and by this, I do not mean all *men*, only).

I see inequalities that affect men as a group negatively to have structural causes. To some extent, I would argue that it is the *same* structural mechanisms that produce inequalities, independent of what kind of discrimination we are talking about. My concern is both to address the differentiating, inequality-producing structures as such, and to highlight how structural mechanisms are maintained and *made invisible*.

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT PRIVILEGES

Is it possible to acknowledge the privileges you hold at the expense of others, without closing your eyes or trying to run away?

Gender researchers and feminists have developed tools to identify discrimination. Often this is seen as consequences of suffering under the domination of the stereotyped privileged being: The white, heterosexual, able-bodied, middle class male holding an influential position with good salary. While such stereotypes may refer to some real differentiating structures in a world of complex relations, there is a poorly developed language for those fitting under these characteristics to speak from a position at the top of the structural hierarchies.

Despite the seemingly universal case of men's structural position of power, most men will not see themselves as possessors of such power. This insight was gathered in the early years of masculinity studies. A person's understanding of own privileges are seldom in accordance with the hierarchical position this person holds by means of belonging to a certain segment of society. People who experience discrimination and oppression will find strength in joining up with others in a similar situation. Those being in a privileged position, however, will find it beneficial to present it as a result of individual achievements.

To be privileged, therefore, is not about being fortunate, or talented, but about an obligation

Obviously, power and privilege are not reserved only for the above-mentioned group of men. Discriminating and oppressive structures are complex. There are several mechanisms at work when a person climbs the social ladder based on a combination of personal abilities and a convenient placement in a complex system. There are women more eager to protect their own standing, once they reach a position of influence, than to challenge existing relations of power, even if their achievements may have been the result of feminist struggles. This is also a case of privilege, and the corresponding disadvantage of others. To be privileged, therefore, is not about being fortunate, or talented, but about an obligation to consider the consequences of the benefits you have.

Critical men's studies emerged partly as a result of some men becoming aware of the privileges they had, purely based on their sex. A natural reaction to such a revelation would be to change one's own behaviour, in order not to contribute to oppression, discrimination, violence, and harassment. And at the same time raise awareness among other men about the unjust distribution of power, impact, possibilities, and safety.

On an individual level, this may be the best you can do, but it does

not let you escape the hierarchical structures that continue to operate to your advantage. Men, as a group, continue to be privileged, and you, as a man, may draw benefits from it: In the job offers you get, your salary, and the amount of time allotted to your words.

There are parallels here to being accountable for your whiteness in a society where racialization is part of the differentiating structures (with the obvious reservation taken for the fact that racialization may find different manifestations in different societies): Being an anti-racist does not make you non-white so that you can escape the responsibilities of embodying the oppressive structures that rank people based on the colour of their skin and that leave material traces.

As privileged persons, we must develop an awareness for continuously asking ourselves whether being a man (or, I should rush to add, member of any category that tends to rank at the top of a hierarchical dimension) constitutes a difference that gives an advantage.

The neoliberal wave that is apparent in many countries puts emphasis on individual freedom of choice, but at the same time pushes the responsibility for achieving equality at the level of society onto the individual. The current government in Norway, while seeing gender equality as an important value, are less willing to address the structural reasons for the continued gender inequality. The reduction in the paternity leave is only one of several indications of a different take on how to solve the problem (or the lack of a realisation that there is a problem at all). There is a paradox here, however, that the same politicians see culture as an explanatory factor when it comes to gender inequality among migrant and ethnic minority groups.

While the responsibility for reaching equality is shifted from state level to the individual, the responsibility on the individual for the inequality that comes as a result of being privileged is weakened. Discrimination and discriminatory practices are often felt more strongly by those subject to it, than by those who benefit from social hierarchies. When someone is not given a job they applied to, based on their foreign-sounding name (as research has shown), someone else are given the same job based on their name.

It should be added, as already indicated, that women, too, may benefit from hierarchical structures. This could be seen as an argument for a law that addresses all forms of discrimination in combination, rather than the current situation in Norway where gender discrimination is singled out in a separate law. There is a risk in the current political climate, however, that such a strategy strengthens the notion that discrimination affects people as individuals, not as members of a social group. In such a scenario, the idea of seeing structural hierarchies as intersecting may suffer.

The *intersectional* perspective has been integral to the development of masculinity theories, by the analytic acknowledgement of how class, ethnicity, 'race', and sexuality work together to produce complex relations of power between categories of men – and between individual men.

Different from an additive perspective that measures the degree of structural subordination as the sum of each discriminatory formation, intersectionality suggests that the combination of discriminatory formations in a given context may turn the structural hierarchies on its head.

When Kimberlé Crenshaw launched the concept of intersectionality, the aim was to highlight how multiple forms of discrimination jointly may be legally regarded discriminatory, in cases where discrimination based on a single criterion cannot be established. Different from an additive perspective that measures the degree of structural subordination as the sum of each discriminatory formation, intersectionality suggests that the combination of discriminatory formations in a given context may turn the structural hierarchies on its head. Being a man will not always work in your favour, despite men globally being seen as the privileged gender. Talking of double or triple discrimination, therefore, relies on a stability of the discriminatory formations that are not compatible with the need for contextual analysis that intersectionality encourages.

As a sensitizing concept, intersectionality increases awareness of the multiple differentiating dimensions that may, but need not, be of influence in a given situation. There are certain limitations, however, because intersectionality as a concept derives from the field of law. Emphasis is directed towards discrimination and social categories that contribute to a person being discriminated against. I think we could gain a lot by turning intersectionality on its head and look closer at the privileging that occur at any given time. Even if a person may claim belonging to a group that, relative to others groups, are placed in a subordinate position, this cannot be an excuse for not being accountable for those privileges they may enjoy through other differentiating structures, at the cost of others. As with discrimination, privileges cannot be summed up by simply adding together your position in multiple, stable hierarchies of power. The infamous privileged male presented above is therefore only a stereotype of a person who do not critically consider

their position at the top in a given situation, disregarding that person's gender, ableness, class, sexuality, and so forth.

It is this critical consideration of own privileges that I wish to promote. We need to start a conversation where we not only manage to disclose discrimination and oppression, or where we identify the exertion of structural power by others, but where we also make a clear statement about the privileges that are to our benefit. The aim is twofold: First, to shift responsibility for calling out structural differentiation from those that are subordinated and discriminated against. Second, to strengthen the point that privileges have the same structural causes as discrimination.

It is my hope and belief that this may also present a more viable way for men and boys to engage in promoting gender justice. I find it ill-advised to start the conversation by stating that men are statistically, or worse inherently, prone to oppression, discrimination, and even violence, demanding of boys and men to distance themselves from what is essentially societies' image of men. Some may then denounce the problem altogether, while others struggle for a way to state that they are *not* that kind of man (and thus, self-presentation through negation). I think we are better served by being accountable for the privileges that we hold, and by starting this conversation, we can invite other groups into acknowledging how privileging is complex and intersectional.

For someone who wishes to stand up against injustice and discrimination, it can be despairing to see that the hierarchies of power that you are fighting, continue to work to your benefit. This is, however, a discomfort that we are obliged to accept and that is not comparable to the pain we may cause others.

I find it ill-advised to start the conversation by stating that men are statistically, or worse inherently, prone to oppression, discrimination, and even violence

4 Introduction to the Session: Engage Boys and Men in Anti-Violence Efforts

LUIS LINEO (SE) President, MÅN

In the introduction to the session, Lineo underlined that ending boys' and men's violence against women is an issue close to heart for the NGO MÅN and for him personally. In cooperation with other partners, MÅN is engaged in numerous projects and initiatives aimed at reducing men's violence and redefining masculinity. Two of the projects presented in the session, FattaMan and Killfrågor, are run by MÅN. The third is a pilot project, MandSnak, by the Danish NGO DareGender.

Thirty participants signed up for this parallel session, making it the most popular parallel session at the conference. Many of the participants were themselves involved in violence prevention, and in the round of presentation they were asked to give examples of current challenges in engaging men in this work. Challenges mentioned were:

- The great diversity in ways of being a man, including intersections with other aspects of identity, is a challenge in the development of programs.
- Inaccurate descriptions of boys' and men's violence, how many are targeted, and the severity of the violence, are another problem. If men's violence is made larger than it is, this could have negative consequences and become a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, ignoring gendered aspects of violence should also be avoided.

- When the media addresses issues of men and masculinity, it is most often in negative terms. Masculinity is associated with violence, rape, and other unwanted practices, and most boys and men do not feel that these issues are about them - or they feel falsely accused. To start with a positive story may be a better approach.
- Locker rooms and men-only spaces are not the problem; rather, men-only spaces can be used to address gender equality and help men to open up. One of the participants noted that, for him, the locker room is "one of the last spaces in society where I can be a man." Some commented that it is also misleading to assume that most men consent to, and are comfortable with, so-called locker room talk.



From the left: Mattias Ram, Svante Tidholm, Henriette Højberg and Luis Lineo

5 The Project FattaMan | Get It Man

SVANTE TIDHOLM (SE) Project manager for FattaMan, MÅN



Everyone knows a victim of sexual abuse, but no one knows a perpetrator

The aim of the project FattaMan is twofold. Firstly, the project wants to help boys and men to take responsibility for and take part in the positive development of sexual consent in practice, including working for an improved legislation. Secondly, the project wants to help boys and men to develop a masculinity free from sexualized violence. The project is now nearing its end, but the organizations involved will continue the work as part of other projects and endeavours.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

The project has been one of several branches of the large Swedish campaign Fatta/Get it, which started as a social movement and public revolt after the acquittal of the perpetrators in a couple of severe rape cases. From the start, one of the campaign goals has been to bring explicit consent into the rape legislation, as well as obtaining social justice in a broader sense. The mother campaign, Fatta, makes use of a wide range of activities and means of influence, including panel discussions and demonstrations, the writing of articles, production of jewellery and clothes, meetings with politicians and other people with power, lectures and speeches, and activist gatherings.

APPROACH

One of the premises of FattaMan is that boys and men are expected to change and to take a public stand against sexualized violence. Tidholm used statements like "No one is born a rapist" and "Everyone knows a victim of sexual abuse, but no one knows a perpetrator" to spark reflection around the role of men in violence prevention. From this point of departure, the project has sought

to bring discussions of sexual consent and violence into man-to-man conversations, while at the same having a continuous cooperation with the broader Fatta movement and the women there.

Tidholm emphasized the importance of framing consent and anti-violence in positive ways, for instance as a way out from typical problems of men, such as isolation and loneliness.

MATERIALS:

UTRYMMET.SE/FATTAMAN

Tidholm showed the participants FattaMan's digital platform with different lessons and corresponding slide presentations that include videos, illustrations, questions, and guide for the trainers. The platform enables participants in classroom settings to use their phones to give immediate, anonymous responses to questions asked. Tidholm demonstrated how the responses of the participants are polled and used in the presentations. To facilitate good discussions, the project has produced several videos on the topic of sexual violence and given Swedish captions to the popular British animation video "Tea Consent."

MUSIC AND PODCASTS

As part of the project development, FattaMan has made an endeavour to find men that support the campaign and are role models for young men. The project did for example commission the song and music video "Det Börjar Med Mig" (It Starts with Me) by the popular and renowned rap artists Adam Tensta, Erik Rapp, Zacke and Parham. In addition, FattaMan has produced a dozen podcasts with men interviewing other men about sex, violence, and friendship.



6 The Chat Service Killfrågor.se | Questions Boys Ask

MATTIAS RAM (SE) Project manager for Killfrågor, MÄN

On the website killfrågor.se, boys and young men can chat anonymously with or email adult volunteers about anything they think about today: questions concerning school, bullying, family, friends, violence, love, sex, and so on.

Ram started by addressing the question “Why is there a need for a specialised chat service for boys in Sweden?” Firstly, Ram stated, some boys suffer serious problems, and boys are overrepresented among early deaths, suicides, and as perpetrators of crime and sexual violence. Secondly, many boys do not know how to share problems or help their peers with troubles they go through. Thirdly, before Killfrågor.se, no such service for boys existed in Sweden.

Ram explained that a lot of work goes into promoting the service and increasing the number of boys using the chat. The service is made known through school visits, health services, media talks, Facebook ads, and more. One goal of the service is to support boys in talking about feelings and seeking help, in different arenas and relations. In this way, the project stands with boys and against predetermined notions of how boys and young men are supposed to be.

One goal of the service is to support boys in talking about feelings

7 The Project MandSnak | ManTalk

HENRIETTE HØJBERG (DK) Co-founder and director,
DareGender

DareGender, the organization behind the planned project ManTalk, is a new NGO started up in 2016, that organize debates and projects with the goal of engaging all genders in the work for gender equality.

Højberg explained that the project ManTalk springs from the organization's ambition to address acute problems to gender equality and find solutions off the beaten path. It is an ongoing problem that some boys and young men share nude pictures of others without consent or send so-called "dick pics" to unwilling recipients. A connected problem is that of sexism, as manifested in sexual harassment by young people on the dating scene and in the nightlife. Such practices also have negative consequences for the boys and men enacting them, and a goal of the project is to reach out to the young men in question, something no one else is doing today, apart from the police.

The planned chat service could be a first step in another direction, Højberg said. Drawing on research, she told the participants that boys and young men often report a better mental and physical health than is the actual case. The launch of a phone counselling service for young men between 15-25 years can also reach a broader audience of men in need of someone to talk to, and lower the threshold for getting in contact with other helpers.

Henriette Højberg



8 Introduction to the Session: Engage Boys and Men in Care Work

TRYGGVI HALLGRÍMSSON (IS) Special adviser,
Centre for Gender Equality

An uneven gendered distribution of professional and private care work is pervasive in the Nordic and European countries, although there are also positive developments and examples. In this workshop, we discussed problems and possibilities for breaking with structures and stereotypes, demonstrated through projects from Iceland and Slovenia.



Tryggvi Hallgrímsson

9 Increasing the Enrolment of Men in Nursing in Iceland

GÍSLI KORT KRISTÓFERSSON (IS) Assistant Professor,
School of Health Sciences, University of Akureyri

The University of Akureyri, in cooperation with the Icelandic Centre for Gender Equality, has been engaged for the last few months in a project to increase the enrolment of men in nursing in Iceland. This is in accordance with the gender equality policy of the University of Akureyri and with official policies to be enforced by the Icelandic Centre for Gender Equality, in which the emphasis is on rectifying unequal gender distribution in different fields that require vocational and university training.

Only 2 %
of the current
Icelandic nursing
population
are men



Gisli Kort Kristófersson

Currently, only 5 % of registered students in the University of Akureyri Department of Nursing are men, and only 2 % of the current Icelandic nursing population are men. While in Italy men make up 25 % of nurses and in the Scandinavian countries and the United States around 10 %. This begs the question of why the country that consistently scores at the top of the World Economic Forum's gender gap report lag far behind many countries that are much farther back on the same list when it comes to male participation in the traditional female role of nursing. What are we doing wrong, or, perhaps more accurately, how are we thinking wrong?

The University of Akureyri and the Centre for Gender Equality are devising a sustainable and specific plan of action to increase the enrolment of men in the nursing program at the University of Akureyri. One part of the project aims to advocate nursing as an option for men in junior college. This would be done in collaboration with the Icelandic Nurses' Association, through scholarships for men in nursing school, and through a social media campaign already underway that emphasises male role models in nursing. Gender quotas and specific spots for men in the nursing program at the University of Akureyri are other options to increase male enrolment in the program.

10 Work-Life Balance of Employed Fathers in Slovenia: Challenges and Visions of a Pilot Experiment in Four Organizations

ŽIVA HUMER (SI) and **MOJCA FRELIH (SI)** Researchers,
Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies in Ljubljana

The role of fathers in contemporary families is changing, but gender inequalities in sharing household work and care work still persist. In the latest survey of fathers in Slovenia, conducted within the project "Fathers and Employers in Action – ODA," the results show that fathers perceive their role in its entirety, including emotional support for the child, financial support of the family, spending free time with the child, and supporting the child in everyday tasks. As many as 80 % of fathers are facing conflicts in work-life balance. Worst positioned are the men on opposite ends of the employment spectre: fathers in precarious working conditions and fathers in managerial and leading positions.

Employment is one of the key factors that affect the involvement of fathers in family life. In neoliberal conditions, work organizations are based on the concept of an "ideal worker" who is unburdened with care and family obligations, and which derive from a traditional gender role division. According to the traditional gender role division, women prioritise motherhood and unpaid care work in the family before their own career, while men do the opposite, and the organizations encourage that model. However, many men strive to transcend traditional gender roles and to achieve greater equality in

**It turned out
that the fathers
were not aware
of the existing
possibilities of
work-life balance
measures in the
organizations.**

partnerships, especially through active fatherhood. These men do not necessarily always enjoy support from their employers. Therefore, it is important to foster caring masculinities at the level of work organizations and raise awareness among employers about the importance of work-life balance.

Work-life balance measures in organizations can have positive effects on employees (satisfaction with life, stronger relationships with children and partner) and their families; organizations (greater loyalty and productivity of the employee); and society in general (variety of knowledge and skills, gender equality as a practice and basic principle of the society). These were the starting points of the project "Fathers and Employers in Action – ODA", which focussed on father-friendly measures for work-life balance in four selected organizations (the police, the public Radio-television Slovenia, the IT company Support & Trade, and the transportation company GoOpti) in Slovenia. The duration of the pilot experiment was six months, in which involved fathers were balancing their working and family life by implementing tailor-made measures. The model "Flexible package of measures ODA" was developed in cooperation with employees, employers, trade unions, and a project team aiming



Živa Humer and Mojca Frelj

to enable easier work-life balance of fathers.

Before the pilot experiment, the involved fathers from the four organizations reported a lack of understanding from employers for their needs regarding work-life balance. They also reported a lack of communication between them and their superiors (middle management). It turned out that the fathers were not aware of the existing possibilities of work-life balance measures in the organizations. Some of them also reported that they felt discomfort when using work-life balance measures.

Upon the needs assessment of fathers, work-life balance measures were developed. These included communication between project team, involved fathers, and the leadership; workshops for fathers (upon father's needs); services for families; work from home arrangements; etc. After six months of pilot testing, involved fathers and employers were asked to evaluate the pilot experiment. According to the evaluation, fathers were extremely satisfied with the pilot testing, in particular with the workshops, with newly gained knowledge, and with exchanging experiences of fathering among themselves. Some fathers also reported that their active engagement in care for children had a positive influence on their female partners, giving these

more free time and less stress at work since care for children were more equally divided in the partnership. Positive changes were also observed among employers, especially when it came to communication with employees and the recognition of the care needs of working fathers. Work-life balance became a topic of conversation in the work environments. This can be perceived as a positive element for building trust among the whole staff, facilitating the common search for solutions to various problems of work-life balance.

Last, but not least, the involvement of fathers in actively reconciling their work and care obligations represents the emancipation of men and presents a step forward to gender equality.

For more information about the project "Fathers and Employers in Action – ODA" (2015-2016; financed by Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014), please see: <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/en/enakopraven-oce/>

Positive changes were also observed among employers, especially when it came to communication ...

11 Fathering from the Margins of Late-Capitalist Labour Markets

MAJDA HRŽENJAK (SI) Researcher, Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies in Ljubljana

In public debates, active fatherhood is often considered an issue of men's identity change and of raising men's awareness about the importance of an equal division of care work for gender equality and the benefit of children. However, this view often ignores the fact that the possibilities of individual change are defined by broader structures, policies, and organizations that can enable, hinder, or even punish individual change. The labour market is one such critical structure. This is not only due to the traditional identification of masculinity with paid work and breadwinning, but also because the position of men in the labour market determines their access to the resources and time dedicated to fathering. Social and employment policies link social rights, including parental ones, to a standard, full-time, permanent employment. Workers employed in individualised employment such as self-employment and contract work are excluded from numerous parental rights, such as paid paternal leave, childcare leave, and paid annual holidays. This establishes legalised inequalities and represents a structural obstacle for men holding precarious employment to engage in involved fatherhood.

The narratives of precarious workers, based on 11 in-depth interviews with fathers in precarious employments, introduce the perspective of a deprived margin of the labour market to

the discussion of work-life balance. Men as employees have heterogeneous positions in the labour market, and non-standard and precarious employment impact their possibilities for balancing work and fathering. This view implies a critical reflection of the impact of neoliberal labour markets on caring masculinity.

THE SLOVENIAN CONTEXT

The Slovenian context of fatherhood is somewhat particular, due to the socialist experience of full-time employment and economic emancipation of women after the Second World War. This resulted in one of EU's most notable examples of the dual breadwinner model in which both men and women participate in paid, full-time work. In 2015, among the more than 80 % of Slovenian women between the age of 24 – 54 years old working, only 14.8 % worked part-time. In EU, the average working part-time was 31.5 %.

Within the framework of the former socialist common country Yugoslavia, childcare was socialised through the establishment of a public, subsidised, and universally accessible network of preschools and a quality scheme of parental rights, which in transition was even upgraded with the introduction of paternity leave in 2003. The uptake of 20 days of non-transferable fully-paid paternity leave is approximately 85 % of fathers.

Nowadays, nonstandard employments make up 41 % of all employment in Slovenia



Majda Hrženjak

LABOUR MARKET PRECARISATION

During the transition, the public childcare system was deconstructed in many Eastern European countries. In Slovenia, this was not the case; Slovenia retained a high level of socialisation of childcare. But, the labour market experienced deep changes that are revealed in the flexibilisation, dualisation, intensification, and precarisation of work. This implies a reduction in the number of standard working relations (such as continued open-ended contracts, full-time work hours, one employer, and access to social rights) and a rise in the number of non-standard employments (such as part-time work that does not bring enough income, temporary work that is uncertain, and self-employment and contract work that is excepted from social and labour protection). Nowadays, nonstandard employments make up 41 % of all employment in Slovenia, and the flexibilisation of labour has mostly affected young people, i.e. potential or actual parents of young children. Seventy-six percent of first employments are short-term and fixed-term jobs.

The precarisation of labour affects both women and men, but in different ways. The feminised non-standard form of work typically refers to part-time employment. Men predominate in self-employment, contract work, and agency work. The difference is that fixed-term and part-time work is performed within work organizations with employees having a proportional share of social rights deriving from labour. Self-employment and contract work, on the other hand, are distinctly de-regularised, individualised jobs that are exempt from labour rights and, in the case of agency work, also subjected to rough exploitation. The increasing share of precarious, non-standard employment leads to employees' dependency and non-autonomy in relation to their employer, and the subordination of other spheres of life, including parenthood, to paid work.

Although traditional male-female roles are reversed, these situations represent a re-traditionalisation of gender roles ...

RELATIONS BETWEEN PRECARIOUS WORK AND FATHERING

The question pursued in the analysis of the 11 interviews conducted is: how do fathers' precarious employment positions enable them to realise involved fatherhood? Fathers in precarious employment are not a homogeneous group; they face diverse working conditions, workloads, degrees of autonomy vis-à-vis employers and customers, various forms of flexibilization, and degrees of uncertainty. Based on the fathers' narratives, there are three distinctly different types of relations between precarious work and fathering.

The first type involves self-employed fathers and small entrepreneurs. These working fathers take on every order they receive regardless of family obligations and plans, and they do not have much autonomy when it comes to organizing their work time. Their work is not measured by hours, but by completed orders, and the work must be finished within certain deadlines and cannot be done from home. The primary problems faced by these workers are economic coercion to be 100 % available to customers and employers, the unpredictability of work with simultaneous inflexible timeframes for the execution of work, and their irreplaceability at work.

The second type of relation involves fathers in less flexible forms of precarious employment, with a relatively stable workload and timeframes, but who only have fixed-term employment. These fathers are very careful in using leaves of absence, sick leave, and paternal leave, because they fear their employer will not extend their contract if they do not live up to the norm of the ideal, care-free worker.

The third type could be named a "reversal of gender roles" and includes fathers who perform occasional work under contract or as self-employed. They are mostly underemployed

and representatives of the highly educated young population. They are concentrated in lower jobs with an income that does not enable survival, they do not have social rights, and they work less time than they would want, in jobs in which they do not use their education. If their partners are engaged in standard employment, the traditional model of the male breadwinner - female carer is reversed. The partners establish a strong alliance that aims to preserve at any cost the female partner's standard employment because it enables the survival of the family. In these cases, fathers take on most of the domestic work besides full childcare, which limits the time they can devote to work. Fathers in this group strive to stay in business and take order, but are often doing their work at night when their children go to bed or during the afternoon rest or preschool. They totally subordinate their work to their children's care needs and the needs of their partner's employment, putting their own careers on hold. Although traditional male-female roles are reversed, these situations represent a re-traditionalisation of gender roles because of the inability of professional fulfilment, surplus of responsibility for unpaid care work, and economic dependence of one of the partners.

An important feature of precarious employment is that work often takes place outside standard hours, on weekends, holidays, at night, in the evening, and on afternoons. This generates childcare problems as the public network of preschools is organized to cater for parents holding standard, day-time employment. Such a situation makes parents in precarious employments dependent on private, informal help with care for the children. While childcare for employees in standard employments is a public concern, for precarious workers childcare turns into a private issue.

The ideal worker - a self-sufficient, competitive, independent individual who is mobile, flexible, fully available, fully focused on paid work and above all without caring responsibilities - is turning into a dominant norm in the neoliberal labour markets.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the fathers' narratives show that precarious work conditions enable fathers to be intensely involved in childcare mainly when their employment form approaches standard employment in its characteristics of stability and predictability of working hours and a guaranteed workload. When work is unpredictable and the worker is in the situation of either taking or losing the job, the reconciliation of work and fatherhood is hard because the organization of everyday life is subordinated to work requirements. In the context of crisis and high unemployment rate, the traditional pattern of men's complete involvement in the work sphere is strengthened. The ideal worker - a self-sufficient, competitive, independent individual who is mobile, flexible, fully available, fully focused on paid work and above all without caring responsibilities - is turning into a dominant norm in the neoliberal labour markets. This hits men in individualized contract jobs, agency work, or self-employed jobs very hard. In families where both parents are precarious workers, the pressure of breadwinning for men is strong. In families where a female partner has a standard safe job, men are forced to take full responsibility for domestic and care work, meaning that men and women are becoming more equal, but in disadvantages, not in advantages.

For more information about the project "Fathers and Employers in Action - ODA" (2015-2016; financed by Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014), please see:

<http://www.mirovni-institut.si/en/enakopraven-oce/>

12 The Session: Expanding the Ideals of Gender

KIMMO SAASTAMOINEN (FI) and KALLE LAANTERÄ (FI)
Counsellor and Manager, Poikien Talo | Boys' House, Helsinki



The aim of the workshop was to gather professionals and activists to reflect on and discuss the concept of gender and more specifically masculinity, and find new tools to expand often limited perceptions when working with youth in different environments.

The workshop gathered about 50 participants, led by Saastamoinen and Laanterä. When entering the workshop space, each participant was asked to select a photograph which represented masculinity, either traditional or modern. In addition to introducing themselves and their backgrounds, the participants had a chance to share what made them curious about the masculinity represented in the photograph. The conversation explored the diversity of gender, especially among men, and acknowledged that the public image of men and masculinity might appear a bit problem-centered.

Here are snapshots of accounts of masculinity in the pictures:

“In this picture, I see an older man exercising, looking like he’s trying too hard. I don’t want to end up being this person when I’m at his age.”

“This is a portrait of the film director John Waters. I picked up this specific photograph because he’s from my hometown Baltimore. He’s sharp dressed in a suit and all, but at the same time he has a rat on his shoulder. It makes me conscious that even though things appear nice and neat there are dark elements behind the façade.”

“When I look at this photograph of two boys playing on the meadow and just staying care-free, I can recall the time when I was young. This photograph expresses the values that I want to teach my own son, and that you don’t have to try and push it too hard.”

The very same video I remembered as very heterosexual had somehow transformed into a homoerotic dance video.

“The picture I imagine is one of my childhood’s greatest boybands, Backstreet Boys. Me and very many of my female friends were huge fans of this group, and they were a big part of our desire for boys at the time. Thinking back, there was never a question if these boys were anything other than heterosexual and masculine men. But later on, as I grew older, I revisited one of their music videos and I was stunned. The very same video I remembered as very heterosexual had somehow transformed into a homoerotic dance video. The notion that a group of boys dancing in the rain with open shirts and singing “quit playing games with my heart” could be seen as heterosexual 15 years ago and now as homosexual fascinates me. It says something about how fast our conceptions of both sexuality and masculinity actually do change.”

The other part of the workshop included three conversational “spots” where the participants, divided into smaller groups, discussed different topics. The topics were: own reflections on gender and how these attitudes affect our interaction on daily basis; different methods to expand the ideals and images of gender when fostering children and youth; and how men and masculinity are depicted in the Nordic countries through, for instance, different mediums and popular culture.

Among the workshop participants, there was a quite clear consensus on tools and approaches that would be essential when helping the youth to become responsible and sensitive adults. Tools included norm-critical thinking and approaches; gender-sensitivity that should begin during one’s early years; increasing demand for safe spaces; and paying attention to the language and terminology that we use.

13 The Session: Organizing the Upcoming 3rd Global Symposium for Men and Gender Equality

BERT BJARLAND (FI) Activist, Profeministmiehet | Profeminist Men

LAXMAN BELBASE Global Networks Manager, MenEngage Alliance -Global Secretariat, Washington



Bert Bjarland and
Laxman Belbase

The objectives of the session were to: 1) learn about the history of MenEngage Symposiums and the rationale of such gathering; 2) understand how MenEngage members in the Nordic region have utilized the symposium and its outcomes; and 3) collate some strategic inputs for the 3rd MenEngage Global Symposium.

THE HISTORY OF THE GLOBAL SYMPOSIUMS

Todd Minerson, Co-Chair of MenEngage Alliance, presented about the historical background of the symposiums and their rationale. The 1st Global Symposium in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2009, was the first ever global gathering of NGOs, academics, policymakers, UN officials, youth leaders, and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The symposium was organized with the objective to exchange ideas and experiences, to forge collective actions for engaging men and boys in achieving gender equality and

social justice, and to foster the global network in the field.

The 2nd Global Symposium in New Delhi, India, in 2014, brought together 1,200 delegates from 95 countries and had over 60 sessions, 100 oral presentations, and 50 poster presentations. This symposium marked the further maturing of the MenEngage Alliance's political stance, placing patriarchy at the centre of our problem analysis and deepening an intersectional understanding of how gender interplays with matters of race, class, economic status, age, etc. Minerson concluded: "The main lesson learnt was that deepening the critical analysis is fundamental but challenging work, and this space strengthened trust and goodwill, increased collaboration, and demonstrated commitment to intersectional feminist principles. Despite the intense efforts some perspectives still felt left out."

HOW MENENGAGE MEMBERS IN THE NORDIC REGION HAVE UTILIZED THE SYMPOSIUM AND ITS OUTCOMES

The majority of participants affirmed the relevance of organizing the global symposium, since it is the only sort of global event that brings concrete focus on the issues of men and masculinities. Such events can provide a global forum for critical reflection; the sharing of promising practices on programming, communications, and advocacy; and discussion on the issues of "transforming masculinities and engaging boys and men in gender equality."

All the participants felt that the MenEngage declarations and calls for Actions are great tools for the members and networks, and they confirmed they have been using these tools in various ways in their programming and advocacy, including analytical write-ups. Some participants had used the declarations and calls for action to



From the left: Are Saastad (Reform), Dag Endal (FORUT), Thomas Walle, Hilde Røren (CARE), Rezan Saleh (AIDA), Magnus Jacobson, Lena Wallquist (MÄN), Rebecka Andersson, (UNIZON)

develop proposals for their new programs. The participants felt the documents from both symposiums are fairly well known among various actors and agencies, especially on the issues of 'men and masculinities' vis-à-vis women's rights and gender equality. The participants in general concluded that these two documents provide concrete ideas for programming and campaigns and help sharpen the advocacy focus at all levels. www.menengagedilli2014.net/delhi-declaration-and-call-to-action.html

INPUTS FOR THE 3RD MENENGAGE GLOBAL SYMPOSIUM

The participants' overall suggestion was to connect the topics of the symposium to some of the global concurrent issues, such as the role of gender in migration and humanitarian settings. Some participants also felt that such a global gathering should aim to challenge notions that "the Scandinavian countries are progressive and the Global South should learn from them" and invite Scandinavian countries to learn from countries in the Global South, particularly as it pertains to activism and innovative approaches. It was also suggested that given that we are in the era of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a smart way to go about the symposium is

to connect the symposium topics to other global agendas, such as climate justice and LGBTIQ rights.

Some specific ideas for the topics or areas of focus for the next global symposium were:

- Intersectionality
- Building alliances with men's groups
- Dealing with the backlash against women's rights movements (and on the work with boys and men), including religious fundamentalisms
- Creating spaces for "agree to disagree"
- Critical reflections on the power and privileges of boys and men: What does this mean for the gender justice movement?
- Gender and the Sustainable Development Goals: The contributions of the "men and masculinities" field
- Accountability and partnership: Dialogues between various women's rights and social justice movements
- Changing political situations in donor member states

When it comes to the planning and organization of the next symposium, the MenEngage Global Secretariat and the Board clarified that this will be a joint work between the mem-

bers of the host network and that the organizations will get support from the global level, including the Global Secretariat as well as the Board. The host organization will however have a significant workload when it comes to the administrative work and arrangements. The participants thus provided the following suggestions:

- The Symposium can be organized in two different locations, in order to minimize the workload with parallel events in a particular region. One can use information and communication technology (ICT) to connect between the two places.
- Given the Nordic governments' political emphasis on gender equality, the symposium can be organized in one of the Nordic countries. This could also provide an opportunity to challenge the notion that the Nordic countries have nothing to learn about gender equality from the Global South.
- Instead of physically bringing many people to one place, one could gather an optimal number of people, ensuring appropriate regional representation, and encourage people to use online platform participation across the regions.

14 Introduction to the Panel: How to Engage Migrant Men for Gender Equality?

DANIEL PAUL GETZ (NO) Adviser,
Reform – Resource Centre for Men

Men make up approximately two-thirds of the refugees arriving in Europe and the Nordic countries since the start of 2015. Most of these men are young and unmarried. The male face of immigration has given rise to heated public debates in the Nordic countries, but is not reflected in integration policies.

Getz encouraged the panellists to discuss the situation of refugees coming to their country and how it is perceived by the popular opinion. He also invited them to share promising measures from their country or region for engaging men in gender equality.

Daniel Paul Getz

15 Who Are the Migrant Men We Want to Engage?

KATARZYNA WOJNICKA Postdoctoral researcher, Centre for
European Research at the University of Gothenburg

In contemporary European public debates, the topic of men and migration is a burning issue attracting the attention of politicians, researchers, journalists, and the general public. However, due to recent waves of Middle Eastern and North African people seeking refuge in Europe, migration in general is now often treated as synonym for a so-called “refugee crisis”, and consequently, migrants are seen predominantly as newly-arrived asylum seekers. Moreover, migrants are commonly portrayed as male and, in many cases, as persons lacking an appropriate (European) system of values with regard to gender and gender equality. Hence, public debates on migration often concentrate on the question: how to engage migrant men in gender equality? Such a question, however, is faultily stated as it is based on assumptions that a) migrant men are a homogeneous group and b) their perceptions of gender equality vary significantly from the values characteristic of host country populations.

The spuriousness of the first assumption is reflected in the fact that, in reality, migrant men are a highly heterogeneous group that includes not only newly-arrived refugees from the Middle East and North Africa, but also, for example, inter-EU migrants such as Polish migrants who constitute the largest immigrant group in Norway with 97,200 persons. The category of migrants also includes so-called “international expats,” among

whom one can identify “global elite masculinities” (Connell 2012) that represent one of the most privileged social groups in the world. Such men have little in common with the teenage boys from the Middle East and North Africa seeking refuge in Europe.

Moreover, the study found that refugee men were not more conservative in these attitudes compared to refugee women.

The second assumption is equally misleading as it is based on the common belief that, in general, migrant men are significantly less likely to demonstrate gender egalitarian attitudes (and practices) than men from European host countries. Such beliefs result not only from widespread stereotypes but also from a lack of research on perceptions of gender among different groups of migrants. To date, in the European context, there has been only one such study. The study, conducted in Austria (Buber-Ennser et al. 2016), analysed gender equality perceptions among newly arrived refugees. Importantly, and contrary to common belief, traditional gender norms were “dismissed by a majority of male and

female respondents” (Buber-Ennser et al. 2016:22). Moreover, the study found that refugee men were not more conservative in these attitudes compared to refugee women. Overall, this study found a more modest value divide than is often assumed in popular discourse.

Therefore, all public discussions and policy development around migrants and gender equality must be conducted from a deep intersectional perspective (Collins and Bilge 2016). Migrant men are not a homogenous group, and their attitudes, opinions, practices, and experiences, as well as their understandings and performances of gender roles and masculinities, are deeply rooted in factors that go beyond their migrant social status, such as their class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, citizenship status, and religion. Hence, there is a need for in-depth research on gender attitudes among migrant men in Europe in order to compare these attitudes with those of men belonging to host country populations.

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16 Insight into Arab Masculinities

SHEREEN EL FEKI Senior Fellow, Promundo, and Co-Principal Investigator IMAGES MENA

Many of the boys and young men seeking refuge and applying for asylum in the Europe and the Nordics originate in the Arab region. One important context of the migration to Europe is the fall of several dictatorships in the MENA-region and the break out of internal conflicts and the start of the civil war in Syria in 2011.

El Feki started her talk by noting the way Arab men are portrayed in certain Western media and political circles. The framing of young men from the Middle East as violent sexual predators, in the wake of the 2015 Cologne attacks and other incidents, has not only coloured public opinion but has also shaped public policy-making on travel and immigration. There is nothing new with this sort of “othering.” El Feki noted, citing examples of the framing of “their” men as a danger to “our” women through the ages.

There is nothing new with this sort of “othering” framing “their” men as a danger to “our” women.

In her talk, El Feki provided insight into issues of gender and masculinities in the MENA region. Her talk was based on the IMAGES MENA study, conducted by Promundo and local research partners, under the aegis of UN Women, with funding from SIDA, and her acclaimed book *Sex and the Citadel*. She gave an overview of some of the trends emerging in the study and tackled some of the misconceptions surrounding men in the region.

El Feki underscored the need for more research on men and masculinities in the Arab region. Men in MENA face a wide range of challenges, including double-digit unemployment; underperformance in schools; migration and displacement; conflict; gender-based violence in public and private spaces; health problems and drug use; and patriarchy and hegemonic masculinities, intensified by religious fundamentalisms.

The IMAGES MENA Study, conducted in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine, consists of both a household survey fielded with more than 9,000 men and women across the four countries, as well as complementary qualitative research. The study is a further development of the IMAGES studies conducted in over 50 countries. In collaboration with local research partners, the questions in the original IMAGES MENA survey have been complemented with new mod-



Shereen El Feki

ules to take account of local issues of interest, including: attitudes toward gendered laws and policies; men and marriage; women in public life; men and migration; gender-based violence in public spaces; female genital mutilation; honor and honor killings; men and occupation.

In the discussion, El Feki pointed to benefits of greater collaboration between the handful of NGOs in countries across the Arab world working with men and boys on gender equality and Nordic NGOs, as well as other groups working with migrant men and boys outside the region. While the former have valuable expertise (as well as practical programmes and materials, in Arabic) that would be useful for groups outside MENA, the latter have a growing body of experience working with refugees that would also benefit groups within the Arab region. Greater opportunities for communication and information-sharing, via the MenEngage Network and other platforms, would offer valuable synergies and promote a better understanding of the needs and concerns of Arab men, at home and abroad.

<http://promundoglobal.org/resources/understanding-masculinities-results-international-men-gender-equality-survey-images-middle-east-north-africa-executive-summary/>

17 Young Refugee Men Are Collectively Demonized

NIDDAL EL-JABRI (DK) Founder and CEO, Mino Danmark

The number of asylum seekers coming to Denmark peaked in 2015 with 21,516 persons of which 2,144 were unaccompanied minors. That year, 10,849 persons were granted asylum. Last year, in 2016, the number of asylum seekers coming to Denmark was down to 6,235 of which 1,219 were unaccompanied minors. Like in Europe overall, approximately two-thirds were men.

There is a general concern targeting young refugee men as chauvinists who do not know how to interact in a proper manner with the opposite gender. These young men are, from a political standpoint, considered unwanted, compared to women, kids, and families.

Far right-wing parties, in particular, show a lack of tolerance towards this group. Especially after the New Year's Eve incident in Cologne (Köln), young refugee men were collectively demonized. In Denmark, this resulted in journalists visiting night clubs in minor Danish cities where there would be asylum centers, and stories would be made about how the refugees would be looking at women in the clubs in a wrong way and engaging in a wrong way.

There was also an asylum centre for minor unaccompanied asylum seekers that kept showing up in the media, for issues like internal violence

towards each other, indecent exposure, and also sexual assault. In late 2016, it then became publicly known that some of the female workers had sexually assaulted some of the boys aged 14 to 17 years at the centre. We must be conscious of how sexual harassment is a practice we in different ways, through our expectations in particular, teach young refugee men after they arrive in Denmark. It is not a trait of culture.

Refugee men should not be especially targeted with messages about gender equality. It is not just wrong; it is counter-productive to treat refugee men differently from other men. We must engage and expect gender equality from all colors and genders. Isolation from society will be the biggest mistake to make. Interaction is key, also when it comes to gender equality, with civil society engaging and being friends, hosts, and mentors for the refugees.

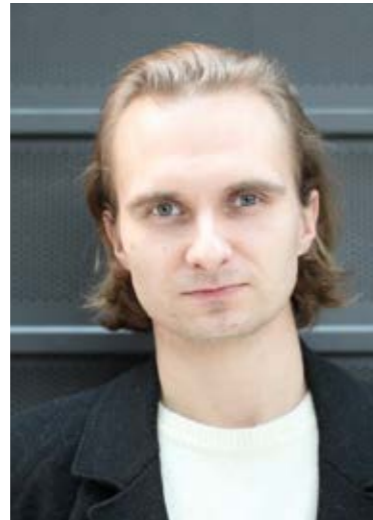


Niddal El-Jabri

Refugee men should not be especially targeted with messages about gender equality.

18 For All Boys – An Inclusive Approach

KIMMO SAASTAMOINEN (FI) Counsellor in gender and culturally sensitive social youth work, Poikien Talo | Boys' House, Helsinki



Kimmo Saastamoinen

Boys' House, established in 2011, does gender and culturally sensitive social youth work in the Helsinki area. With services targeting boys and men 10–28 years of age, Boys' House provides community activities and individual support regardless of one's social, ethnic, or cultural background.

I am the person responsible for coordinating and developing our services for migrant boys and young men, including refugees and asylum seekers.

All of Boys' Houses services are open to everyone regardless of one's cultural, ethnic, or religious background, yet we also have intercultural group and peer activities recommended especially

for boys and young men with immigrant background. In addition to open groups, we provide sexual counselling for individuals and arrange sexual education for groups, classes, and different communities. These include male groups from reception centres. Different sexual and gender minorities have also been present at Boys' House.

Earlier in another job and nowadays on voluntary basis, I have recruited and educated Finnish-born men to become support persons for the refugee men and help them settle in Finland. This form of voluntary work and Boys' House's efforts try to fill the gap between boys and young men from Finland and abroad.

19 About the Rights of Unaccompanied Minors, Often Boys

KAROLINE STEEN NYLANDER (NO) Leader of secretariat, PRESS



PRESS is the youth organization of Save the Children Norway, working for children's rights nationally and internationally. The organization's work is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Each year, a large percentage of unaccompanied minors seeking refuge in Norway vanish without any further notice. As many as 182 unaccompanied minors went missing from refugee centers in the year 2016, reports the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration. There have been gaps in the care for such children for the whole two-and-a-half-decade PRESS has existed. Unaccompanied minors, many of whom are boys, face great risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, child labor, and criminal activity.

The disappearances and the lack of knowledge about the children's whereabouts are in a violation of the rights of the child, and PRESS holds the government accountable. PRESS is putting forward demands to reduce the risk and danger the children are in, and here are some of the demands:

- If no safe return to home country is possible, permanent residence permit must be granted for the unaccompanied child in question.
- The right to family reunion for all children granted asylum in Norway.
- An improved method for age determination, in which the child must be given the benefit of the doubt.
- Faster warnings to the police, within 12 hours after the disappearance.
- Mapping and helping refugee children used for criminal activity.
- An action plan against disappearance from asylum centers, focusing on prevention.
- For a full account of the policy recommendations put forward to the government, go to the webpage press.no

20 Gender Equality and Quality of Life: New Research and New Possibilities

ØYSTEIN G. HOLTER (NO) Professor in Gender Equality Research and Men and Masculinities Studies, Centre for Gender Research, University of Oslo

Are we seeing a backlash among men and in forms of masculinity, or a continued development towards gender equality? Or both tendencies, in different groups? The situation today is varied and confusing. We need better knowledge, better research. This can help create better policies and actions.

A new, more in-depth method of research on men, masculinity, and gender equality was developed in Norway and other countries based on the “Gender equality and quality of life” survey in Norway in 2007. This includes the International Survey on Men and Gender Equality (IMAGES), as well as a recent European project (Norway/Poland) with an improved version of the method.

Among the core results in the new research is the importance of gender equality as an independent variable, linked to practices as well as attitudes. For example, gender equality among parents approximately halves the chance of violence or punishment of children, in Poland (2015) as well as in Norway (2007). Main results are common across national contexts. Violence against children mainly follows a power pattern – the adult with the “final say” at home is also usually the perpetrator of violence. These trends appear in the IMAGES studies too. Men’s positive attitudes towards women and gender equality are associated with lower conflict and violence levels among adults, as well as children.

For example, gender equality among parents approximately halves the chance of violence or punishment of children, in Poland

The new Poland survey shows that most people care about gender equality, and it gives a picture that is surprising for a country commonly seen as gender-conservative. The response rate was 64 %, showing engagement among respondents (it was 41 % in Norway in 2007). As much as 77 % of men agreed that “gender equality is important.” The idea that “gender equality has gone too far” is not common in today’s Poland – only 8 % of the men fully agreed. And only 5 % fully agreed that gender equality is a “threat to the Polish family”. Although barriers are visible, like the skewed work division in wage work and households, the survey shows progress and potentials among men as well as women.

Other new research confirm that gender equality is an independent variable. A study of European nations and US states from 2010 (total sample 82) found a violent death rate at 5.6 per 100,000 population among the countries/states with little gender equality, 4.4 among those with medium, and 3.5 among those with fairly high gender equality. In Europe, the three most gender equal countries had twice the proportion of people feeling happy, compared to the three least gender-equal countries. Depression and male suicide followed a similar pattern and were highest in the least gender-equal nations and states, lower in medium cases, and lowest in the most gender-equal cases. These patterns were similar among men and women. Although some of the variation can be explained by other variables, gender equality appears as an underrated dynamic or “force” on its own (See Holter, Øystein Gullvåg 2014: “What’s in it for Men?": *Old Question, New Data, Men and Masculinities* 17(5), 515-548.)

In the Norwegian situation, I would argue, that more research in this area is now very much needed, ten years after the original Norwegian survey in 2007. To better understand “where men are going,” we need better research.

21 My Father, a Book Project: Adult Children with Diverse Identities and Their Understanding and Experience of Caring Fathers

KRIS BUE (NO) Adviser, Reform – Resource Centre for Men

I am going to talk about a book project I was working on last year together with my colleague at Reform, Ole Nordfjell. The project was called «My Father: Stories about Diversity and Fathers,» and it was funded by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth, and Family Affairs. The book itself is a collection of 20 stories and pictures portraying positive and diverse experiences in adult children’s relationship to their father or father figure. The photos depict the storytellers and are taken by students at Elvebakken upper secondary school. The stories are being told from the adult children’s point of view, reflecting upon their upbringing, episodes of importance, and values they wish to pass on to their own children. The children in the book have a wide variety of backgrounds: Some have immigrant parents or have migrant

background themselves, including from adoption; some are straight and some are queer; one is transgender; some were born with a disease or disability; and some have majority background.

BACKGROUND

The intention and background for this project was to provide alternative stories to what is often presented in the mainstream media. Focusing on diversity and on bringing to light the positive parts of the children’s upbringing and relationship to their father, we wanted to challenge the stereotypical stories about fathers and different types of minorities. In other words: We wanted to challenge stories like that of the controlling migrant father, the homophobic working class father, and the father who abandoned his disabled child. Another aim was to tell stories about caring fathers regardless of their children’s gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and ability.

INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

In that way, intersectionality became the core aspect of the stories and the conversations that we wanted to include in the book. How do conversations of caring fathers appear when their children in one way or the other differ from the norm? Are they really that different from the stories being told from a majority perspective?

When talking about equality, we tend to look at equality as a pyramid: White women before black women,

white queers before black queers, and white, disabled people before black, disabled people. The more you add to your list of minority identities, the further down in the pyramid you are and the less rights you have. This leaves black queers with disabilities at the bottom.

The stories of minorities are also very often the stories which never reach the media, at least not in a positive way. The stories being told about caring fathers are very often defined by white, straight, cis-gendered, able-bodied people, hence majority people.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT PARENTHOOD

So, what happens in the partnership or relationship between child and father when the child is non-normative? In our book project, three perspectives unfold: (1) Relationship based on shared experiences; being different, sharing a disability, same race/ethnicity. (2) Relationship based on the parent’s ability to learn what they did not understand. (3) Relationship based on the parent supporting and standing up for the child. In general, we can see that positive experiences help the children through difficult periods of their lives and influence the children’s values when they talk about raising their own children.



Kris Bue

Examples from the Book



My father told me that he didn't know about any openly queer people from Eritrea. He was very proud of me and thought I was brave.



Photo: Dana Leigh

Selena, 23 years

Living together with her girlfriend Sara. Her father immigrated from Eritrea. She describes him as a local celebrity, very open-minded and supporting. Her father, she says, supported her through racist bullying in school and always accepted her for who she is and what she wanted in life. His only concern when she told him about Sara was that she was happy.

"My father told me that he didn't know about any openly queer people from Eritrea. He was very proud of me and thought I was brave. The Christian Eritrean community is very traditional. It meant a lot to me that he said this and that he didn't care what others would think."

Selena's story is an example of both a relationship based on shared experiences with the father (race in this case) and a relationship based on support and standing up for the child.



Photo: Mauf Elisabeth Diefchen

James, 28 years

Transman, born female but identifies as a man. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, where his father still lives. Working class father who takes care of homeless people and started a support group for people with HIV. His father attended a LGBT class when James came out as transgender.

"Attending the LGBT class made him a lot more confident and he became very interested and passionate about LGBT politics. He proudly calls me his son and enjoy challenging his co-workers saying things like: I have a transgender son, and what are you gonna do about it?"

James' story is an example of a relationship based on the father's ability to learn more about what he did not understand and a relationship based on support and standing up for the child.

Does it matter?

To sum it up: Highlighting positive stories about diversity and fatherhood do have an impact and do feel important for different minorities. The feedback from the participants in this project is that these kinds of stories matter, and that they are missing from the general stories about fathers.

22

Closing remark

TODD MINERSON (CA) Co-Chair of MenEngage Alliance, and the Executive Director of the White Ribbon Campaign



Todd Minerson

The White Ribbon symbolizes a man's pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women. Initiated in Canada in 1991, the White Ribbon now has a presence in over 65 countries around the world.

I do not know about closing remarks, but I would like to share some observations and thoughts on intersectionality, accountability, and privilege, and then some words on what to do next.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality has lately become a mainstream part of the conversation; we are all talking about it now, and it is very much implemented in the way we talk about social justice. It is one of the things you cannot unsee when you have opened your eyes to it. For me, two of the things which are most critical when talking about intersectionality are the principle of multiple identities aiming to bring the most important equity forward, and to do it in a way which is responsive to the person's unique situation. For a long time, social justice has focused on what is closest to us rather than focusing on what is most complex and matter the most. For me the conversation about intersectionality is just the beginning. The real issues are when you have to practice it in praxis. That is when it becomes a real challenge. That is when you fuck up and feel uncomfortable, but it is an important process because that is when you get to the real progress that we want to see.

Doing accountability makes us ask questions like what am I doing, who am I doing it with, and who am I accountable for? How do these ideas sound; do they include everybody in the discussion?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a process and a practice that you cannot do once and then move on. I think of accountability as a way of countering privilege. For those of us who do have privilege and are doing this work, accountability is the way we can address these issues without being paralyzed with guilt. Doing accountability makes us ask questions like what am I doing, who am I doing it with, and who am I accountable for? How do these ideas sound; do they include everybody in the discussion? Accountability is also a relation thing. You cannot stand there alone in the field with a flag saying, "I am accountable." You have to have those connections and relations to be able to do that, and it will make you feel uncomfortable and challenge you. But I would like to use it as a counter strategy to regenerate change rather than feeling guilty about situations that you are in.

MEN AND PRIVILEGE

I would like to mention privileges that men have working with gender equality. We have to acknowledge that we have privileges that others do not have. For example, when you are in a group with people working with gender equality, you often get a lot of positive attention because you are a man doing gender equality. Women do not get that same kind of positive feedback when they are doing it. We also have the ability to do it in spaces that are not safe for women and LGBT-folks. We have the opportunity

to call out people and individuals, which is not safe for others. So, we have to acknowledge these privileges as well.

I also want us to think about privilege is in a global context. Women around the world are experiencing shrinking democratic spaces and opportunities to talk about human rights and gender equality. So those of us who have the opportunity to talk about it, we really need to amplify that and use it to give space to other voices and create spaces that forward them.

Rather than a closing remark, let us think about what to do next. These two things, men's opportunity to go into other spaces, and to create spaces for others, we must think about when we are working with men and boys in gender equality.

I also think it is critical to make spaces to talk together. When we are all in our research and in our work, it is hard to make dialogue, but critical. Another thing to take further is collaboration, collaborating across organizations, across expert fields and regions, we can really expand and do much more than when we are working in our own little niches with our own little agendas.

23 Not Ending but Continuing ...

JEFF HEARN Founding member and activist, Profeministimiehet | Profeminist Men, Finland; Örebro University, Sweden; Hanken School of Economics, Finland

As set out in the title of this historic event, this gathering has been about making the invisible visible, transforming social norms, and striving for gender justice. With all the many presentations and debates we have heard it is important to remember these key messages.

But first I want to go back for a moment. There have been many responses by men to First Wave, Second Wave, and nth Wave Feminisms! Around the time I became publicly involved in these politics of men and feminism in 1978, there were several large “Men Against Sexism” gatherings in the UK, that led to the work of the Commitments Collective (1980) urging: commitment to anti-sexist men’s group; consciousness-raising; support for the Women’s Liberation Movement; support for Gay Liberation; sharing child care; learning from gay and feminist culture; action on our own behalf; propaganda and outreach; link-ups with Men Against Sexism groups; and renunciation of violence (physical, emotional, verbal).

In 1987 Raewyn Connell wrote in *Gender and Power* on reasons for men, especially heterosexual men, to detach themselves from the defence of patriarchy against entrenched interests maintaining it: oppressiveness and unjustness of gender unequal systems, wish for better life for women, girls and other men around them in life. Also in 1987, I concluded *The Gender of Oppression* with “material reasons for men to change against patriarchy:” possibilities of love, emotional support and care for and from men; privilege and emotional development that may come from contact/work with children; improved health;

transforming work under capitalism; avoidance of other men’s violence; reduction of likelihood of nuclear annihilation.” So these challenges are not so new. But, we can also ask: what was missing from these 1980s accounts? And I will come back to that.

Jumping on 30 years, MenEngage is a really important and still fairly new initiative, not envisaged in the 1970s and 80s. If you have not read it, I very strongly recommend the Delhi Declaration and Call to Action arising from the 2014 MenEngage meeting in New Delhi and addressing patriarchy; intersectionality; gender transformation; accountability to women’s movements and social justice groups; and increased participation from Global South.

Many, many issues have been raised today, based on immense commitment, practical experience, and politics. Here I am just going to pick up on a few of the many themes. In the introductory session, we heard about dating violence; the importance of sharing and collaboration; and the place of violence in gender equality/profeminist work.

Among themes in the panel on young men were: how many young men want to talk about gender; changing and stopping locker room talk; the need to reflect on men’s own political behaviour; and diverse/LGBT*IQ+ stories, including the very question: what is a “man?”

In our keynote, the importance of humility if engaging men and boys was stressed, as well as raising the question of whether emphasis only on individual responsibility, discrimina-



Jeff Hearn

Men are not only men; boys are not only boys. Men may be seen as part of either the problem or the solution, perhaps both?

There are further issues that have not been addressed so explicitly, such as: the environment, climate justice, transport (...); racism, nationalism, populist politics; economy, finance, globalization; militarism; information technology; age and ageing.

tion and oppression works to engage men. The need to recognize structural privileges, especially at a time of shifts to individualised approaches to inequality was emphasised, along with the challenge of taking on intersectional privileges and critical whiteness. Effective concrete collective practice and interventions were raised in the discussion.

The panel on migrant men examined such issues from the perspectives of minority, migrant, refugee, asylum seekers, black men and, men of colour. This included representations of migrant men around sexuality and sexual harassment; breaking the stereotypes of Arab men, as in the new IMAGES survey; the need for cultural-sensitive work amongst the variety of migrant men and boys; unaccompanied minors; moving from non-engagement to exchange; working against Othering; and learning from elsewhere and pop culture.

This was followed by examining gender inequality in Norway and Poland, how public opinion may not match political leadership, and how more generally gender inequality tends to go together with violence and conflict. Finally, diverse, alternative, and often positive father stories were presented, asking the question: which stories are used and told? There are further issues that have not been addressed so explicitly, such as: the environment, climate justice, transport (including how in given income groups women/men differences in energy consumption are greatest for transportation, and that differences reduce with more income, not disappear); racism, nationalism, populist politics; economy, finance, globalization; militarism; information technology; age and ageing.

Just taking the last two ... Recently, I have been working, with Matthew Hall, on the topic of revenge pornography (Hall and Hearn, 2017). There are many feminist websites and web campaigns against various forms of violence: Crash Override network, Women, Action and the Media (WAM), TrollBusters, End Revenge

Porn, Without My Consent, Army of She, Women Against Revenge Porn, feministcurrent.com, everydayfeminism.com. Now, there is a need for many more websites and e-actions on men and (pro)feminism.

As regards ageing, this is becoming of growing importance, with ageing populations, more older men, changing men’s relations to care and caring work, and different modes of being older men (Jackson, 2016; Older Men’s Memory Work Group, 2016)

Finally, there are continuing contradictions to mention: between the power and privilege of men, as against the dispensability of some men; naming of men, and problematising of men; persistence of gender binaries versus gender as a continuum. Men are not only men; boys are not only boys. Men may be seen as part of either the problem or the solution, perhaps both?

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Appendix A:

List of Contributors at the Conference

Aziz, Shanga Founder and activist, Locker Room Talk, Sweden. Aziz is also a student of Social Sciences in his senior year. @Lockerroomtalkuf shangaaziz@live.se

Belbase, Laxman Global Networks Manager, Men Engage Global Secretariat, USA. @menengage laxman@menengage.org

Bertelsen, Alexander Blum Student, Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution, Lund University, Bertelsen has background in youth politics in Denmark.

Bjarland, Bert Activist, Profeministimiehet | Profeminist Men, Finland. bert.bjarland@gmail.com

Bue, Kris Adviser, Reform – Resource Centre for Men, Norway. Bue has a MA in Gender Studies from the Centre for Gender Research, University of Oslo. kris@reform.no

El Feki, Shereen Senior Fellow, Promundo, and Co-Principal Investigator of the International Men and Gender Equality Survey, Middle East and North Africa (IMAGES MENA) study. El Feki is the author of *Sex and the Citadel: Intimate Life in a Changing Arab World*, 2013, and an expert on the complex interplay of sexuality, politics, economics and religion in the Middle East and North Africa. El Feki is also a Professor of Global Practice at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto and holds several esteemed academic and activist positions in her fields expertise. @shereenefeki

El-Jabri, Niddal Founder and CEO, Mino Danmark. El Jabri has dedicated his time to understanding minority issues from the minority perspective, and the work of Mino Danmark proves this is key to creating better solutions. Mino Dan-

mark works around three target groups: descendants, migrants, and refugees. www.mino.dk niddal@mino.dk

Espseth, Luca Dalen Counsellor, FRI Gender Diversity. Espseth is also currently working on his master's thesis in Gender Studies. For many years, he has been active in the public debate as a feminist, trans-activist, and man. @foreningenfri

Freiesleben, Piv la Cour Co-Founder and activist, DareGender, Denmark. @daregender plc@daregender.dk

Freljh, Mojca Researcher, Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Freljh has an MA in Sociology. She is a trained field worker with background in conflict resolution. Her research fields are: reconciliation of public and private life, fatherhood, care work, media and gender(in)equality, (in)equality, (anti)discrimination etc. She is a representative of Slovenia in the international group “Experts’ Forum of the European Institute for Gender Equality” and a member of the editorial »spol.si«, focused on topics related to gender. mojca.freljh@mirovni-institut.si

Getz, Daniel Paul Adviser, Reform – Resource Centre for Men, Norway. Getz is a social worker with experience from NGOs and child welfare services. In Reform, he works on the “Stopp kjærestevolden” project educating youth about dating violence, and on other gender equality issues, with a particular focus on the situation of immigrant men. daniel@reform.no

Hallgrímsson, Tryggvi Specialist adviser, Centre for Gender Equality, Iceland. Among Hallgrímsson's experiences is the supervision of the governmental advisory panel on men and equality, proposing, in 2013, measures to increase the participation of men in dialogues about gender equality. tryggvi@jafnretti.is

Hearn, Jeff Founding member and activist, Profeministimiehet | Profeminist Men, Finland; Örebro University, Sweden; Hanken School of Economics, Finland. Hearn has been involved in anti-sexist and profeminist activity and activism since the late 1970s, along with work on policy development in Europe, such as anti-violence work, and the EU report *Study on the Role of Men in Gender Equality*, 2012. He has researched and published widely, most recently Men of the World: *Genders, Globalizations, Transnational Times*, 2015; and *Men's Stories for a Change: Ageing Men Remember*, with the Older Men's Memory Work Group, 2016. jeff.hearn@hanken.fi

Holter, Øystein Gullvåg Professor in Gender Equality Research and Men and Masculinities studies, Centre for Gender Research, University of Oslo. ogholter.no o.g.holter@stk.uio.no

Humer, Živa Research fellow, Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Humer has a PhD in Sociology. Her main research areas cover gender equality politics, work-life balance and fatherhood. She has co-authored two books: *Novo očetovstvo v Sloveniji* (New Fatherhood in Slovenia, 2008) and *Obrazi homofobije* (The Faces of Homophobia, 2012) and co-edited the e-book *Očetje. Kratke zgodbe o sodobnem starševstvu* (Fathers. Short stories about parenting, 2016). ziva.humer@mirovni-institut.si

Hrženjak, Majda Researcher, Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Hrženjak has a PhD in sociology. majda.hrzenjak@guest.arnes.si

Højberg, Henriette Co-founder and director, DareGender, Denmark. @daregender hh@daregender.dk

Kristófersson, Gisli Kort Assistant Professor, School of Health Sciences, University of Akureyri, Iceland. Kristófersson has a PhD in nursing. gislik@unak.is

Laanterä, Kalle Manager, Poikien Talo | Boys' House, Helsinki, Finland. kalle.laanterä@poikientalo.fi

Lineo, Luis President, MÄN, Sweden. luis.lineo@mfi.se

Minerson, Todd Co-Chair, MenEngage Alliance; Executive Director, the White Ribbon. Minerson's work includes numerous engagements against Gender-Based Violence, in Canada, and with the United Nations, including as a member of the UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group. Of all of his engagements he is most proud of being a father, a husband, and a really average hockey player. @menengage @whiteribboncampaign

Nordfjell, Ole Bredesen Senior Adviser, Reform – Resource Centre for Men, Norway. ole@reform.no

Nylander, Karoline Steen Leader of secretariat, PRESS, the youth organization of Save the Children in Norway. karoline@press.no

Ram, Mattias Project manager for Killfrågor, MÄN, Sweden. @killfragor mattias.ram@mfi.se

Saastad, Are Director, Reform – Resource Centre for Men, Norway. Saastad has been director since 2012 and has a background as a psychiatric nurse and union representative. During his time in Reform, the resource centre has taken to a more intersectional perspective, building alliances to a wide

range of actors in Norway and abroad. are@reform.no

Saastamoinen, Kimmo Counsellor in gender and culturally sensitive social youth work, Poikien Talo | Boys' House, Finland. In addition to his current position in Boys' House, he has previously organized and coordinated a range of non-governmental and voluntary activities to promote the psychosocial well-being of refugee men. kimmo.saastamoinen@poikientalo.fi

Terning, Kai-Morten State Secretary (Progress Party), Ministry of Children and Equality, Norway.

Tidholm, Svante Project Manager for FattaMan, MÄN, Sweden. @fattaman svante@fatta.nu

Walle, Thomas Senior adviser at *Musea i Sogn og Fjordane*. Walle has examined masculinities among migrant men. His PhD on Pakistani men in Oslo (2010) argued for a strategic decoupling of ethnicity from gender in research. Walle was member of the Equality Commission (2010-2012) delivering two Official Reports on gender equality in Norway, and he has later criticized the government for inaction. He has experience from curating exhibitions at Norsk Folkemuseum where concepts of gender, class, and nation are central.

Wojnicka, Katarzyna Postdoctoral researcher, Centre for European Research, Department of Sociology and Work Science, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Her main research interests are critical studies on men and masculinities, sociology of social movements, and European studies. She is the author or co-author of over 30 scientific publications and author of the scientific blog

Dr. K & the Men. She organized the international workshop Men and Migration in Contemporary Europe (CERGU, June 2016) and is a co-editor of *NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies*, special issue on Men and Migration in Europe to be published in 2017. katarzyna.wojnicka@gu.sev

Appendix B:

About MenEngage Alliance

MenEngage Alliance is an international network of CSOs working on transforming masculinities and engaging men and boys for women's rights and gender justice. The Alliance currently connects over 700 CSOs, NGOs, research institutions, and UN Agencies, and thousands of individual experts and change-agents worldwide. It is present in around 70 countries and organized through six regional and 38 country networks.

Our Core Principles Questioning men's violence against women

We are dedicated to engaging men and boys to end violence against women and to questioning or challenging violent versions of manhood.

Engaging men as caregivers

We are dedicated to promoting more equitable participation by men and boys in caregiving, the care of children, and domestic tasks.

Working as allies with existing women's rights organizations

We are committed to working as allies with women and women's rights organizations to achieve equality for women and girls.

Engaging men from a positive perspective

We seek to build examples of men already acting in more gender-equitable and non-violent ways.

Non-discrimination

We will actively advocate against, question, and seek to overcome sexism, social exclusion, homophobia, racism, or any form of discriminatory behavior against women or gay/bisexual/transgender men and women, or on any other basis.

Please visit our website for more about the Core Principles, <http://menengage.org/about-us/our-core-principles/> and Code of Conduct, <http://menengage.org/code-conduct>

Join Us

Join MenEngage Alliance: as a member, you will stay informed about what is happening in the world, connect with others active in the field, exchange ideas and resources, start new collaborations, lobby and advocate together, and much more. To join, let us know about your interest by writing to info@menengage.org

MenEngage Nordic

The conference was organized by supporters and members of MenEngage Nordic. The Nordic MenEngage Alliance, established in Stockholm in 2015, is a sub-regional network associated with MenEngage Europe and through that the MenEngage Alliance at the global level.

<https://www.facebook.com/menengagenordic>



“In Europe, the three most gender equal countries had twice the proportion of people feeling happy, compared to the least gender-equal countries”

Øystein Gullvåg Holter

Illustration photos: Shutterstock

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

