

# **GENDER EQUALITY**

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**ALSO A  
MATTER FOR MEN!**

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## Glossary

**Gender equality** goes beyond equality at the legal level and extends to equal opportunities for personal and professional development in society, regardless of gender.

**Sexism** refers to discrimination on the basis of gender as well as the attitudes, stereotypes and cultural elements that foster this discrimination.

# INTRODUCTION

## DEAR MEN...

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### **Dear men,**

We appreciate your interest in gender equality. With this brochure, we want to provide information on how you can make a concrete contribution to this. We also want to give good reasons why your commitment as men is important and how you can personally benefit from gender equality.

This brochure was created during a weekend event at which 70 people - half of them men - intensively discussed exactly this topic. Afterwards, a few of us sat down together in order to review and share the collective insights.

As always, however, we have to keep in mind that life is complex. In society, people are superordinated and subordinated along various power dynamics, for example on the basis of skin colour, income and sexual orientation. Sometimes these power dynamics occur separately, sometimes they seem to be absent and at other times they occur together. Here we focus on a certain dynamic, that between men and women.

We hope that the brochure can serve as a catalyst for reflection, as a stimulus for action or perhaps also as a basis for discussion.

Lukas, Charlotte, Matthias, Peter & Lyn

*Also thank you to Ronja, Max and Phil for helping out with the English translation.*

### **Dear gay readers,**

In the sections in which we address relationships, we focus on those between men and women. We do this because for gay relationships often other points are relevant and we specifically want to deal with relations between the genders in the booklet. However, many of the points mentioned can also be transferred onto relationships between men.

### **Dear non-binary readers,**

At many places in this brochure we speak only of two genders. We know that genders are diverse, but we have decided to focus on the relationship between people who identify themselves as women or men or are read as such in certain situations.

## INTRODUCTION

# WHY IS THE COMMITMENT OF MEN IMPORTANT?

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*It is easier to promote gender equality if more men are actively involved because:*

- Men make up almost half of the population. So this is a huge potential that needs to be taken advantage of!
- Men are more likely to be sensitised to sexism by other men than by women. For example, when men criticise sexist behaviour, this is often regarded as more legitimate and is taken more seriously by the men present than if a woman would do the same.
- When men stand up for gender equality, they do not have to fear hostility or exclusion as much as women.
- Men are often in positions of power, e.g. in politics and business, and thus have more room for manoeuvre - which they must use for the good cause.
- Men contribute to the current gender inequality. It is therefore necessary for men to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour and to contribute to overcoming inequality.
- Boys often adapt to the behaviour displayed by adult men. This is why equality-conscious men are needed as role models.

**BUT...**

## WHAT IS IN IT FOR MEN?

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*Men also benefit from gender equality. After all, the point is that all people can freely express themselves regardless of their gender and are not restricted by narrow gender role expectations.*

*In concrete terms, men can benefit from gender equality in the following ways:*

INTRODUCTION  
SO...  
**WHAT IS IN IT FOR MEN?**

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- Masculinity no longer needs to be proven and recognized by others.
- Recognition as a man is no longer based on risky behaviours such as excessive alcohol consumption, smoking and fast driving. Men, too, can be more active in their health, go to preventive medical checkups, pay attention to their diet and much more without being looked at obliquely.
- Men are no longer expected to take the first step in flirting (but they can if they are the type).
- Sexually, there are more possibilities. You can be the tough guy, as well as give up the lead and let yourself go - as long as everyone involved consents!
- Men no longer have to necessarily take on the role of breadwinners, but are also recognised in their role as care-givers for other people, for example for children or grandparents.
- Fathers are just as accepted in their competence as parents as mothers.
- The compatibility of work and private life is guaranteed by the workplace for men as well as for women.
- Occupations are no longer typically male or female. Men can also take up occupations such as kindergarten teacher, nurse etc. without being confronted with stereotypes.
- To feel good as a man, you don't have to align to an "ideal" body image.
- Sports life can be designed freely according to one's own interests - whether football, ballet, rugby or yoga.
- Physical and emotional closeness between men is no longer devalued.
- Accepting help from others is not considered a weakness.
- Vulnerability and emotionality can be expressed without being criticised.

# WHAT CAN MEN DO CONCRETELY?

## FUNDAMENTALS

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- 1** I see it as my responsibility to actively contribute to gender equality.
- 2** I am informing myself on how the opportunities for self-realisation are unequally distributed among the genders.
- 3** I am aware that there is a variety of ways in which people can experience sexism - e.g. in connection with age, skin colour, sexual orientation or social background.
- 4** Sexism often happens unconsciously. Therefore it can also happen that I may exhibit sexist behaviour. In this respect, I remain open to criticism and try to reflect on myself.
- 5** I don't find sexism acceptable, no matter which person it comes from.
- 6** I show that I do not find sexist utterances and behaviour acceptable. If it is possible for me, I oppose them.
- 7** I use gender-neutral language, so that not only men feel addressed, but all people.
- 8** I see that men are often over-represented in film, art and literature, and I consciously inform myself about works by female authors, filmmakers and artists in the interest of gender equality.
- 9** I don't have to prove my masculinity to anyone to boost my self-esteem.

## AMONG MEN

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- 10** I talk to other men about the importance of gender equality. Among other things, I sensitise them to sexism with concrete examples and thus initiate discussions.
- 11** I also oppose sexist remarks and jokes in men's groups.
- 12** I am not lecturing, but instead explain why I myself support gender equality.
- 13** I criticise behaviour and not people. This way I encourage my counterpart to reflect on his own behaviour instead of feeling forced into a corner.
- 14** I do not devalue men when they show emotions or insecurities. Every person should be allowed to decide for themselves how much they want to show them.

## RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY

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- 15** In my relationship, I discuss and reflect on role models and the distribution of tasks and try to design them on an equal footing.
- 16** I recognize the value of care work. This includes, for example, household work, child care and emotional labor.
- 17** In care work my starting point is an equal distribution, which we can adapt together according to our wishes and professional situation.
- 18** If parallel professional changes are not compatible with the relationship or the family, we alternate in the relationship with professional steps.
- 19** I know that a "yes" in a sexual interaction is valid for the moment. Consent can be withdrawn at any time. And a "yes" for something is not immediately a "yes" for everything that might follow.
- 20** I know and accept that every person freely decides about their body for themselves, e.g. their body hair.
- 21** Through my own actions, I show my children that all genders are equal.
- 22** I educate my children to be aware of their bodies and limits, to value them, represent them confidently towards others and to likewise respect the limits of other people.
- 23** I make sure that my children can develop as freely from gender stereotypes as possible. For example, I let them wear the clothes of their choice, am there for my sons as well as for my daughters when they cry and let my daughters face the same challenges as my sons.



## PROFESSIONAL LIFE

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- 24** I am informing myself about discrimination in professional life.
- 25** Also everyday professional life I intervene in cases of sexism and sexual harassment, even if this can have negative consequences for me. In doing so, I respect the wishes of the person concerned.
- 26** I take colleagues seriously when they talk about their experiences with sexism.
- 27** I actively support women in their careers.
- 28** I judge the competence of team members based on their performance and not on their time spent at work.
- 29** I make sure that women are taken as seriously and are included as much as men, e.g. in meetings.
- 30** I criticise requirements that make it difficult to reconcile work and family/private life.
- 31** I make transparent when I am not available due to family tasks.
- 32** I show my support for gender equality measures within my company.
- 33** Like my female colleagues, I take on tasks such as making coffee, clearing out the dishwasher and taking minutes.

## PUBLIC SPACE & NIGHTLIFE

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- 34** On public transport and benches, I don't take up more space than I need. When walking, I don't force my way through the crowd, but take others into consideration.
- 35** When flirting, I respect a "no thanks, I'm not interested" and I don't see it as a personal attack.
- 36** When I witness a person being harassed, I try to help them in a supportive way. I respect their anonymity and their suggestions for solving the situation.
- 37** I report sexist advertising to my national advertisement authority.

## CONVERSATIONS IN GROUPS

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- 38** I support the fact that everyone, regardless of gender, has the same opportunities to participate and that their contributions to the conversation will be rewarded accordingly.
- 39** I also reflect on my own speaking behaviour.
- 40** When I contribute to a conversation I try to add content and not to elevate my status.
- 41** If other men show dominant speaking behaviour, I sensitise them to it.

## TO CONCLUDE

We would be happy if you implemented some of the actions yourself. However, it is just as important to talk about gender equality with others.

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**[zusammenfuergleichstellung.de/en](https://zusammenfuergleichstellung.de/en)**

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