Let's Design Equality Together – The Push*Back*Lash Cartoon Series

Make a Space, Take a Space: Equal Participation

PUSH*BACK*LASH

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- **What can you see in the picture?**
  Describe what you can see in the picture. What situation are we in? Describe the various people and what they are doing.
- **Equality**
  What does equality mean to you? Which people in our society are not (yet) equal? What does equal participation mean?
- **Similarities and differences**
  How can people be different but also equal? Do you think you are equal to other people? Does everyone have to be the same to be equal? What does it look like in a society when people are equal?
- **Now your turn!**
  Think of examples when people were treated equally and when people were treated unequally. Create a drawing of a lot of different people being treated equally. Explain the characters you have drawn to others. What are they doing and how are they being treated equally?

What is the person with the blue T-shirt doing in the picture?

Do you also have a wish for the future that you would write down and hang on the tree?

Do you know the flag that the child is holding?

The woman seems pretty excited! Can you find her in the picture? Who is she listening to? And what could be the reason why she is so happy?

What would you tell the politicians at the street fair? What questions would you ask them?

“Make a Space, Take a Space” – Supporting Information

Imagine a future where equality has been achieved! This cartoon shows a fictional street fair in the year 2050. The occasion is "Equal Participation Day," a public holiday that celebrates equality and equal participation for all members of society. The day is an opportunity to celebrate progress towards equality, but also to reflect on the status quo. How can we better ensure that the doors to social and political participation are open to all groups in society in the future? The street fair shown in the cartoon provides a space for gathering and exchanging ideas, and for encouraging participation and learning.

People of all social groups can be seen at the street fair on Equal Participation Day. Young and old, people of different genders and religions, people with disabilities and people without disabilities, celebrate together and explore the themes of equality and participation. The festival offers all kinds of opportunities:

The speech (top left):

A politician gives a welcoming speech and explains how this festival came to exist. The listener on the left of the picture is enthusiastic and admires the politician because she sees someone like herself in a political position. (Representation)

The "Wish Tree" (center):

People can write their (political) wishes and goals for the future on pieces of paper and hang them on the tree for everyone to read. What remains to be achieved? What do we want to work on? What do we want the future to look like?

Who does care work?

To keep the women's backs free, you can see also men in the picture taking care of children. In addition to the equal distribution of care work, an environment is created that enables parents to combine childcare with work in the best possible way.

Talk to politicians:

On the left and right of the picture you can see groups of seats where people can talk to local politicians and Members of the European Parliament. The politicians make an active effort to listen to people and understand their concerns. Such conversations can also help make politics more accessible and understandable.

Celebrating, living, and supporting diversity:

Among the people at the street fair are people wearing flags, T-shirts or badges with symbols of sexual and gender diversity. These include, for example, the inclusive pride flag or the transgender flag. In both flags, each

stripe represents a different group within the LGBTQIA* community. The symbols are worn not only by LGBTQIA* people themselves, but also by so-called allies, i.e. supporters of LGBTQIA* people and their concerns.

The quiet room in the town hall (top right):

People can retreat and rest in the quiet room. On the one hand, the town hall becomes more accessible, as people can spend time there. On the other hand, the focus is on people's well-being. The fair provides food and places to take a break so that everyone, including those with limited resources or families, can participate.

Workshop tent for training (bottom left):

A workshop for women and LGBTQIA* people is being held to actively exchange skills and provide them with more knowledge about political processes.

Encouraging participation (bottom left):

Two people stand in front of the workshop tent, actively approaching visitors, talking to them, and handing out brochures (recruiting). Parties and organizations can use the Equal Participation Day to encourage women, LGBTQIA* people, and members of other underrepresented groups in particular to get involved and participate.

The photo wall (bottom right):

At the photo wall, people can have their picture taken while giving a speech in the EU Parliament. This is intended to make the possibility of political participation more tangible. The sign "Now your turn!" is addressed to the readers, according to the motto: You can participate too, now it's your turn!

First and foremost, the illustration of the Equal Participation Day is meant to encourage people to think and ask questions: What might a gender-equal future look like, a future in which everyone participates? Who has what responsibilities and opportunities today, and who takes on what roles in society? What do we need to change about this distribution? What will it take for more women* and people from underrepresented groups to participate in social and political decision-making processes in the future? How do we want to live together and how can we get there?

In addition, the visual representation of women and people from other underrepresented groups is intended to encourage people from these same groups to have more confidence in their own political and social participation and, in the best-case scenario, to encourage them to become more involved in the future. "Make a space, take a space" points out that, on the one hand, it is important to welcome people from all social groups into spaces where they can participate and contribute politically. On the other hand, we as a society must also provide them with resources that enable them to occupy these spaces and step up as leaders.

Further Reading

Der Gender Equality Index

What is the state of gender equality in the European Union in 2023? The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has created the *Gender Equality Index* to measure this. Since 2013, the Institute has regularly collected data on gender equality in all European Union Member States. Are women equally represented in politics? Who does how much care and housework? How (unequally) is money or access to knowledge distributed between the sexes? How has gender equality developed over the last 10 years?

Find out by clicking through the EIGE website:

⊃ click here

Equality in the Labor Market

Despite positive developments in recent decades, women in Europe today are less likely to be in employment and on average are paid less than men for the same work.

Information on the gender pay gap can be found here:

⊃ click here

In addition, women still hold far fewer leadership positions than men. Find facts & figures here:

⊃ click here

Gender Equality and the Division of Labor in the Family

An important step toward gender equality is the fair distribution of domestic and care work. Who takes care of the children or relatives? Who takes parental leave and who returns to work after staying home? Only when domestic and family responsibilities are shared equitably will women have the same opportunities as men to contribute to society, to work, and to take on leadership roles.

Facts & figures on the division of labor in the family can be found in the Data Report 2021 of the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb):

⊃ click here

What can be done to achieve gender equality in families?

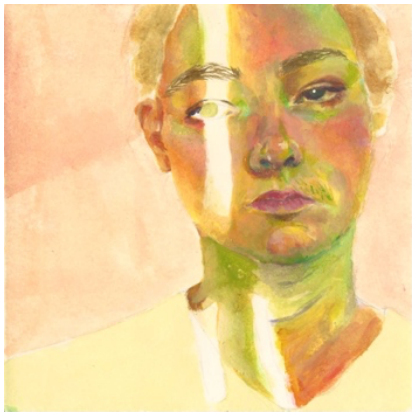
⊃ click here

Gender Budgeting

One way to implement gender equality is through gender budgeting. Budgeting is the planning of revenues and expenditures. This includes the politically important public budgets of the federal government, the federal states, local authorities, and the European Union. The term gender budgeting refers to the gender-specific analysis of public budgets. Gender budgeting enables the systematic analysis, monitoring, and evaluation of the budget to actually implement gender equality.

- ⊃ click here for a video
- ⊃ click here for a detailed definition

The Cartoonists



Meei (she/he) is a student of sustainable design at *ecosign/Akademie für Gestaltung* in Cologne, Germany with a focus on illustration. Meei likes to search and find images for what is (often) invisible. It is important to her to work in a responsible, queer feminist way and with more-than-human being(s) in mind.

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Olan Weber (they) studies Sustainable Design at *ecosign/Akademie für Gestaltung* in Cologne, Germany with a focus on Illustration, Comics and Animation. Their studies center around stories not being heard. A lot of their Work therefore address antidiscrimination, being trans*, queerness and more-than-human kinship.

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