

Who is a contemporary EQUAMAN – a supporter of gender equality movements? How do men understand gender equality in different cultural contexts? How do boys and men perceive their masculine gender roles? How are gender roles developed throughout adolescence? And how do gender equality and masculine gender roles help or hinder men in experiencing well-being?

In this 3-year project, a team of interdisciplinary researchers including psychological and sociological scientists from Poland and Norway will focus on the important, though understudied, topic of men's understanding of gender equality. We will also analyse 1) how understanding gender roles and gender equality might help boys and men improve their well-being, and 2) what makes men involved in gender equality movements. This is a novel approach to the topic of masculinity and well-being, and we want to investigate it through different perspectives using suitable methods – focus group interviews, surveys, experimental studies and workshops conducted in schools and at universities.

The data collection will take place in Poland and Norway - two countries strongly varying in their level of gender equality. Our project will consist of four work packages focused on different aspects of masculinity: In Work Package 1, we will investigate the role masculinity plays for youths in different cultural contexts. More precisely, we will analyse the development of gender role identities in adolescents in Poland and Norway and investigate how it relates to their well-being over time. In Work Package 2, we will examine the conditions under which men are willing to contribute to gender equality by taking different actions to support it. In Work Package 3 we will explore how different groups of men, varying in age, cultural origin, and socio-economic status, understand what it means to be a man and what gender equality is. We will also increase the knowledge on challenges and barriers that might prevent men from becoming involved in gender equality movements. In Work Package 4, we will apply the knowledge gained from Work Packages 1-3 by developing educational workshops. The workshops will be tested among adolescents and young adults to assess whether information- and science-based workshops can alter young men's attitudes towards gender roles and gender equality. An important contribution from Work Package 4 will be an open-access manual for educational workshop sessions that can be used by professionals to educate young men about the role of gender equality and gender roles for men's overall well-being.

Combining and integrating different disciplines and perspectives in a cross-cultural approach allows us to get a better understanding of the complex ways that men's gender roles relate to well-being and inequality, both globally and within societies. Our interdisciplinary, scientific team consist of expert investigators involved in four work packages. This carefully assembled team of researchers brings together a broad variety of expertise in different research fields and methods, and will thus allow not only for an innovative and truly interdisciplinary perspective on the topic, but it will also lead to an optimal realization of the project through joint publications in high-impact journals. Our results might furthermore be important in understanding mechanisms relating to gender equality around the world and can be beneficial for global, social change movements interested in increasing men's and women's well-being.