



Success Story: Mehmet Fatih Karagün

My name is Mehmet Fatih Karagün, I'm 24 years old, and I was born and raised in Doğubayazıt, Ağrı, a small town in eastern Türkiye. In the place where I grew up, people rarely talked about concepts like “gender equality” or “feminism.” What I mostly heard was that feminism was something against men that it meant rejecting traditions or attacking family values. I believed that for a long time, without really questioning it.

Everything started to change when I joined the Equal Futures Project. At first, I was hesitant; I didn't think it was “for me.” But during the workshops and discussions, I realized how wrong my perception had been. Listening to participants from Türkiye, Denmark, and Lithuania opened my eyes. I learned that feminism is not about hating men, it's about creating equal chances for everyone.

One session that deeply affected me was about inequality in the workplace. We talked about how women often face invisible barriers, sometimes called the glass ceiling, that stop them from advancing in their careers and I had never thought about that before. At the same time, I also saw that men experience limitations too: not being given paternity leave, or feeling pressure to always appear “strong” and never express emotions. I realized that gender inequality hurts all of us, just in different ways.

After the project, I started questioning a lot of things I had once taken for granted. I began reading more, listening more, and trying to understand the struggles people face because of gender expectations. Most importantly, I stopped feeling





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defensive whenever I heard the word feminism. Now, I see it for what it really is a movement for fairness, for both women and men.

The Equal Futures Project didn't just teach me about gender equality it changed how I see the world and my place in it. These days, I try to talk with my friends about these topics, encouraging them to look beyond stereotypes. My goal is to help create spaces where everyone, no matter their gender, feels respected and equal.

If someone had told me a few years ago that I'd one day call myself a supporter of feminist values, I probably would've laughed. But today, I say it proudly. Because equality doesn't belong to one side it belongs to all of us.

