

2020

Gender Equality Plan



01/01/2020

Introduction

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a fundamental step in promoting gender balance and inclusion in Research, Innovation and Training granted under the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe financial programmes of the European Commission.

The work on equality, undertaken by ERIC and all its Partners, is designed to promote equality and combat discrimination among the Partner's employees, researchers and students, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion and beliefs, functional abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity and age.

Although different types of discrimination have some common characteristics, there are many situations where it can be appropriate to separate out gender equality as a priority area and, in fact, the lack of gender balance in top scientific positions is still a key issue.

Equality is not just a matter of gender balance, but also one of equal opportunities and the fair distribution of resources. The achievement of equality between the genders requires having a long-term, genuine desire to bring about change.

Many parties are involved in allocating resources and making appointments, and there are many considerations, which need to be taken into account.

When we are involved in our everyday work, it is easy to quickly lose sight of equality considerations unless targets have been expressed and clearly incorporated and responsibilities have been clearly allocated.

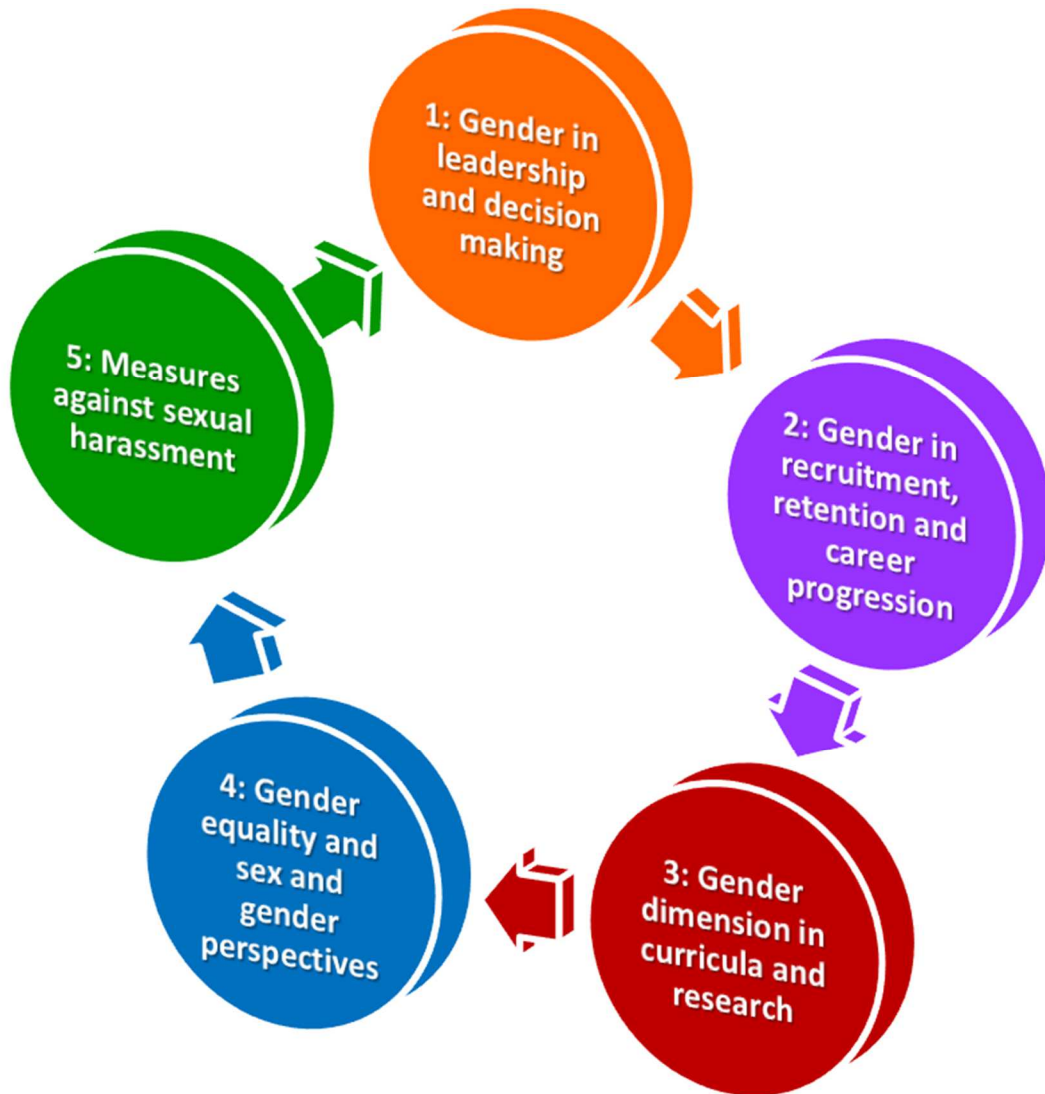
This plan addresses the most important challenges involved in ERIC's gender equality work during the forthcoming years.

Although ERIC is a small research organisation, the overall structure of the GEP has been elaborated with the support of all ERIC's partners and is divided into five key areas:

- Gender in leadership and decision making;
- Gender in recruitment, retention and career progression;
- Gender dimension in curricula and research;
- Gender equality and sex and gender perspective
- Measures against sexual harassment.

The GEP is a flexible tool and contains measures foreseen for the needs of a small research organisation. The measures are addressed to specific beneficiaries, being the main target the "female researchers". The individual measures were specifically foreseen for the years 2020-2022 will be verified through the use of indicators and by peer-reviewers.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS



1. Gender in leadership and decision making

Women play a role in ERIC leadership, nevertheless senior leadership positions (particularly those of the Board of Directors) have been traditionally male dominated. The composition of the Board has never been gender balanced. Although gender equality is generally supported by the leadership and administration, there is a lack of gender mainstreaming in decision-making processes.

Objective	Actions	Timeline		
		2020	2021	2022
Achieve gender balance in ERIC leadership	→ Achieve gender balance in the Board of Directors			X
	→ Appoint senior leadership in EU Projects, according to their terms with consideration for gender balance		X	X
	→ Develop and support leadership capacity for women.			X
Mainstream gender in decision-making processes				X

2. Gender in recruitment, retention and career progression

This action is a very wide one as it involves not only the challenges related to gender equality in recruitment, retention and career progression but also diversity and work-family balance: since careers in research are associated with high workload and the culture of long working hours on the one hand and insecure working conditions (temporary contracts) on the other hand, men and women who have children or would like to have children tend to be disadvantaged.

In the research sector there is a marked gender imbalance (66% are female researchers) although there are no imbalances in gender pay gap and salaries are coherent with the research seniority, thus we have an equal pay for equal work.

Objective	Actions	Timeline		
		2020	2021	2022
Improve the situation of the (mostly feminized) research sector	→ Identify and put in place measures to improve gender balance across research ranks			X
	→ Define transparent, meaningful research ranks with correspondent salary scales			X
Make all phases of recruitment gender sensitive	→ Collect and monitor the gender of applicants for jobs in a digitalized, anonymous manner		X	X
	→ Improve the gender balance of shortlisted candidates		X	X
	→ Develop and adopt gender-sensitive recruitment guidelines			X
	→ Provide training on gender-sensitive recruitment procedures.	X	X	X
Recognize and accommodate employees with care-related responsibilities	→ Provision of services for work and personal life integration		X	X
Improve communication of ERIC's commitment to be family-friendly work place.	→ Make ERIC's commitment more explicit in recruitment processes.		X	X
By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value				

3. Gender dimension in curricula and research

Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research is one of the six European Research Area (ERA) priorities. Integrating the gender dimension in research content and teaching is one of its three objectives. Training activities in ERIC are mostly related to research project under a Framework programme, thus, it is probable that a great pool of students might never encounter a gender topic while following these seminars. At present, there are no ERIC's formal policies or guidelines on integrating a gender component in research.

Objective	Actions	Timeline		
		2020	2021	2022
Promoting the integration of a sex and gender perspective in teaching curricula	→ Availability of Guides and/or Workshops on the integration of gender equality and diversity issues in curriculum design, learning activities and/or program of study, as support for teaching staff			X
	→ Organise Training seminars or prepare guidelines on integrating sex/gender in teaching curricula			X
	→ Collect and monitor the gender of applicants for jobs in a digitalized, anonymous manner		X	X
	→ Improve the gender balance of shortlisted candidates		X	X
	→ Develop and adopt gender-sensitive recruitment guidelines			X
	→ Provide training on gender-sensitive recruitment procedures.			
	→ Provision of services for work and personal life integration		X	X
	→ Make ERIC's commitment more explicit in recruitment processes.		X	X
By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value				

4. Gender equality and sex and gender perspective

Although gender equality is part of ERIC's mission in implicit ways through the idea of open society, diversity, tolerance or equal opportunities, but not explicitly. Institutional data is not analysed systematically from a gender perspective, and there is no strategic planning concerning the promotion of gender equality.

Although the female presence is very high in research positions and salaries are only referred to the position, i.e. equal pay for equal work, there has been a lack of communication campaigns targeting gender equality in research. In spite of recent efforts, there is a low awareness at the ERIC community about equal opportunity-related policies

Objective	Actions	Timeline		
		2020	2021	2022
Promoting a gender and sex perspective in Research processes	→ Institutional recognition within the Partnership of those dissertations that have taken the gender dimension into account. (e.g prizes for MA/Phd Thesis)			X
	→ Promotion of networking of multidisciplinary research groups interested in gender issues and diversity management			X
Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard				X

5. Measures against sexual harassment

Although ERIC did not report incidents of sexual harassment since its creation in 2008, it does not mean that this topic should not been addressed.

It is necessary to organise trainings on the topic to prevent victims from hiding their complaints as the fear of retaliation and mistrust in the institutional response were common reasons given by harassed people for not reporting these cases.

Objective	Actions	Timeline		
		2020	2021	2022
Prevention and zero tolerance of sexual harassment	→ Develop a new institutional system with an additional informal complaint procedure to complement the formal one in place			X
	→ Set up a centralized digital recording system for both formal and informal complaints			X
→ Measures for information and reporting → Run communication campaigns on sexual harassment				X