GENDER-NET Analysis Report

Comparative analysis of existing national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents

GENDER-NET

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AND INTEGRATION OF THE GENDER DIMENSION IN RESEARCH CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

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Executive summary

The subject of the integration of the gender dimension in research contents is covered as one of the main ERA priorities within the "Gender Equality and Gender mainstreaming in research" priority. The quality of science, research and innovation depends on the research community's ability to be responsive to the needs of society as a whole and it has been proved that integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation (R&I) content helps improve the scientific quality and societal relevance of the produced knowledge, technology and/or innovation.

Gender dimension in research means integrating sex and gender analysis into all phases of basic and applied research—from setting priorities, to funding decisions, to establishing project objectives and methodologies, to data gathering, analysing results, and evaluation[1]. And *incorporating the gender dimension in research content* refers to the use of sex- and/or gender-based analysis in all the phases of the research cycle, so that research content and impact reflect the realities, needs and expectations of both the women and the men.

As it is stated in the ERA Progress Report[2], *the lack of a gender dimension in research programmes remains a common challenge. There is a need for more efforts and systemic strategy aiming at longer term institutional change in the European research system.*

Today, many research institutions in Europe have long been developing gender studies in various fields of the social sciences and humanities (SSH). And yet, few national programmes, agencies or research institutions have initiatives to promote the integration of the gender dimension in non-SSH fields research, although it is a cross-cutting factor in Horizon 2020, the EU framework programme for research and innovation (2014-2020), and is becoming a requirement for more and more journals.

The present *"Comparative analysis of existing national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents"* examines the information collected by the *"Compendium of existing national and re-gional initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents"* as a result of a survey launched in July 2014 by GENDER-NET. The core objective of the survey was to identify and analyse common approaches and areas of development on initiatives to facilitate the integration of the gender dimension in research contents within national organisations in the framework of their national programmes. The main areas of the survey were: Policies and Strate-gies aimed at integrating sex/gender analysis in research (P/S), Research Fun-ding Programmes aimed at integrating sex/gender analysis in research (RFPs), Guidelines and Training materials for Applicants (GTAs), Guidelines/Training for grant proposal Reviewers (GTRs),

1 Source: http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/terms/dimension.html

2 ERA Progress Report 2014 (pag. 6)

Recommendations and/or Models for Uni-versity Curricula Development in scientific and technological fields (RMUCD), Transnational Activities (TAs) and Other Activities (OAs).

40 national-level organisations responded to the survey and the data and information collected was compiled and analysed to feed into the present comparative analysis report. Although the coverage can be perceived as limited, the survey and the report cover all the major players in the field, many of which are stakeholders in GENDER-NET.

Based on the information provided, half of the responding organisations (22) can be defined as **relatively inactive organisations** having reported no activity at national level in any of the main survey areas covering the integration of the gender dimension in their research programmes. The remaining half of the responding organisations can be characterized as ranging from **relatively active to proactive organisations.** The gap in terms of implemented policies and measures between the proactive and inactive organisations is wide and causes significant **differences among peer organisations.** The core of proactive organisations has already implemented significant measures and their experience is fundamental to supporting other organisations in their endeavour to promote the integration of the gender dimension in research contents.

One of the main conclusions drawn from the analysis is that there seems to be **no homogeneity on the level of proactivity of organisations**, neither within countries nor among types of organisations.

The present report also concludes that **the level of implementation follows a descending trend from P/S** (40% of the sample), **RFPs (28%), GTAs (28%), GTRs (15%) to RCMUCDs (3%),** which indicates different stages in the implementation process.

Successes, promising practices and case studies that were collected through the survey and compiled in the Compendium, were selected according to transferability potentialities, and are presented to provide valuable lessons and insights into (new) ways of integrating gender perspectives into research contents.

Having analysed the specific **challenges** that organizations face when integrating the gender dimension in the contents of research in their national programmes, the following areas were acknowledged by organizations as **barriers**: lack of high level support; different level of resistances; lack of awareness, expertise, or organizational competence; and confusion between gender balance/gender equality policies and gender in research contents.

Finally, in order to support organizations approaching these challenges and barriers, a set of recommendations are proposed to further advance at

national and transnational levels. Among these recommendations the following are stressed:

A great effort should be put in place to avoid the common confusion between gender balance/gender equality policies and the gender dimension in research contents. For that purpose, it is essential to provide clear definitions and examples of the gender dimension in research contents when talking about sex/gender analysis, gender in research and gender approach.

The adoption of a specific policy or strategy within the institution aimed at integrating the gender dimension in research content and the implementation of a legal framework can help in giving the legitimate support to develop the implementation of policies or strategies, to develop further measures, and to allocate the financial means to do so.

High level support is crucial for the development and implementation of such a policy/strategy. One can go as high as legislators for establishing a legal framework, but clear support of the leadership at institutional level is key, particularly in showing that enforcing such integration is in no way limiting freedom of research but actually promoting better research quality and widening innovation potentialities.

Additionally, where a policy/strategy is in place, the necessary budget and resources should be allocated for a sound implementation followed by a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system to measure the success of the implemented policies.

The present report provides also other recommendations towards the integration of the gender dimension in university curricula, research funding programmes, and development and implementation of guidelines and training for applicants to grants and reviewers of project proposals.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The present report is a deliverable of the GENDER-NET ERA-NET, funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework programme (Science-in-Society work programme).[3]

GENDER-NET is a pilot transnational research policy initiative (a European Research Area Network) designed to address the common challenges still facing European research institutions in achieving gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research and innovation. These challenges concern the persistent barriers and constraints to the recruitment, advancement and mobility of women in the European scientific system, the lack of women in decision-making, but also the limited integration of the gender dimension in research programmes and contents. The present report focuses on this latter aspect.

GENDER-NET brings together a balanced partnership of 12 national research programme owners from across Europe and North America (i.e. ministries, national research funding agencies and research performing organisations, and other types of national organisations – see consortium members on page 2) as well as a number of Observer organisations (6 national organisations as of June 2015) and an Expert Advisory Board, all with a shared commitment to gender equality and synergistic expertise in gender and science issues.[4]

This D3.10 report is part of the outcomes of Work Package 3 entitled: "Gendering Research Contents and Programmes". It provides an overview of existing national/regional policies and programmes, as well as related implementation tools, addressing the integration of sex and gender analysis in national-level research and innovation funding and/or performing organisations in Europe and Northern-America.

The data analysed in this report were collected by means of a comprehensive online survey launched in the course of 2014 that was sent to ministries, national research funding agencies and research performing organisations as well as other private organisations located in the Member States and Associated Countries participating in GENDER-NET as well as in other relevant countries. In total, 40 such organisations from 22 countries responded. The information collected was then synthesised into a *Compendium of existing national and*

3 Detailed information on GENDER-NET is available on the project's website: http://www.gender-net.eu

4 As of the General Assembly of August 30th 2015, there are now 2 new late-entry Beneficiaries and 4 new Observers in the GENDER-NET consortium. These are: 1) Beneficiaries: Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and the Ministry of Science, Technology & Space of the State of Israel (MOST) ; 2) Observers: NordForsk, the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic, the Icelandic Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and the US National Science Foundation

regional initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents including country and institution fact sheets (GENDER-NET Deliverable 3.9).[5]

The present report (Deliverable 3.10) consists of a comparative analysis of the data presented in the Compendium. It is expected to be the GENDER-NET's *core reference document for developing common criteria, guidelines, recognition schemes, and other implementing tools*. Particularly, it will be useful for the last two subsequent WP3 GENDER-NET reports: D3.11, aimed at assisting national/regional research funding organisations/agencies with the know-how to in-tegrate sex and gender considerations into policies, programmes, plans and strategies, and to raise awareness about the importance of sex and gender in research and innovation; and D3.12 aimed at identifying the core elements of a framework for implementing transnational strategic activities and monitoring of common indicators.

On 26 and 27 February 2015, an expert workshop (Milestone MS8) was organised to kick-start the comparative analysis of the data and feed into the present report, which is structured into 6 different sections.

In section 2, common threads at national and regional levels are described, and the survey results are analysed according to the type of organisation and proactivity level across the main survey areas. In terms of proactivity, a three level categorisation of the respondent organisations is proposed.

Section 3 lists the successes and promising practices that were collected through the survey. They were selected according to transferability potentialities and provide valuable lessons and insights into (new) ways of integrating gender perspectives into research contents.

Section 4 highlights the barriers and challenges that were identified by the respondents. It is of upmost importance to understand what challenges and barriers exist in order to tackle these efficiently.

In section 5, three full case studies are provided from the respondent organisations which have been selected for being good examples at the general objective of integrating the gender dimension in their own research funding systems.

5 The contents of the Compendium (D3.9) will be made readily available online on the GENDER-NET website, including through an interactive map offering an easy access to the complete organisations' fact sheets, per country. It must be noted that one of the respondent organisations (NIH, USA) did not answer the survey in the online format but rather provided information through e-mail, and therefore it is included as an exception in the Compendium. But, given it is a good case study due to its important initiatives and measures in areas which are not found in the other respondent organisations, it has been included for the comparative analysis at the same level as the other 39 ones

Finally, section 6 presents the main conclusions of the analysis, together with specific conclusions per main survey area: 1) Policies and strategies aimed at integrating sex/gender analysis in research, 2) Research-funding programmes aimed at integrating sex/gender analysis in research, 3) Guidelines and training materials for applicants, 4) Guidelines/Training for grant proposal reviewers, 5) Recommendations and/or models for university curricula development in scientific and technological fields,

The present report prepared by MINECO and FNRS as task leaders, was reviewed by CNRS (GENDER-NET Coordinator), CIHR (WP3 co-leader with MINECO) and by other GENDER-NET participants (HEA/IRC, RCN, CRUS, RPF, FWF).

1.2 Definitions and Concepts

Sex *is a biological quality or classification of sexually-reproducing organisms, generally female, male, and/or intersex, according to functions that derive from the chromosomal complement, reproductive organs, or specific hormones or environmental factors that affect the expression of phenotypic traits that are strongly associated with females or males within a given species. Hormonal (and environmental) effects, which may be organizational (differentiating) and essentially permanent, or activational, thus possibly reversible, are strongly influenced by the genetic make-up of the individual (Wallen, 2009).*[6]

Gender – *a socio-cultural process— refers to cultural and social attitudes that together shape and sanction "feminine" and "masculine" behaviours, products, technologies, environments, and knowledges. "Feminine" and "masculine" describe attitudes and behaviours on a continuum of gender identities. Gender does not necessarily match sex.*[7]

Equality between women and men (Gender Equality): *refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.*[8]

6 Source: http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/gendered-innovations/index_en.cfm?pg=home

7 Source: http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/terms/gender.html

8 Source: UN Women, available at Concepts and Definitions

Gender Mainstreaming: is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities - policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.[9]

Sex/gender analysis: *is an umbrella term for the entire research cycle that includes the integration of sex/gender issues from the setting of the research priorities through developing methodologies, gathering and analysing data to evaluating and reporting results and transferring them to markets*[10].

Gender dimension in research *means integrating sex and gender analysis into all phases of basic and applied research—from setting priorities, to funding decisions, to establishing project objectives and methodologies, to data gathering, analyzing results, and evaluation.*[11] In fact, gender dimension means integrating sex and gender analysis into research.

Sex and Gender intersecting factors: Sex and gender also intersect in important ways with a variety of other factors. *These factors or variables can be biological, socio-cultural, or psychological aspects of users, customers, experimental subjects, or cells. These factors include but are not limited to age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, geographical location, etc.*[12]

Methods for Sex and Gender Analysis *are described as follows: Sex and gender can influence all stages of research or development processes, from strategic considerations for establishing priorities and building theory to more routine tasks of formulating questions, designing methodologies, and interpreting data. Many pitfalls can be avoided—and new ideas or opportunities identified—by designing sex and gender analysis into research from the start. Sex and gender analysis work alongside other methodologies in a field to provide yet further "controls" (or filters for bias) providing critical rigor in science, medicine, and engineering research, policy, and practice.*[13]

Integrating Gender Analysis into Research (**IGAR,** also known as "incorporating the gender dimension into research content") refers to the use of sex- and/ or gender-based analysis in all the phases of the research cycle. In some projects

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9 Source: UN Women, available at Gender Mainstreaming

10 Source Guidance on Gender Equality in Horizon 2020, European Commission, 2014, available at http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/gender/h2020-hi-guide-gender_en.pdf. Also http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/what-is-gendered-innovations.html

11 Source: http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/terms/dimension.html

12 Source: http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/methods/factors.html

13 Source: http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/methods-sex-and-gender-analysis.html

only a sex analysis is relevant to the research problem (e.g. preclinical studies on cells and tissues, and in animals in many cases, given that *an over-reliance on male animals, and neglect of attention to the sex of cells, can lead to neglect of key sex differences that should be guiding clinical studies, and ultimately, clinical practice*[14]). In some other cases, only a gender analysis is necessary (mainly in studies where biological differences do not play a role). Gender inequalities, however, are based in the structural gendered division of labour and power and are crucial to understand and take into account the different interests, needs, behaviours, roles, stereotypes, constraints, etc. of women and men regarding their access to resources, power, positions, activities, etc. Study results may then affect the social and economic relationships between these groups, for instance, reduce the existing gender inequalities by means of developing new tools aimed to detect and prevent gender-based violence. And in other cases, both sex and gender interact in a particular study. In some instances sex and gender *cannot* be distinguished, as for example in studies of nutrition or exercise, where hormonal, physiological, and cultural factors can influence the likelihood of disease[15]. Therefore, as a concept, 'IGAR' also covers the inclusion of sex analysis (not only gender), and is used as such in the present report.

Gender-sensitive research *takes into account the differences between men and women in all aspects of the research, from an initial idea, formulating research questions, objectives and methodologies to the outcomes and presentation of results. Apart from integrating gender into the content, gender-sensitive approach strives to provide equal participation of both women and men in scientific work. Gender-sensitive approach takes into account transgender and transsexual population as well.*[16]

Gender blind research *does not account for the differences between men and women. It can ignore or misuse the existence of gender differences to pursue research outcomes. It overlooks women's groups and interests and reinforces unequal power relations*[17]*. Gender-blind research does not take gender into account, being*

14 Source: NIH Takes Steps to Address Sex Differences in Preclinical Research

15 Source: LERU (2015). Gender and sex matter in research: Twenty recommendations from Europe's research universities. For instance, traditional gender attitudes towards beauty and body image have biased research on eating disorders. This research field has only recently come to focus on male experience. A paper by Chengyuan Zhang (2014) tracks the evolution of approaches to anorexia nervosa in men since 1873. The study by Ulla Räisänen & Kate Hunt (2014) has showed that the widespread perception of Eating Disorders (EDs) as uniquely or predominantly a female problem led to an initial failure by young men to recognise their behaviours as symptoms of an ED.

16 Source: Toolkit for Integrating Gender-Sensitive Approach into Research and Teaching (GARCIA Working Papers 6, 2015, p.4)

17 Source: Integrating Gender into Forestry Research (Center for International Forestry Research, 2012, p.48)