

The logo for ULB (Université Libre de Bruxelles) consists of the letters 'ULB' in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a dark blue square.

UNIVERSITÉ
LIBRE
DE BRUXELLES

*ULB seeks to foster gender equality in STEM as a priority axis in the **technology transfer to society** by increasing **equal opportunities for women and men** as STEM experts and by improving the **quality of research and social innovation**.*

Gender Equality Status Analysis



An extensive assessment of **gender bias** and **inequalities** both inside the Institution and in the external Innovation Ecosystem where it is positioned.

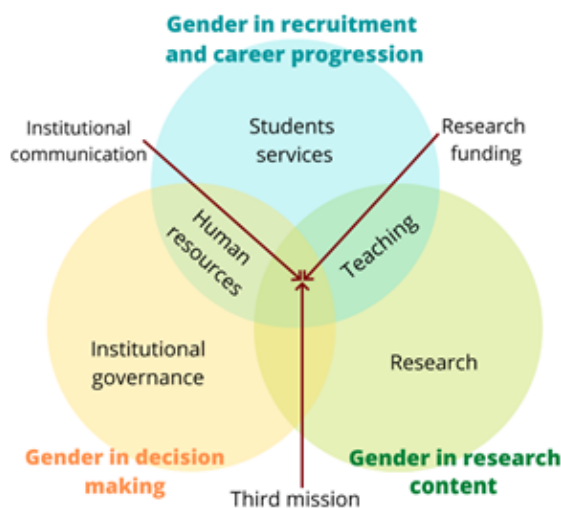


This research has been carried out by ULB in the context of CALIPER project through the funded European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No 873134.

Status of Gender Equality inside the Institution

The internal assessment followed the **three ERA priorities on Gender Equality*** and examined them in the context of **specific activity/service areas** inside ULB through the collection of qualitative and quantitative data.

The data collection was conducted by the institution researchers, through **desk research, policy analysis, interviews, surveys and focus groups.**



Key Findings

HUMAN RESOURCES

During the recruitment processes for technician positions, most of the applications received are from male applicants. On the other hand, in the administrative staff there are more women than men. At the same time, there are not enough role models for women.

In STEM areas, it is difficult to set up gender-balanced recruitment committees because there are very few women. This might contribute to render the recruitment of women more difficult. In relation to career progression, there is a high drop-out rate of female students after graduation.

Distribution of gender in recruitment or promotion boards/panels



*Council of the European Union (2015). Conclusions on advancing Gender Equality in the European Research Area. RECH 295, COMPET 551, SOC 703



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INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

At ULB, the different gender equality measures and actions are included in the “**Gender Equality charter**”. They address institutional governance, human resources, teaching, research, student services and communication.

Since 2018, the University has a **Diversity Plan** (including a focus on gender, gender identity and sexual orientation) funded by the Institution.

The Institution applies **regulation and policies regarding decision-making bodies to maintain balance in gendered composition.**

Gender share in governing administration boards, committees, academic senate etc.

Rectorate

50% Women 50%Men



Board of Directors

55% Women 45%Men



Academic Council

46% Women 54%Men



Research Council

25% Women 75%Men



Study Council

50% Women 50%Men



In terms of **gender disaggregated data**, a report on gender equality is prepared annually at the institutional level.

RESEARCH & TEACHING

ULB is very sensitive to gender issues and takes measures to correct gender biases and inequalities. However, there is **no allocation of funds for specific teaching programs on gender studies** and the Institution refrains from setting a specific research agenda, since the freedom of researchers is a fundamental value of ULB.



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Likewise, there are **no policies or guidelines on the integration of the gender analysis in research.**

Nevertheless, there are different gender studies centres and departments at ULB. The two main ones are:



STRIGES – An Interdisciplinary research structure on gender, equality and sexuality.

The Atelier Genre(s) et Sexualité(s) – A research unit within the Institute of Sociology.

In terms of gender dimension into teaching curricula, there are optional guidelines for inclusive communication provided to the teaching staff, yet no further policies are applied.

The awareness about the need to use gender sensitive material and language is not sufficient inside the Institution. To mitigate this, the Institution's Learning Support Centre is in the process of developing a **Guide on Gender in Teaching.**

STUDENT SERVICES

The incorporation of the gender perspective in different activities for information/guidance to prospective students is not in place yet.

Recently, the CASHe UNIT was established to tackle harassment, moral or sexual, towards students.

TRANSFER TO MARKET

Currently, collaborative research projects with a gender dimension are not thoroughly documented at ULB.



Status of Gender Equality inside the Institution

InforScience, initially created as a service of the Faculty of Sciences, is a unit with many collaborations with other Universities and external partners. It is particularly attentive to the (visual) representation of women in certain activities. The service is aware of the importance of adopting a gender perspective but lacks specific knowledge on how to do it.

Statistics of the recent years show that spin-off teams are mainly composed by male researchers. In addition, more males are transferring the research results into patents.

Gender ratio of researchers in ULB spin-offs (3 years avg.)



Gender ratio of patenting researchers (3 years avg.)



INTERSECTIONALITY

The Diversity Plan of ULB focuses on diversity (gender, age, social status, origins and disability) but **not on the interaction of gender and other variables**, thus the topic of intersectionality is not fully addressed.

The complete report is publicly available [here](#).



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Status of Gender Equality in the Innovation Ecosystem

The first part of the external assessment included **an analysis of the national legal and policy framework**. The second part focused on the National and Regional Innovation Ecosystems. A **context analysis** was implemented through a dedicated desk research. In addition to the context analysis, a **mapping** was conducted by ULB to identify existing and potential synergies with external stakeholders. The mapping included a focus group with internal stakeholders, a survey for external stakeholders and a Social Network Analysis.

Key Findings

NATIONAL LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

There are **several laws promoting gender equality both at federal and regional level**, addressing the integration of the gender dimension in all policies, measures and actions, gender-based violence and discrimination between women and men in the economy, employment and professional training.

Specific policies also **promote the underrepresented gender in management positions and committees** both in public and private bodies, and include quotas.

National policies are also in place concerning work-life balance (e.g., maternity, birth and parental leave). However, a lack of homogeneity can be seen in the application of the birth leave (available to fathers and lesbian partners) since it is not applicable for self-employed (or unemployed) people.

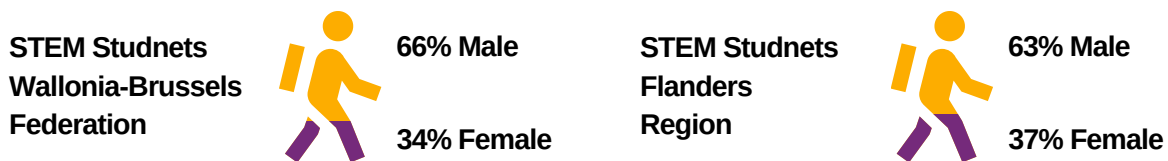
In this context, the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men **recommends the improvement of the existing policies against discrimination in relation to family responsibilities**.



Status of Gender Equality in the Innovation Ecosystem

ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

Data collected show a **great imbalance concerning STEM students**, both in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and in the Flanders Region.



The same applies for STEM researchers nationwide.



In the evolution of the employment rate in ICT, the difference between males and females is very visible, with a slightly positive evolution for women (from 15,50% of women in 2013 to 18,16% in 2017).

The level of integration of gender as a scientific research dimension is not monitored since, in application forms, applicants are not asked about the gender dimension of their proposals. This applies for the main funding entities like FRNS, as well as for ULB itself in its grant applications for ARC projects, mobility grants, etc.

SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

ULB counts of a variety of collaborations with universities, ICT companies, NGOs and public government bodies.

According to the current research, external stakeholders **appear to be familiar with gender equality issues** and most of the participating stakeholders have already implemented different actions.



Status of Gender Equality in the Innovation Ecosystem

In general, stakeholders **reported willingness to further collaborate on gender equality** and the main kind of envisioned joint actions awareness campaigns, exchange of good practices and dedicated meetings.

183 stakeholders were included in the Social Network Analysis, most of them belonging to the Industry & Business sector.

Only **20 collaborations of the overall 222 with the above stakeholders are led by a team mainly composed by female researchers**, while 9 collaborations are led by an equal number of male and female researchers.

The complete report is publicly available [here](#).



This research has been conducted in the context of Horizon 2020 project, CALIPER.

The results will be used for the project's next implementation phases.

ULB is one of the 9 Research Organisations across Europe which participates in CALIPER to develop a **Gender Equality Plan (GEP)** and engage the local Innovation Hubs to transfer the gained knowledge beyond academia.

Discover more about CALIPER



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