

PB12 – Integrating the gender dimension into research content for research performing organisations: How to innovate?

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For those countries identified as having national level measures and above EU average levels of implementation.¹

This policy brief provides evidence-based, concrete recommendations for national level policy makers on how to integrate the gender dimension into research content in RPOs.²

Why is this important?

Integrating the gender dimension into the research process and content means integrating sex and gender analysis into research.³ It can improve the quality of research and its outcomes.⁴ For example in the field of health, both men and women need to be included in clinical trials for drug development. Integrating sex and gender analysis into the research process saves human lives and prevents the waste of economic resources. It also helps to ensure that research reflects the needs of a diverse population thereby increasing the relevance of its outcomes.⁵ It may also contribute to opening up more market opportunities by diversifying the experiences and expertise in the innovation process.⁶

The European Commission's major research funding programme Horizon 2020 (2014 -2020) prioritises the integration of gender/sex analysis in research and innovation (R&I) content as one of its main objectives to improve greater gender equality in science.⁷ Member states have been invited to create a legal and policy environment and provide incentives to strengthen the gender dimension in research programmes.⁸ Various national initiatives have been already undertaken to encourage greater sensitivity and the integration of sex and gender analysis in science knowledge and practice. These include developing and providing support for:

- policies and strategies promoting the integration and analysis of sex/gender as research variables and determinant of outcomes
- research funding programmes aimed at advancing cross-cutting impact of sex/gender aware and responsive research
- guidelines and training materials for researchers and research managers
- guidelines/ training for assessment and evaluation of gender as component of excellence and impact in research proposals and projects
- recommendations and/ or models for university STEM curricular development and researcher training in relevant fields.⁹

The results of the ERA survey 2014 indicate that on average 44%¹⁰ of RPOs which are ERA compliant¹¹ include the promotion of gender dimension in research content.¹²

What is the extent of the problem?

This policy brief addresses specifically those countries that have national measures to promote the gender dimension in research content. At the same time more than 44% (EU average)¹³ of their research performing organisations include such a gender dimension in research content. In concrete terms, this “How to Innovate”- brief targets specifically: Denmark, Germany, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.¹⁴

In general progress to date has been slow and difficult to measure.¹⁵ The ERA Facts and Figures 2014 reports that whilst more countries are including the gender dimension in research content and programmes – the level of implementation is ‘insufficiently supported’.¹⁶ The share of institutions doing so also varies significantly amongst Member States. Of those countries identified as having above average levels of implementation with measures, – the percentage of RPOs that include the gender dimension in research content ranges from 46% in Ireland to 80% in Austria.¹⁷

What are the options?

National level policymakers have real leverage to encourage the integration of the gender dimension into research content and higher education curricular as they can set research and funding priorities.¹⁸

Various solutions have been tried including enacting legislation, - either domain-specific or pushing forward a more general gender mainstreaming approach in public agencies.¹⁹

The Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation Act was passed in 2011- and required a gender dimension to be included in all aspects of the research process. This ensured that the Spanish Strategy on Science, Technology and Innovation 2013²⁰ and the State Plan for Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation²¹ included the integration of the gender dimension into public RDI policies as one of five main principles.²²

A different approach has been taken by the Swedish government which has invested SEK 20 million (approximately 2 million Euros)) in a four year gender mainstreaming programme of government agencies–supported by the government-funded Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research.²³ It has carried out gender mainstreaming work with 41 government agencies including, The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), The Swedish Higher Education

Authority (UKÄ), The Swedish innovation agency VINNOVA, and The Swedish Research Council.²⁴ The Secretariat has also coordinated competence building activities, organised forums for sharing of experiences, identified and disseminated examples of good practices as well as documenting the results of the agencies work.²⁵ In its budget for 2016, the Swedish government expanded the gender mainstreaming duty in 2016-2018 to all higher education institutions, allocated some funding for the purpose, and gave the National Secretariat for Gender Research the task to be the support organisation in this task.²⁶

Competence building activities are also being undertaken in Canada and the U.S. where sex and gender training are being developed for both grant evaluators and researchers according to the specific area of science and technology.²⁷

Recommendations

- Include and integrate the sex/gender dimension as a key element in research policies and strategic plans for science and technology.
- Consider and assess the potential need for integrating the sex/gender dimension and a gender budgeting approach to define research/funding priorities whilst allocating resources to national granting agencies, universities and research projects.²⁸
- Ensure that the sex/gender dimension in research content is taken into account and encouraged in national research programmes, from programme design, throughout implementation and evaluation.²⁹
- Develop a systematic method of assessing the sex/gender dimension in study design and project impact.³⁰
- Make funding and resources available for researchers to further investigate and integrate the sex/gender dimensions of their research.³¹
- Make available gender equality funding to develop teaching on how to integrate the sex/gender dimension into specific disciplines (i.e. health, technology) or establish a database of gender research contents to support potential gender researchers.³²
- Allocate resources to raise awareness and carry out training for researchers, evaluators and management (top and middle) to promote a gender sensitive research- including integrating it in PhD training curricular and the development of guidelines.³³
- Share and promote new policy approaches and practices introduced by RPOs that are successfully integrating the sex/gender dimension.³⁴

Further Reading

Further, in-depth reading concerning the integration of the gender dimension into research content for research performing organisations is available through the following three publications: the Gender-Net *Compendium of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimensions in research contents*³⁵, the report by the League of European Research Universities (LERU) *Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process* (see footnote 15) and the *Gendered Innovations* project (see footnote 3).

[The GenPORT Gender Dimension in Research Content Research Performing Organisations \(RPOs\) Online Discussion](#)

- [1] Please see 'Gender and Science Policy Briefs: From "Where to start" to "How to innovate": An Introduction', for a description of the methodology used. Available at:
http://www.genderportal.eu/sites/default/files/resource_pool/pb_introduction_.pdf
- [2] According to the ERA, a research performing organisation (RPO) encompasses any organisation conducting public research – specifically research with a 'public mission' (DG Research and Innovation, 2013).
- [3] Schiebinger, L., Klinge, I., Sánchez de Madariaga, I., Paik, H. Y., Schraudner, M., and Stefanick, M. (Eds.) (2011-2015). Gendered Innovations in Science, Health & Medicine, Engineering and Environment. Available at:
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/gendered-innovations/>.
- [4] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p34.
- [5] European Commission, (2012b). Structural change in research institutions: Enhancing excellence, gender equality and efficiency in research and innovation, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p.13.
- [6] For an overview of gendered innovations please see <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/what-is-gendered-innovations.html>
- [7] European Commission, (2014d). Guidance on Gender Equality in Horizon 2020, V1, February 2014.
- [8] European Commission, (2012a). A Reinforced European Research Area: Partnership for Excellence and Growth, COM (2012) 392, p12.
- [9] These categories are taken from the classification of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents developed by the Gender-Net Project.
- [10] It should be noted that these figures concern RPOs which answered the ERA survey in 2014, which employ 515 000 researchers (around 20% of total EU researchers).
- [11] ERA Compliant is defined as organisations which are implementing some or all of the ERA actions with high intensity. European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p 10.
- [12] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p33.
- [13] It should be noted that these figures concern RPOs which answered the ERA survey in 2014, which employ 515 000 researchers (around 20% of total EU researchers).
- [14] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union. We recalculated the groups presented on p34- taking into consideration the percentage of RPOs that answered 'yes' as a percentage of all applicable organisations – and whether or not measures were identified. Please note that the sample for the ERA Survey was not randomly selected and the results have not been weighted due to a lack of substantiated information about the sample frame and the whole population of RPOs. "This means it is not possible to produce inferential statistics about the wider population". See Figures, 2015, Handbook p111.
- [15] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process, p. 13.
- [16] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p. 28.
- [17] It should be noted that these figures concern RPOs who answered the ERA survey in 2014, which employs 515, 000 researchers (around 20% of total EU researchers).
- [18] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process.
- [19] Legislation has been passed ranging from domain- specific legislation,- in health (U.S., Italy), science (Spain), higher education and research (France) to taking a much broader gender mainstreaming approach (Sweden).
- [20] http://www.idi.mineco.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Investigacion/FICHEROS/Estrategia_espanola_ciencia_tecnologia_Innovacion.pdf p. 5.
- [21] http://www.idi.mineco.gob.es/stfls/MICINN/Investigacion/FICHEROS/Plan_Estatal_Inves_cientifica_tecnica_innovacion.pdf p. 28.
- [22] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process, p.16.
- [23] http://www.genus.se/english/news/Nyhet_detalj//swedish-secretariat-for-gender-research-supporting-gender-mainstreaming-in-academia.cid1327961
- [24] <http://www.genus.se/english/about-us/about-the-gmga-programme>
- [25] <http://www.genus.se/english/about-us/about-the-gmga-programme>
- [26] Swedish State Budget 2016. <http://www.regeringen.se/rattsdokument/proposition/2015/09/prop.->

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- [27] Pollitzer, E., Buitendijk, S., Hermann, C., Mühlenbruch, B., & Schiebinger, (2015). On Lessons Learnt for Work Programme 2016-2017, Integrating Gender in Horizon 2020, Pan European Networks: Science and Technology.
- [28] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process.
- [29] Pollitzer, E., Buitendijk, S., Hermann, C., Mühlenbruch, B., & Schiebinger, (2015). On Lessons Learnt for Work Programme 2016-2017, Integrating Gender in Horizon 2020, Pan European Networks: Science and Technology.
- [30] Gender Summit 4 Europe 2014 GS7- See: http://gender-summit.com/images/GS7_Speakers/GS7_ppts/GS7EU_Programme_Public_SML.pdf
- [31] Pollitzer, E., Buitendijk, S., Hermann, C., Mühlenbruch, B., & Schiebinger, (2015). On Lessons Learnt for Work Programme 2016-2017, Integrating Gender in Horizon 2020, Pan European Networks: Science and Technology.
- [32] Regitz-Zagrosek, (2013)cited in Gender Summit North America, (2013). Diversity Fueling Excellence in Research and Innovation Conference Report, p29.
- [33] European Commission, (2013b). Recommendations on the Implementation of the ERA Communication: Report of the Expert Group 2013, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p43.
- [34] For example, VTT, Franhofer, CESAER, CERN, and AIC. Gender Summit, (2014) Report From The 2014 European Gender Summit To The European Commission And European Parliament. See: http://gender-summit.com/images/GS4_EU_2014_Report.pdf
- [35] Gender-Net, (2015a). Compendium of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents. Available at: <http://bit.ly/29yqOTY>