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External Gender Equality Assessment

Université Libre de Bruxelles



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 under Grant Agreement No 873134.

Executive Summary

In the context of the Horizon 2020 project, [CALIPER](#), the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) has conducted an analysis in order to investigate the external conditions such as the legal and cultural framework and the existing national innovation ecosystems in Belgium and identify where gender imbalances occur, why they are created and by which factors they are influenced.

To perform this external assessment a quadruple helix approach was adopted, by involving stakeholders belonging to the following sectors:

- Academia and Universities
- Industry and Business
- Government and Public Sector
- Civil Society

The assessment focuses on the national legal and policy framework on gender equality. Moreover, it presents data about STEM students, researchers, patent registrations, innovative start-up founders within a gender perspective. Finally, it provides a mapping of the existing collaborations of ULB with external stakeholders.

These findings may lay the grounds for the design of the ULB Gender Equality Plan and its implementation and exploitation by the Institution as envisioned by the [CALIPER](#) project, as well as for the set-up of a Research and Innovation Hub by ULB to transfer the knowledge and best practices attained during the project beyond academia.



Introduction

Methodology

The external assessment was aimed at investigating ULB external conditions such as the legal and cultural framework and the existing local/national innovation ecosystems and identifying where gender imbalances occur, why they are created, and by which factors they are influenced.

A quadruple helix approach was adopted, by involving stakeholders belonging to the following sectors:

- Academia and Universities
- Industry and Business
- Government and Public Sector
- Civil Society

The first step of the analysis consisted , in defining the **national legal and policy framework** and in particular:

- the existence of any specific national (and/or regional) policies on gender in Higher Education and/or Scientific Research & Innovation;
- how the frameworks define the relationship between gender equality and quality/excellence in
 - research and/or in education;
- in case there are no specific frameworks, if broader national and/or regional policies on Research, Innovation, and Higher education include any measures on gender equality.

For exploring the national (and regional) policy frameworks two methods were proposed: a desk research/policy analysis and interviews with relevant stakeholders (complementary in case the desk research did not produce enough information).

The second step of the assessment focused on the **National and Regional Innovation Ecosystems**. A **context analysis** through a dedicated desk research eventually complemented with interviews with internal stakeholders was implemented. The aim of the context analysis was to have a clear picture of the challenges faced by ULB in its own innovation ecosystem from a gender perspective. Indeed, the analysis was related to the identification of gaps and challenges related to gender inequalities at different levels (across education, scientific research and knowledge production, transfer to market of research outputs) within innovation ecosystems.

Besides the context analysis a **mapping** was conducted in order to identify existing and potential synergies with external stakeholders, through the following methods:

- a focus group with internal stakeholders¹;
- a survey for external stakeholders;
- a Social Network Analysis (SNA).

Both the focus group and the survey had the purpose of exploring the existing collaborations with external stakeholders from a gender perspective, as well identifying actions already undertaken by stakeholders in order to overcome gender inequalities, potential synergies and risks from further collaborations on gender issues.

¹ Suggested internal stakeholders to involve were: the President and/or vice president(s) research and/or innovation, professors leading researchers/coordinators of clusters or centres or subject areas with a high density of regional cooperation, the Head of administration and heads of research support office and technology transfer office, the Head of continuing professional development/continuing education office, the Head of start-up support service.



The focus group took place online on the 28th of September 2020, with three internal stakeholders and 11 external stakeholders answered the survey.

Finally, the SNA was conducted by ULB with the aim at providing a broad view of national/regional/local networking activities that took place around the Organisation through external projects or joint initiatives. It helped spotlighting gender gaps within every partner's institutions in the leadership of external interactions and identifying how frequently gender issues are taken into account in the external stakeholders' interactions. ULB focused on collaborations on STEM, in order to narrow the analysis down.

The result of the SNA consists in visual maps spotlighting the collaborations in place with stakeholders belonging to the following categories:

- Academia & Universities
- Industry & Business
- Government & Public Sector
- Civil Society
- Schools
- Others

Per each category a map is created showing those collaborations having female leaderships (from the side of the ULB) and those focusing and/or taking into account gender issues. KUMU² was used as tool in order to conduct the SNA.

² <https://kumu.io/>



Université Libre de Bruxelles (Research Performing Organisation)

The Belgian national legal and policy framework

Overall strategic gender equality policies at national level

In Belgium, there are different laws promoting gender equality at federal and regional level. In particular:

- Law n. 2007002011 of the 12th January 2007³ aimed at monitoring the implementation of the resolutions of the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995 and integrating the gender dimension into all federal policies; in particular, the integration of the gender dimension into all policies, measures, budget preparations or actions, with a focus on avoiding or correcting possible inequalities between women and men. For this purpose, at the beginning of a new legislature, the new government shall present the strategic objectives it intends to achieve during the legislature for all the pursued policies.
- Order of the Walloon Government of the 10th July 2003 establishing a Walloon Council for Equality between Men and Women.
- Circular of the 17th June 2013 on “Research and prosecution policy on discrimination and hate crimes (including discrimination based on sex)”. In the Circular it appears that: the legislation on discrimination and hate crimes is not always clear in practice and is not always correctly applied; collaboration between the public prosecutor's office, the police and/or the social inspection services can be improved; collaboration with institutional stakeholders must be developed, first and foremost with the CEOOR and the IEFH; judgments and statistical data are not always transmitted to institutional stakeholders; the recording of discrimination and hate crimes must be improved.
- Decree n. 2008204573 of the 6th November 2008⁴ on the “Fight against certain forms of discrimination, including discrimination between women and men in the economy, employment and professional training”.

Existence of specific mechanisms to promote the under- represented gender in Higher Education and/or Scientific Research & Innovation at national or regional level

The following provisions/initiatives can be mentioned:

³ Law n° 2007002011 of 12 January 2007 «Loi visant au contrôle de l'application des résolutions de la conférence mondiale sur les femmes réunie à Pékin en septembre 1995 et intégrant la dimension du genre dans l'ensemble des politiques fédérales» (Published 13 February 2007).

⁴ Decree n°2008204573 on 6 November 2008 «Décret relatif à la lutte contre certaines formes de discrimination, en ce compris la discrimination, entre les femmes et les hommes en matière d'économie, d'emploi et de formation professionnelle (1)» (Published 19 December 2008).



- Royal Decree n. 2003027712 of the 27th February 1990⁵ on measures for the promotion of equal opportunities between men and women in the public services.
- Royal Decree of the 29th June 1983⁶ on equal treatment between men and women as regards access to vocational training in educational establishments. It does not concern university studies but vocational training (e.g. economic conversion/reorientation).
- Royal Decree of the 15th February 1980⁷ establishing an Education Commission to guarantee the equal roles of men and women in society. The Commission's mission is to give opinions, carry out studies or propose legal or regulatory measures in all matters directly or indirectly concerning the equalization of opportunities for boys and girls in all study directions and at all levels of education.
- Order n. 2002/838bis of the College of the French Community Commission of the Brussels-Capital Region of 27 May 2004 on the protection against violence and moral or sexual harassment at work for teaching and related staff and for staff of psycho-medico-social centres.
- Actiris⁸ has a "diversity" label⁹ and can help companies to set up an anti-discrimination plan.
- As part of its commitment to gender equality, the Board of Directors of the F.R.S.-FNRS (Le Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique)¹⁰ recently decided that the Fund would financially participate in the AcademiaNet project "The Portal of Excellent Women Academics", a web portal edited under the aegis of the SNF Switzerland and which consists in an online database containing the profiles of high-level women researchers from all scientific disciplines¹¹.
- International Day of Women and Girls in Science (FNRS)¹²
- The "Guidelines for integrity in scientific research" provided by FNRS¹³. Examples of breaches of the scientific integrity are: deliberately omitting the names of project collaborators who have made essential contributions to the project; mentioning, without his/her agreement, a person as a co-author regardless of their contribution to the project.

Existence of national policies on implementation of quotas or targets for promoting the underrepresented gender in management positions and committees

The existing policies for promoting the underrepresented gender in management positions and committees are:

⁵ Royal decree n°2003027712 on 27 February 1990 « Arrêté royal portant des mesures en vue de la promotion de l'égalité de chances entre les hommes et les femmes dans les services publics »

⁶ Royal decree on 29 June 1983 « Arrêté royal du 29 juin 1983 relatif à l'égalité de traitement entre les hommes et les femmes en ce qui concerne l'accès à la formation professionnelle dispensée dans les établissements d'enseignement, pris en exécution des articles 124 et 125 de la loi du 4 août 1978 de réorientation économique. » (Published 29 August 1983).

⁷ Royal decree on 15 February 1980 « Arrêté royal 15 février 1980 portant création d'une Commission de l'enseignement pour la garantie de l'égalité des rôles des hommes et des femmes dans la société » (Published 26 February 1980).

⁸ Actiris is the Brussels Regional Job Agency.

⁹ see the list of companies that have been awarded this label <https://www.actiris.brussels/fr/employeurs/label-diversite/>

¹⁰ <https://www.frs-fnrs.be/fr/>

¹¹ According to the FNRS Gender equality report of 2018, promoting gender equality requires the implementation of a diverse range of actions and measures, including actions aimed at improving the visibility of women researchers.

¹² <https://www.frs-fnrs.be/en/prix-mecenats/grants/l-oreal-unesco-for-women-in-science>

¹³ FNRS (2020), Directives relatives à l'intégrité dans la recherche scientifique, Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique – FNRS.



- Royal Decree n. 2012002027 on the 2nd of June 2012, which amended the Royal Decree of the 2nd October 1937 on the status of public servants. Also, laws promoting gender equality in federal and regional advisory bodies exist. Indeed, at the beginning of 2012, in the federal public services and public programming services, only the 13% of managers and the 27% of staff appointed in classes A3, A4 and A5 were women, showing a great inequality. The decree gradually introduced a two-thirds quota per public service belonging to the federal administrative civil service.
- Law of the 28th July 2011 aimed at guaranteeing the presence of women on the boards of directors of autonomous public companies, listed companies and the National Lottery. It introduces, for all board members, a quota of at least one third of members of the least well represented sex (within six years for very large companies, eight years for small and medium-sized enterprises-SMEs and without delay for public companies). In the event of non-compliance with these provisions, penalties are provided.
- Law of the 24th May 1994¹⁴ to promote a balanced distribution of men and women on the lists of candidates for elections.
- Decree of the Walloon Government of the 9th January 2014 intended to promote a balanced representation of women and men on the boards of directors of private bodies approved by the Walloon Region.
- According to the IEFH 's report “Femmes au sommet – Recommandations” (“Women at the top”)¹⁵, “*Nobody likes quotas, but nobody can deny their immediate effect. In this sense, quotas are considered as the most effective way to fix under-representation and the measures offering sufficient guarantees of results. The progress made over the past decades in women's political representation would not have been possible without a quota system according to IEFH. Therefore, it seems obvious that the introduction of quotas should be considered also in other areas, especially where progress in gender equality is insufficient or even non-existent [...] We have received many requests to update this brochure. This proves that this information is important for many people directly or indirectly affected by the policy. It is therefore strongly recommended to systematically and regularly update these data. Figures on the presence of women on boards of directors and in company management require considerable research work. In order to enable their systematic monitoring, the data should be reported in a different way. These statistics could be published annually by the National Bank*”.
- Recommendations of the IEFH "Establishing a guaranteed presence of women in the decision-making bodies of commercial companies and public enterprises"¹⁶ about which quota or how many. According to the recommendations, a representation of at least 30% is the sociological threshold that seems to be the consensus in order to set in motion an irreversible equality dynamic. The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men believes that it is up to the legislator to determine the modalities, in consultation with the partners concerned and taking into account their progress.

Existence of national legislation promoting equality and non-discrimination in employment

The provisions to take into consideration are the followings:

¹⁴ Law on 24 May 1994 «Loi du 24 mai 1994 visant à promouvoir une répartition équilibrée des hommes et des femmes sur les listes de candidatures aux élections» (Published 1 July 1994).

¹⁵ IEFH (2020), Femmes au sommet – Recommandations, Institut pour l'égalité des hommes et des femmes. https://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/avis_et_recommandations/femmes_au_sommet

¹⁶ IEFH (2011), Instaurer une présence garantie de femmes au sein des organes de décision des sociétés commerciales et des entreprises publiques, Institut pour l'égalité des hommes et des femmes.



- Law n° 2007002098 of the 10th May 2007 "Law to combat certain forms of discrimination"¹⁷. It refers to discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, civil status, birth, wealth, religious or philosophical conviction, political conviction, language, current or future state of health, disability, physical or genetic characteristic, social origin but not explicitly on gender. The law protects a person when he or she files a complaint about discrimination in the workplace (protection against unfair dismissal for example) and defines sanctions and penalties against harassers and people who discriminate. In case of harassment, it is the harasser who must prove that he/she is not harassing.
- Law n° 2007002098 of the 10th May 2007 "Law to combat discrimination between women and men"¹⁸. It refers to discrimination on the basis of gender.
- Act of the 22nd May 2014. It amended the Act of the 10th May 2007 about discrimination between women and men, with the purpose of extending the protection to gender identity and gender expression.
- Law n° 2012204357 of the 22nd April 2012¹⁹ to fight the pay gap between men and women. Every two years, the employer of a company employing on average at least fifty workers has to carry out a detailed analysis of the pay structure within the company to determine whether the company pursues a gender-neutral pay policy and, if not, to achieve this in consultation with the staff delegation.

Existing policies at national level for reducing unequal gender division of labor related to housework and family care

National policies are included in:

- Law of the 10th May 2007 "Law to combat discrimination between women and men"²⁰. It mentions maternity, paternity, co-maternity (for lesbian couples) and the term "head of family" and "dependant". A direct distinction based on pregnancy, childbirth and maternity is assimilated to a direct distinction based on sex. The Act was amended by the Law n° 2014000613 of the 22nd May 2014²¹ and the n. 2020020361 of the 4th February 2020²².
- Royal Decree of 20 July 1971²³ instituting compensation and maternity insurance for self-employed workers and assisting spouses.
- Collective Labour Agreement No. 64 of 29 April 1997 of the National Labour Council²⁴ establishing a right to parental leave: both the father and the mother may make use of this right. The same applies to adoptive fathers and mothers.

There is a lot of discussion going on about legal provisions for part-time work, parental leave, but no measures to better share the parental burden exist.

According to the Belspo report, Belgium's policy on work-life balance was originally implemented through a system called "career break". The aim of this system is to reduce unemployment by sharing available jobs. It is designed to encourage the temporary withdrawal of women from the labour market. The Directive

¹⁷ Law n°2007002099 on 10 May 2007 « Loi tendant à lutter contre certaines formes de <discrimination> » (Published 30 May 2007).

¹⁸ Law n° 2007002098 on 10 May 2007 «Loi tendant à lutter contre la discrimination entre les femmes et les hommes » (Published 30 May 2007).

¹⁹ Law n° 2012204357 on 22 April 2012 « Loi visant à lutter contre l'écart salarial entre hommes et femmes (1)» (Published 28 August 2012).

²⁰ See reference n. 155

²¹ Law n° 2014000613 on 22 May 2014 «Loi modifiant la loi du 10 mai 2007 tendant à lutter contre la <discrimination> entre les femmes et les <hommes> en vue de l'étendre à l'identité de genre et l'expression de genre » (Published 24 July 2014).

²² Law n° 2020020361 on 4 February 2020 «Loi modifiant la loi du 10 mai 2007 modifiant, en ce qui concerne l'interdiction de discrimination relative à la paternité ou à la comaternité, la loi du 10 mai 2007 tendant à lutter contre la discrimination entre les femmes et les hommes (1)» (Published 28 February 2020).

²³ Royal decree on 1 July 1971 «Arrêté royal instituant une assurance indemnités et une assurance maternité en faveur des travailleurs indépendants et des conjoints aidants.» (Published 7 August 1971).

²⁴ Convention collective de travail n° 64 du 29 avril 1997 du Conseil national du Travail instituant un droit au congé parental.



2010/18/UE²⁵ focuses on two rights: the right to leave for at least three months to take care of a child (born or adopted) up to the age of eight, and the right to leave in cases of force majeure for urgent family reasons.

Following the IEFH's report on paternity leave²⁶, it is not only male workers in the private or public sectors who want to be involved in childcare. This equally applies to the self-employed fathers. However, in case self-employed fathers take paternity leave after the birth of a baby, they do not receive any benefits and therefore suffer a pay loss. Unemployed fathers are not entitled to paternity leave either, unlike pregnant women looking for work, who are entitled to maternity leave. Also, unemployed persons may have problems in attending an interview, selection or recruitment tests, in the days following the birth of a child. A change in the mentioned rules, for instance recognising paternity leave for all fathers, would improve the involvement of fathers in childcare and permit a better sharing of tasks between mothers and fathers.

The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men recommends prohibiting direct and indirect discrimination (i.e. less favourable treatment) based on family responsibilities. Greater protection for workers with family responsibilities would enable Belgium to comply with ILO Convention n. 156 and to fill certain gaps in the fight against discrimination, particularly with regard to responsibilities towards other family members. This initiative would help to remove certain obstacles to the balance between family life and work and to change mentalities towards greater equality. Indeed, the Institute regularly receives reports of people who encounter difficulties in their work because of their family responsibilities. Examples include the dismissal of a female worker shortly after she had applied for part-time work, in order to care for her seriously ill mother, or the difficulties encountered by a man who no longer can work overtime in order to pick up his children after school. The Institute recommends that a new criterion protecting against discrimination in relation to family responsibilities should be incorporated into Belgian legislation. The Act of the 10th May 2007 already prohibits discrimination based on the "protected criteria" of sex, pregnancy, childbirth, maternity, sex reassignment and gender identity.

Existing framework conditions regarding childcare facilities

According to the Belspo report, in Belgium, at the beginning of the 1970s, it was decided to devote part of the bonuses coming from the family allowance budget as subsidy for the costs of childcare for the workers' children. This measure was aimed at reducing inequalities on the labour market, of which mothers were the main victims.

Employment conditions at university and research organization

According to the European Charter for Researchers - The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (FNRS, 2005):

- Funders or employers of researchers should be responsible, as recruiters, for providing researchers with selection and recruitment procedures that are open, transparent and internationally comparable.

²⁵ Directive 2010/18/UE du Conseil portant application de l'accord-cadre révisé sur le congé parental conclu par BUSINESSSEUROPE, l'UEAPME, le CEEP et la CES et abrogeant la directive 96/34/CE

²⁶ IEHF (2020), ongé de paternité en Belgique : l'expérience des travailleurs - Recommandations, Institut pour l'égalité des hommes et des femmes.



- Employers and/or funders of researchers shall not discriminate between researchers on grounds of sex, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic status.
- Employers and/or funders should aim to achieve a representative gender balance at all levels of staff, including at the level of thesis/internship supervisors and managers. This balance should be achieved through a policy of equal opportunities at the time of recruitment and at later career stages, but should not override quality and competence criteria. In order to ensure equal treatment, selection and evaluation committees should reflect an adequate gender balance (See SEC (2005) 260, Women and Science: Excellence and Innovation - Gender Equality in Science).
- Employers and/or funders should ensure that entry and admission standards for researchers are clearly specified, particularly at the beginning of their careers, and should also facilitate access for disadvantaged groups or researchers returning to a research career, including teachers (at any level) returning to a research career. Employers and/or funders should adhere to the principles set out in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers when appointing or recruiting researchers.
- Selection committees should bring together diverse expertise and skills, reflect an adequate gender balance and, where necessary and possible, include members from different sectors (public and private) and disciplines, including from other countries, and with appropriate experience to assess the candidate. As far as possible, a wide range of selection practices should be used, such as evaluation by external experts and face-to-face interviews. Selection committee members should be properly trained.

Existence of national programs which promote the integration of gender in the content of scientific research

No programs of this kind exist.

National policies and legal frameworks on sexual/gender harassment in the workplace

National provisions on sexual/gender harassment in the workplace are:

- The Law 2007002098, of the 10th May 2007 "Act to combat discrimination between women and men in the workplace". In the event of harassment, it is the harasser who must prove that he/she was not harassing.
- Order 2002/838bis of the College of the French Community Commission of the Brussels-Capital Region of the 27th May 2004 on protection against violence and moral or sexual harassment at work for teachers and similar staff and for staff of psycho-medico-social centers.

Funding opportunities for collaborative actions on gender equality at national and regional level

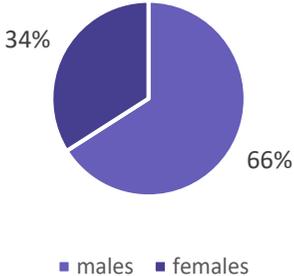
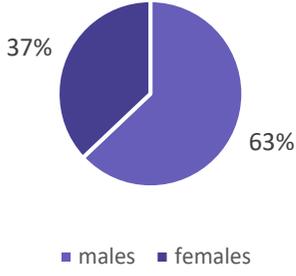
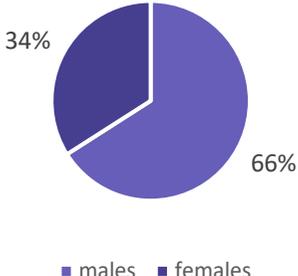
Worth to mention is the "Germaine Tillion" call²⁷ (no gender-specific), which is the Walloon call for social innovation, which funds innovative actions which contribute to the development of new approaches, skills, and the adaptation of employment and training systems. Topics may cover the following areas: work organisation, corporate governance, adjustments to the productive processes, new production channels, new ways of working (teleworking, entrepreneurial design, etc.) and end-of-career management.

²⁷ <https://recherche-technologie.wallonie.be/fr/menu/acteurs-institutionnels/service-public-de-wallonie-services-en-charge-de-la-recherche-et-des-technologies/departement-de-la-recherche-et-du-developpement-technologique/direction-des-programmes-de-recherche/programmes-clotures/les-programmes-mobilisateurs/l-appel-germaine-tillion/germaine-tillion-appel.html>



The innovation ecosystem context analysis at ULB

The following table presents the results of the context analysis conducted by ULB in terms of quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Area	Indicator	Results	
Talents and workforce education and acquisition	High School and Higher Education students in STEM by gender, at regional and national levels	<p>STEM students in FWB²⁸ (2015/2016)²⁹</p>  <p>■ males ■ females</p>	<p>STEM students in the Flanders (2019/2020)³⁰</p>  <p>■ males ■ females</p>
	Researchers in STEM by gender in R&I, at national and regional levels	<p>STEM researchers in Belgium in 2015³¹:</p>  <p>■ males ■ females</p>	

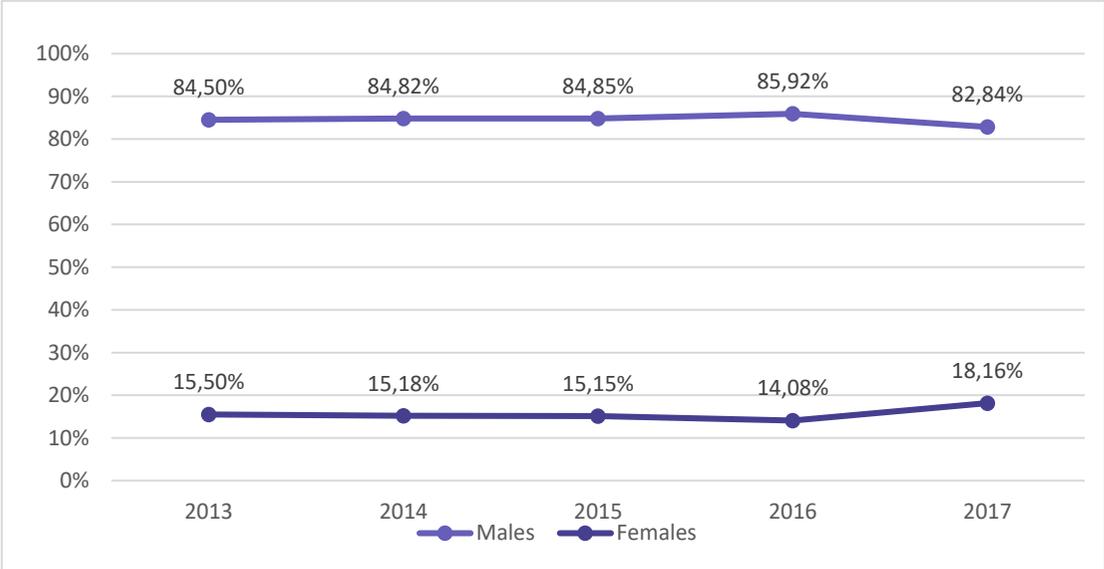
²⁸ Wallonia-Brussels Federation (FWB)

²⁹ Statistics of 2015-2016 of the CREF <http://www.cref.be/annuaire/2016/>

³⁰ Statistics from 2019-2020 of the Flanders region <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/hoger-onderwijs-in-cijfers>

³¹ Eurostat data for 2015 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/R_%26_D_personnel#Researchers



	Evolution of employment rate in R&I by gender	<p style="text-align: center;">Evolution of the Employment rate in the ICT sector in Belgium. Data 2013-2017³²:</p>  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Males (%)</th> <th>Females (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>84,50%</td> <td>15,50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>84,82%</td> <td>15,18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015</td> <td>84,85%</td> <td>15,15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>85,92%</td> <td>14,08%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>82,84%</td> <td>18,16%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Males (%)	Females (%)	2013	84,50%	15,50%	2014	84,82%	15,18%	2015	84,85%	15,15%	2016	85,92%	14,08%	2017	82,84%	18,16%
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Leadership	Patents registrations by gender	<p>Patent registrations in 2016: 159.087</p> <p>According to She Figures 2018, the women to men ratio of inventorships in Belgium for the period 2013-2016 was of 0.16, showing a strong under-representation of women as inventors³³.</p>																		
	Founders and leaders of innovative enterprises and start-ups by gender	<p>Data of self-employed men/women in 2017³⁴:</p> <p>Males: 17,4%; Females: 10,7%</p>																		
Knowledge and tech production issues	Level of integration of gender as a scientific research dimension	<p>The FNRS, in its 2020 guide for applicants, still does not stress the importance of having a gender dimension in a research proposals that have (significant) impacts on males and females. Indeed, there is no place in application forms asking the applicants if their research will have a gender dimension or not and if yes, how they intend to deal with it (as for instance with ethics).</p> <p>The same applies for ULB in its grant applications for ARC projects, mobility grants, etc.</p>																		

³² Figures for TIC sector 2013-2017 in Belgium <https://statbel.fgov.be/fr/nouvelles/chiffres-en-image-les-specialistes-des-tic-sur-le-marche-belge-du-travail>

The percentage of male and female researchers among the overall R&D personnel in the business enterprise sector, in 2015, in Belgium, was roughly the same: 60% for women, 61% for men (SHE Figures 2018, p. 50).

³³ She Figures 2018, page 167

³⁴ Statbel (2018) Chiffres clés. Aperçu statistique de la Belgique https://statbel.fgov.be/sites/default/files/files/documents/FR_kerncijfers_2018_web1a.pdf. Data only concern self-employed people not founders or leaders of innovative enterprises and start-ups.



		<p>On the website of the Wallonia government, while searching for “dimension genre”, only a page appears³⁵ saying that applications for a financial support for sports infrastructures have to take gender into account. Nothing else appears about gender as a scientific research dimension.</p> <p>Even on the websites of the Brussels region and the Flanders region, nothing is indicated with reference to the “dimension genre”.</p>
	Level of consideration of the gender dimension in product/service development	No information is available with reference to this indicator.
Broader issues featuring the R&I ‘cultures	Gender sensitiveness/family friendliness of supporting services to start up and entrepreneurship	No information is available with reference to this indicator.
	Perception of existing stereotypes/bias on gender and innovation/entrepreneurship	No information is available with reference to this indicator.

Table 1_Results of the context analysis conducted by ULB

³⁵ <https://www.wallonie.be/fr/actualites/reforme-du-subventionnement-des-infrastructures-sportives>



ULB Mapping of external stakeholders and SNA

Results of the focus group with internal stakeholders

The focus group took place online on the 28th of September 2020. Three internal stakeholders took part in the activity (2 male and one female), namely the head of the Technology Transfer Office, the President of the Valorisation Committee and the Vice-rector of Research and Valorisation³⁶.

Researchers adapted the questions proposed in the methodology according to the participants specific expertise, but without changing the scope of the activity.

Before analysing the inputs provided to the participants to the different questions posed, it is important to highlight that the answers given mainly focused on the internal analysis rather than on the external one. This is due by the fact that according to the focus group's participants, **gender is not taken into account by external stakeholders**. Participants reported that on their opinion gender inequalities are not perceived as a challenge by external stakeholders and were not aware of any actions taken. As a result, very few information are provided about how gender equality is perceived by external stakeholders and participants spontaneously focused on the internal situation within ULB.

Participants agreed on the existence of gender inequalities within STEM faculties: there are fewer female students, teachers and researchers in STEM faculties as well as fewer female researcher involved in entrepreneurship actions (e.g. spin-off, patents). They perceive these inequalities as a result of a broad process of socialisation, cultural schemes as well as previous study choices (e.g. at the secondary school). However, they mitigated the consequences of gender inequalities in spin-offs and entrepreneurial actions, since in their opinion such spin-offs and entrepreneurial actions are not very much valued in an academic career and, on the contrary, represent an alternative to the academic career itself. Publications remain the most important success factor for an academic career and for this purpose, international cooperation is more important than industrial cooperation. Participants stated that in their opinion the gender dimension is not taken into account at the STEM faculties, gender is not considered a relevant issue in collaborations, like the topic and the competences. According to them, the main benefit of gender equality in STEM would be that research activities would reflect the composition and the real needs of the society. In order to fulfil this, also other dimensions should be taken into account.

Concerning the **actions** put in place, the Head of the Technology Office mentioned a few projects in the frame of the Polytech: the project "Yes She Can", which aims at informing secondary school students about the STEM careers, and "Women in Tech", a regional initiative aiming at promoting women in science and technology sectors. At the institutional level, the "Children University" project enrolls professors of all faculties, including STEM faculties, who make academic teaching accessible to children. It is not focused on gender but it plays a part in making STEM studies more attractive to all.

No specific actions seem to exist at the researchers' level, even though they agreed that the main level to act upon is the secondary schools one, through dedicated communication campaigns involving role-models. Also a greater involvement of women in selection committees would produce benefits.

In general, overcoming gender inequalities would result in a better reflection of the society features and needs in the research activities.

Some of the participants reported being interested in actively participating in the Research and Innovation Hub.

³⁶ Another person was supposed to take part in the focus group but finally did not participate.



About **risks** from collaborations, participants identified only risk related to the greater involvement of women in the selection committees, which consists in overloading women with requests of joining committees.

Results of the survey to external stakeholders

The researchers of ULB adapted the survey questions in order to customize them to the 4 different kind of stakeholders involved. The survey was sent not only to current external stakeholders but also to potential ones. The questions included in the survey are listed in Annex VI.

11 external stakeholders answered the survey: 4 public bodies, 3 no-profit associations, 1 professional federation, 1 company, 1 university and 1 RFO. The public bodies mainly deal with the digital sector, employment and diversity in companies, financing research, development and innovation. The no-profit associations, instead, deal with ICT, gender in STEM and gender studies in general. The professional federation represents and supports the technology industry in Belgium, while the private company works on the vaccine research and development.

Concerning the **actions/measures to promote gender quality** within the participating institutions, 9 out of 11 stakeholders reported having measures in place, only two public bodies reported not having any. About the type of actions, the company representative mentioned that inclusion and diversity is part of their corporate strategy and many initiatives take place about internal and external communication, awareness raising, work-life balance. The no-profit associations integrate gender equality in all their activities with actions ranging from networking, inclusive communication, meetings with the ministerial cabinet on the topic, gender related projects, etc. Also the professional federation included measures such as the obligation of mixed panels and the promotion of the topic in internal communication. Two of the public bodies reported adopting the following measures: quantitative analysis, analysis of recruitment, personnel management, internal and external communication processes, adoption of gender balance measures in decision-making, measures for structural change over/under-representation of women/men in RDI domains and sectors, monitoring gender balance in project teams, gender-sensitive funding modalities, etc. The university reported having actions plans with dedicated actions about gender, while the RFO put in place several measures to reduce gender inequalities, such as:

- The composition of the scientific commissions aims as much as possible at a balance between men and women;
- Gender equality is taken into account within the internal procedures for the selection of remote experts;
- Raising awareness take place at the beginning of SC meetings of potential gender bias;
- Publications of gender statistics through the CReF³⁷;
- Participation in the European She figures survey;
- Application of fixed scales guaranteeing equal salaries for men and women with equal functions and seniority;
- Extension of the grant in case of maternity leave;
- Participation in the network of "gender contact persons" (GCP);
- Annual report on the state of gender equality and inter-institutional report in collaboration with the 6 FWB Universities;
- Participation in the "Women & Science Committee" and in the working groups of this Committee;
- Addition of the field-descriptor "IDR-32 Gender Studies";

³⁷ <http://www.cref.be/>



- Financial support of the contact group "Gender: from theories to research strategies";
- Participation in the ERA-Net GENDER-NET project and in the ERA-Net Cofund GENDER-NET Plus project;
- Member of Academia-Net;
- Creation and hosting of an Observatory of Research and Scientific Careers which includes the study of gender equality among its priorities.

The survey also explored the **problems and risks** encountered when implementing the actions. The most relevant that were pointed out are:

- Lack of interest by employees (especially for the company);
- Resistance to change by the management;
- Lack of funding/means (especially in the case of the associations and the professional federation and public bodies);
- Lack of awareness and expertise/knowledge in the field;
- Lack of time.

Regarding the **benefits** of implementing the measures, the following ones were mentioned:

- Improvement of the well-being, of the working conditions and of the reputation of the company/institution also from the side of potential new employees, who choose to work for an entity having certain values;
- More political “power” (for no-profit associations);
- Change in people mentality;
- Improvement of internal processes;
- A gender-oriented analysis in RDI contributes to promoting scientific discoveries, improving experimental efficiency and enabling social equality.

No actions/measures are considered to be taken by those stakeholders not having current measures in place at the moment.

The survey also explored existing collaborations between ULB and the stakeholders. With 7 stakeholders collaborations were already in place and concerned:

- Donations & grants, support and sponsorships for scientific meetings;
- ULB’s participation in the Board of Directors of the association;
- Support to ULB’s diversity plan;
- Involvement of ULB’s PhD students and trainees;
- Research projects;
- Funding.

Only in 4 cases the collaboration with ULB included actions on gender equality. This is the case of actions about raising awareness activities, the common participation in the Women and Science Committee and in the FWB network of Gender Contact Persons and the support to the ULB Diversity Plan.

9 stakeholders would be interested in a collaboration with ULB for the promotion of gender equality in STEM and in particular, through the following possible joint actions:

- Joint awareness raising campaigns also targeting youngsters (by using role models);
- Exchange of good practices (for instance about recruitment, gender stereotypes in professions, etc.);
- Dedicated meeting on the topic with non-academics.

Results of the SNA



This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no 873134.

The data for conducting the SNA were retrieved through the involvement of the Technology Transfer Office of ULB. In particular, the data asked were about the collaborations in place at the STEM faculties in the last three years. The ULB researchers faced several problems in the gathering of data:

- Data were received later than expected. Researchers had to remind several times to the Technology Transfer Office about the data which were received only at the end of September, consequently delaying their analysis.
- The data received were elaborated/adapted in order to be used for the analysis and then to be included in KUMU
- Some collaborations with industries are confidential. Therefore, some collaborations do not appear in the map.
- The content of collaborations is confidential. Therefore, it is not possible to know whether they take gender into account or not.
- Researchers had no access to internal collaborations as well as to the departments involved in the collaborations. Therefore, only the involved faculties appear in the analysis.
- Given that the data were organized by leader of the collaboration and not by partner, this means that several collaboration leaders are involved with a same stakeholder. Therefore, it was not possible to define the gender of the collaboration leader. Researchers adapted the methodology by encoding “male” when the majority of the collaboration leaders were male and “female” when the majority of the collaboration leaders were female, and “Male/female” when the number of male and female collaboration leaders coincides.

Summing up, the data enabled researchers to have information about the partners each STEM faculty is involved with, which sector stakeholders belong to, and the gender of the majority of researchers collaborating with each partner. No information are available about whether collaborations take gender into account.

Overall **183 external stakeholders** were included in the mapping. The main stakeholders are the ones belonging to the “industry & business” sector (88, representing the 48%), followed by “government & public sector” stakeholders (46, representing the 25%), “civil society” stakeholders (25, representing the 14%) and “academia & universities” stakeholders (22, representing the 12%).

Two hypothesis can be made to explain the prevalence of collaborations with “industry & business” stakeholders:

1. The topic of the projects. However, data of the topic are not available, so this hypothesis cannot be confirmed.
2. The fact that “industry & business” stakeholders are involved both as funders and as research partners. They are therefore included in more collaborations.

Concerning the importance of “government & public sector” stakeholders, it can be explained by the fact that they include the major funding agencies and some research centres are public, which make public stakeholders more diverse.

About the **intensity** of collaborations with external stakeholders, almost half of them are “one time” collaborations (105 out of 222, representing the 47%), while 50 are “frequent” collaborations and 67 “solid”. About “one time collaborations”, the great majority (66) are with the “industry & business” sector.

No information about the **topic** of the collaborations was available, as already mentioned above.

With reference of the gender of the collaboration leaders, **only 20 collaborations (11%) are led by a team mainly composed by female researchers**. However, this does not reflect the number of female researchers involved in collaborations because research teams involve many researchers. 9 collaborations are instead led



External Gender Equality Assessment – ULB

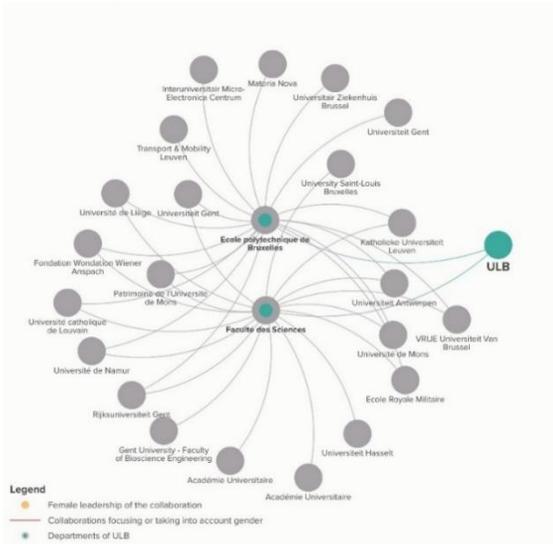


Figure 35_ ULB collaborations with "Academia & university" stakeholders

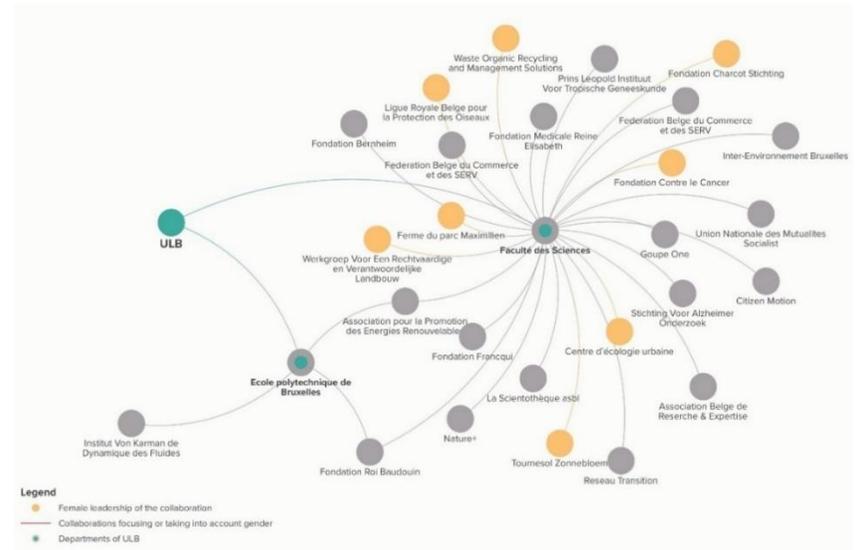


Figure 16_ ULB collaborations with "Civil society" stakeholders

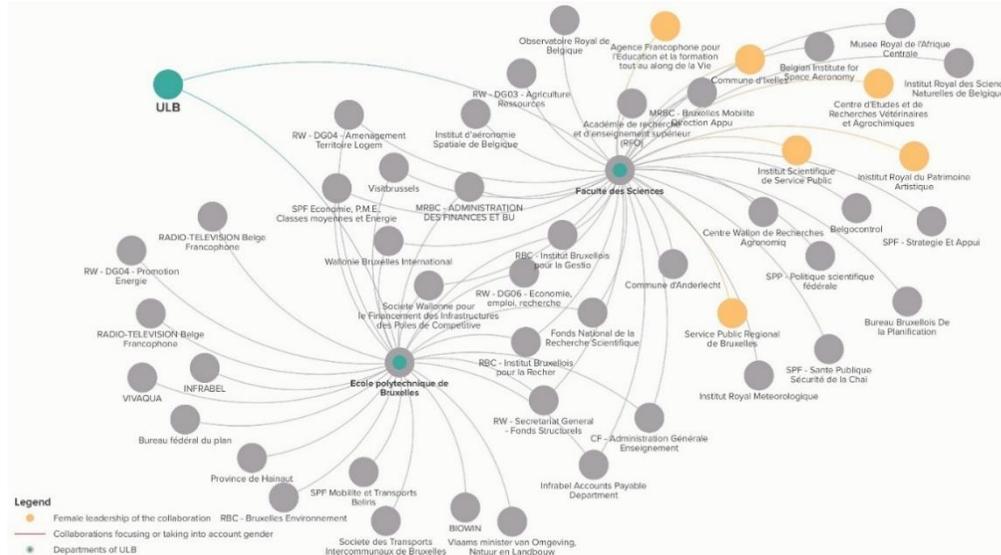


Figure 2_ ULB collaborations with "Government & public sector" stakeholders



This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no 873134.

Final remarks on the external assessment of ULB

The analysis conducted by ULB reveals that in Belgium, **there are different laws promoting gender equality both at federal and regional level**. Such provisions tackle the integration of the gender dimension in all policies, measures and actions, the gender based violence and the discriminations 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, paternity and paternal leave), however, a lack of homogeneity can be seen in the application of the paternity leave since it is not applicable for self-employed (or unemployed) men. The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men recommends the **improvement of the existing policies against discrimination in relation to family responsibilities**.

As far as employment conditions at university and research organizations are concerned, specific provisions are included in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, they consist in: open and transparent recruitment procedures, prohibition of discrimination, achievement of gender balance at all staff levels and even within selection committees.

Data collected show **a great imbalance as concerns STEM students**, both in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and in the Flanders, where respectively the 34% and the 37% of STEM students are female. The same applies for STEM researchers (34%). Looking at the **evolution of employment rate in ICT, the difference between males and females is very visible, with a slightly positive trend** (from the 15,50% of women in the 2013 to the 18,16% in 2017). Also in terms of patent registration there is a strong under-representation of women.

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. And this applies for the main funding entities, as well as for ULB itself.

Concerning the analysis of the collaborations in place with external stakeholders, ULB counts of a variety of collaborations with universities, ICT companies, NGOs and public government bodies. According to the results of the focus group, no relevant findings emerged as concerns the way in which gender is taken into account by external stakeholder. However, the survey provided with relevant information. Indeed, **external stakeholders appear to be familiar with gender equality issues and most of the participating stakeholders have already implemented different actions** concerning internal and external communication, awareness raising initiatives, gender related projects, dedicated analysis, gender balance measures in decision-making. Particularly interesting are the measures adopted by the RFO taking part in the survey (e.g. gender balance in the composition of scientific commissions, gender balance in the selection of experts, equal salaries policies, extension of the grant in case of maternity leave, etc.). About the existing collaboration with ULB, in 4 cases they included actions on gender equality, in the form of raising awareness activities and the common participation to committees and networks. In general, stakeholders reported as being willing to further collaborate on gender equality and the main kind of joint actions that were envisioned were joint awareness campaigns, exchange of good practices and dedicated meetings.

183 stakeholders were included in the SNA, most of them belonging to the “industry & business” sector. **only 20 collaborations are led by a team mainly composed by female researchers**, while 9 collaborations are instead led by an equal number of male and female researchers. Data about collaborations focusing on gender or taking gender into account were not available

