



CALIPER
Gender Equality in STEM Research

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY DESIGN AND DEVELOP AN INCLUSIVE GEP

The ECE - NTUA Experience



National Technical University of Athens

School of Electrical and
Computer Engineering

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“ EU CONTEXT: EXISTING GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Horizon Europe sets gender equality as a crosscutting principle and aims to eliminate gender inequality and intersecting socioeconomic inequalities throughout research and innovation systems. In particular, European Research Area Priority 4 focuses on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research and innovation[1]. The objective is to foster scientific excellence and breadth of research approaches by fully utilising gender diversity and equality.

Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) have been recognised as an effective gender mainstreaming tool for Research and Innovation (R&I) and Higher Education (HE) institutions to tackle the objectives of the European Research Area (ERA) via a set of actions implemented along with clear timelines and monitored through specific indicators[2]. This is evident as well, since a GEP is an eligibility criterion for acceding Horizon Europe funding for the R&I Institutions. Lastly, the Ljubljana Declaration[3] adopted in 2021 highlights the importance of GEPs as a tool “to achieve long-term and sustainable advancement towards Gender equality in R&I”.

Even though the institutional change strategy implemented through GEPs has had very positive impacts in many research organisations and has been a catalyser at national and EU level, there is still a need for a renewed approach[2] which will enable Institutions to go beyond the minimum requirements for a GEP as defined in Horizon Europe eligibility criteria for effectively addressing the persisting structural barriers in R&I institutions.

For this reason, the recent ERA policies on gender equality in R&I have expanded their scope to cover innovation at large aiming at connecting academic research with society and the economy. This is evident from the European Commission’s (EC) most recent policy directions on Gender Equality in R&I and institutional change that seek for ‘inclusive’ Gender Equality Plans referring to “intersectoriality” as one of the dimensions along with intersectionality and geographic inclusiveness.

The **H2020 CALIPER project** was designed and is now being implemented, (since 2020) addressing these three dimensions and in particular having intersectoriality as its key specific feature embedded in all steps of the institutional change process, from the internal assessment to the GEPs design and implementation phase, as well as in monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, drawing upon the experience of the CALIPER project which aims at addressing gender inequality in STEM in 9 RPOs and RFOs across the EU and which has been built based on the GEAR tool but offering an additional inclusive approach, this policy briefing highlights the main takeaways on the design & development, of an inclusive Gender Equality Plan. This particular policy briefing is the first version of three policy briefings to be developed focusing on the inclusive GEP process.

Elaborating on the different dimensions of inclusiveness addressed by the CALIPER project, this policy brief aims at guiding national stakeholders in Greece to effectively contribute to tailoring GEPs to specific domestic needs and developing quality assurance for GEPs.

“ THE GREEK CONTEXT: EXISTING GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The Greek constitution started to reform in 1974 after the restoration of Democracy. The first law reform towards gender equality happened in 1983 regarding the family law. In 1982, the UN International Convention was signed by Greece, for the elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)[4] (Law 1342/83)[5] but also ratified the European Social Charter with Law 1426/84[6]. The action plan for the integration of the gender equality policies in all sectors of action (gender mainstreaming) was first presented in the National Action Plan for Equality (2001-2006)[7], which was devised by the General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality. The National Program for Substantive Gender Equality (2010-2013)[8] and the National Action Plan 2016-2020[9] for Gender Equality was implemented. The more recent Greek Strategy for Gender Equality 2016-2020 (GSGE) and Law 4606/2019[10] provide the content of Gender Equality Plans as well as provisions related to gender sensitive budgeting. With Law 4589/2019[11] the establishment of a Committee for Gender Equality in each university was foreseen. The law also states that higher education institutions must ensure the promotion of gender equality at all levels and processes of academic life. However, no specific mechanisms for promoting the underrepresented gender in Higher education are in place yet. Now the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025[12] is being implemented, which highlights 4 expected axes: gender-based violence, decision-making centres, the labour market and sectoral policies (education, health, culture).

EVIDENCE ON ULB GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES AND PRACTICES”

The Greek legal framework needs further improvement and that reflects the institutional framework of ECE-NTUA. ECE-NTUA doesn't have specific gender-sensitive protocols for recruitment and hiring. Particular processes for hiring permanent personnel (administrative, research, academic, technical) exist, but they are not explicitly designated by the School, rather than the Ministry of Education. Candidates are assessed on their capabilities and experience, while the gender dimension is not considered.

The measures implemented in ECE-NTUA regarding parental leaves are the ones established by laws, presidential decrees and EC directives. Note, however, that these measures apply only to salaried/permanent staff (i.e. faculty, administrative, technical, laboratory staff) or temporary staff under a fixed-term contract. The institution has a general commitment to gender equality, but there is no official monitoring on the gender equality situation, except for demographics. Also, there are no actions on mentoring services for students. The School is in the process of creating the Committee for Gender Equality at an institutional level. The communication material is relatively balanced representing both genders, but there are no gender campaigns to promote female researchers in particular. Regarding research activities, there are no specialised practices to integrate gender dimension and gender analysis. Lastly, the institution doesn't have a specific policy for sexual harassment, and handles incidents based on the national legal framework.

CALIPER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN INCLUSIVE GEP

Setting up the scene for the GEP design and development: Perform an analysis of external and internal conditions for the GEP development and acceptance. Identify potential gender biases and inequalities along with scenarios towards change using the proposed actions below:

Set up a GEP Working Group:

Suggested members of the GEP working group include staff members at different managerial levels including stakeholders from middle and high management.

Perform a qualitative and quantitative gender analysis:

Suggested areas for data collection include human resources, institutional governance, research, teaching, student services, transfer to the market, institutional communication, intersectionality, and sexual harassment.

Tools: set up intersectional indicators and targets to be achieved and collect sex-disaggregated data via desk research and interviews.

Set up Research & Innovation (R&I) Hub:

Adopting the quadruple helix approach gather information through desk research, network analysis and interviews with key stakeholders from academia and universities, industry, ministries/government, public sector, civil society organisations and identify the regional/national innovation ecosystems in which they operate adopting and engage them in the GEP design and development process.

Suggested members of the R&I Hub:

Stakeholders from academia and universities, industry, ministries/government, public sector, civil society organisations.

Develop strategic change scenarios to better understand and reflect key factors, the potential measures and the strategic collaborations with internal and external stakeholders that need to be leveraged with regards to the implementation of the GEP.

Suggested methodology: Develop three scenarios focusing on the identification of the maximum resistances, the maximum opportunities, and a mix of both in the areas mentioned in the gender analysis. For ECE-NTUA the most realistic was the third scenario, which was the only one developed.

The main components of the scenarios included:

Situation; Main problems; Objective(s); Possible solutions; Resistances (including strategies to overcome them); and Opportunities.

ECE-NTUA results: In the case of ECE NTUA, the strategic change scenarios were useful for brainstorming but a bit repetitive, and as a result, they didn't have a significant added value to the construction of the GEP. No significant resistances were encountered at this stage.

Organise Multi Stakeholder dialogues

involving the R&I Hubs assess the above-mentioned scenarios and investigate opportunities and barriers for collaboration with the regional and national stakeholders.

ECE-NTUA results: ECE-NTUA organised two online stakeholder dialogues regarding gender equality strategies in research and innovation. The first one focused on Management, Human Resources, Sexual

Harassment & Gender-Based Violence and Research while the second one focused on Institutional communication, Transfer to the market, Teaching & Student Services and Intersectionality. The **types of organisations** that took part included Universities, private sector, NGOs. Different problems and perspectives leading, indicatively, in the following approaches:

- Increasing the women in STEM and the positions for women researchers through actions which promote the profession of engineer and future career opportunities, via the promotion of role models or even by exploiting exchange programs (ERASMUS, AIESEC) to attract female researchers from abroad.
- The development of measures regarding the balance between work and family life with the support of research centers and best practices from other universities
- Setting up a mechanism for dealing with incidents of sexist behavior, exploiting guidelines from other universities' gender equality committees and civil society organisations.
- Using of gender-sensitive language in all forms of communication. Organisation of trainings for the faculty in this direction and get support through discussions with universities abroad.
- Supporting the integration of women in the labour market through mentoring from professional women in the field, while also directly engaging the private sector.

GEP design and development: Develop an inclusive GEP based on the knowledge and experience gained and the targets set.

Recommended areas to focus when designing and developing a GEP in Greece,

on the basis of ECE NTUA's GEP design and development process:

Human Resources: In this focus area, especially regarding recruitment and selection and work/life balance, in order to improve the policies and ensure a more gender equal and bias free environment, the proposed measures include: **Setting up internal targets regarding female representation** among students, researchers, academic staff, and recruiting boards. The indicators should be monitored regularly, reporting the number of women. **Establishing a formal strategy against biases and sexism.** Top and middle management should be involved in order to contribute to the structure, approval and finally establishment of the strategy. **Publishing a Post-Doc Research Guide, on work/life strategy** at the institutional level. It can be developed by a relevant Committee or secretariat. Involvement of the high and middle level management is critical. Data collection should follow, to facilitate the monitoring of the guide's implementation and efficiency and the respective updating process.

Institutional Governance: To address the low representation of women in decision making bodies, proposed measures include: **Creating a Gender Equality Office** to support, lead, coordinate and embed gender equality and diversity actions at the Institutional level. This office can be responsible for organising gender related events and drafting gender related reports. The office members can supervise the GEP implementation. **Collecting gender disaggregated data** including an annual update of the data/indicators. The Institution can first establish a data collection framework for gender equality with quantitative and qualitative aspects, ensuring

the participation of the Institution's relevant stakeholders and cooperation with the other relevant units and committees.

Institutional Communication: The popular perception of male dominance in the STEM community, creates the need for gender neutral language in the internal and external communication content. The proposed activities include: **Developing and applying a "Guide of using non-sexist language in administrative documents"**, to ensure that official communications use gender-balanced and gender sensitive language. This can be achieved through training about the Guide from the respective body (for example the Gender Equality Office), with the involvement of the top and middle management.

Research: To adapt gender sensitive policies in research proposed measures include: **Create a framework for measuring the inclusion of gender in research content**, and initiate discussions on how to improve performance at the Institutional level. An example for monitoring performance can be the number of thesis/PhD/research projects with a gender dimension in their content.

Teaching and student services: The lack of gender sensitive teaching and student services can be addressed through: **The integration of gender-related topics in selected undergraduate and postgraduate courses.** The content of the course can be designed in collaboration with faculty and teaching assistants, collecting feedback from the students. **The organisation of seminars on gender related topics for students, to improve awareness.**

Transfer to the market: To promote female entrepreneurship, proposed measures include: The creation of an Alumni Network,

to enhance the communication between the business and the Institution. This network should adopt a gender perspective and support female researchers entering the market.

Sexism and Sexual Harassment: Methods to combat sexual harassment may include: **Establishing a formal mechanism dealing with cases of sexual harassment and gender violence**, to improve the reporting and resolution of harassment incidents. The mechanism can operate within the following pillars: Cooperate with the Gender Equality Office; Raise awareness on what represents sexual harassment and sexism at work; Organise training on how to avoid unconscious sexism and gender bias behaviour; Develop a formal mechanism offering mediation services; Establish an effective reporting process; Follow up on complaints immediately.

Intersectionality: To introduce the term of intersectionality, proposed measures include: **The development of a questionnaire to be disseminated to student associations on the definitions, characteristics and information about intersectionality** to assess students' knowledge and familiarity with the term.

CONCLUSION

The present policy briefing describes the European and Greek national context as well as the institutional context regarding gender equality policies and practices as they have been depicted in the extensive external and internal analysis conducted within the context of the CALIPER project. Based on the abovementioned context, ECE-NTUA's GEP has been designed and described here for giving the example to other Research Performing Organisations operating in Greece for setting up their inclusive GEP.

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Learn more about CALIPER project and the Gender Equality Plans:



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