



Generic Policy Recommendations
– Managers of RPOs

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Generic Policy Recommendations – Managers of RPOs

Introduction

All partner universities have now developed and implemented Gender Equality Plans (GEPs). While this process has been underway, SPEAR's methodology has ensured that our cumulative experiences with GEP development and organizational Gender Equality measures more broadly are translated into policy recommendations. This process has involved ongoing trainings by SDU as WP6 leader for all partners to aid the process of transforming our experiences into both generic and specific recommendations at both the organizational and national levels.

This Deliverable D6.2 outlines, together with D6.3 – D6.5 the first installment of the SPEAR consortium's policy recommendations. These four deliverables cover the organizational level (D6.2 and D6.3) and the national level (D6.4 and D6.5). The second further developed installment follows in Month 45. This first installment represents therefore initial thoughts that will be fleshed out in these final versions.

The recommendations list 'what' is presented, 'why' this area is important and 'how' to approach a policy change. Not all recommendations in this deliverable include the 'how' category, as the generic recommendations in this deliverable are conceived to draw attention to general areas of possible interventions for managers of RPOs. Partners are free to use this opportunity as they wish, in terms of who they target and how. If partners include the 'how' category, this is to be taken as a possible approach from a general perspective. The deliverables containing specific recommendations for participating RPOs (D6.3) and specific national stakeholders (D6.5) elaborate on these venues of possible change, based on the knowledge we accumulate on our own organizations and national policy work, and are thus confidential. In the following, the partners' policy recommendations are listed by institution.

Key terms in the policy recommendations in D6.2:

- Salary negotiation
- Promotional criteria
- Recruitment
- Training
- Culture
- Gender bias
- Organizational integration of gender knowledge and GE perspective
- Enhancement of structural organizational collaboration
- Gender-neutral and gender-sensitive language usage



The following policy recommendations fall largely within four categories, naturally with some overlap:

Main themes

Recruitment, salary negotiation, promotional criteria (SDU and UU). SDU's recommendations are based on ongoing organizational gender budgeting analysis (in collaboration with the ACT project) and an inhouse collaboration with a faculty on a matrix for their promotional procedure. UU's recommendation on recruiting positions of trust (e.g., equal opportunities officer), like all UU's policy recommendations in these four deliverables, derives from UU's Gender Mainstreaming, i.e., "a strategy for integrating a gender equality dimension into all decision-making, at all levels and at all stages of the decision-making process, by all those involved in decision-making. Fundamentally, the method comes down to basing decisions more closely on research or organizational facts (quantitative and qualitative data)," (quoted from UU's GEP/Gender Mainstreaming Plan 2020-2022).

Integration of Gender Knowledge and GE perspective into management practices, culture, communication (PU, NOVA, VU, UNIRI, VMU). PU's recommendation focuses on the need to accumulate the necessary gender knowledge and transform it into equal treatment management that fits the organization. NOVA focuses on the culture and environment as crucial arenas to propel the Gender Equality agenda further, as culture and society impact how people are perceived to fit or not fit for positions and other opportunities. The environment should be altered through trainings and technical guidance e.g., of people responsible for recruitment. VU continues in this vein, to suggest the establishment of national network of managers and experts working on GE in RFOs, RPOs and HEIs to create synergies on the national level to counter misconceptions regarding women and Gender Equality. UNIRI describes how the recently passed Declaration about the use of gender sensitive language helps ensure non-discriminatory and inclusive language in all written documents and in written and oral communication. VMU calls for institutions to provide training to teachers and researchers for including the gender component into the university's curriculum, research, and innovation and to provide institutional support to units and centers of gender studies.

Furthering and ensuring the GEP and GE process and integration (SWU, RWTH). As is evident below, SPEAR's partners have very different departure and vantage points, which affect their realm of possibility, focus, and experience with policy-related stakeholder contact. RWTH's recommendation focuses on the need to integrate GE into the broader university policy, to allocate funds, and to sanction non-compliance with GE measures. SWU calls for the establishment of a Gender Equality Commission and a Center for Research and Professional Development of University Staff on Gender Equality and other alterations to regulations, structural elements and their functions, and relationships to ensure full implementation of, in this case, the Gender Equality Plan.

1 University of Southern Denmark (SDU)

Key terms: salary negotiation, promotional criteria

Addressed to: Managers: Heads of Department, Deans, Heads of section and Professors. Union representatives and HR-administrators and legal experts.



What

Preliminary findings at SDU suggest that women recruited for academic positions do not negotiate salaries as often as men recruited to similar types of positions. This echoes the general European and national trend, that women lag behind men in salaries, with an unexplained gap between Danish men's and women's income for equal work of 15%, despite a marked increase in length of education, where women now surpass men¹

Why

This is important because equal and fair financial compensation need to be established to ensure sustainable careers for all genders, as well as in the long run ensure economic stability and growth².

How

Mainstreaming salary negotiation procedures for all candidates as well as establishing common promotion and salary argumentation criteria, so that salary negotiations have a more systematic framework, limiting dependency on individual leanings or bias and perceived fit or achievements of candidates^{3 4 5}.

2 Uppsala University (UU)

Key terms: filling appointments and positions of trust Addressed to:

Department heads and boards.

What

Improve gender equality when filling appointments and positions of trust, i.e. assignments in the service on behalf of the departments, such as, for example, a member of the department board, director of studies or equal opportunities officer.

Why

In the report entitled Transparent Makt: om Hur Utnämningar och Uppdrag Tillsätts vid

¹ Larsen, Mona; Verner, Mette & Højgaard Mikkelsen, Christian (2019): VIVE rapport: 'Den 'uforklarede' del af forskellen mellem kvinders og mænds timeløn': <https://www.vive.dk/media/pure/15412/4699770>

² McKinsey Global Institute (2015) 'The power of parity: how advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth'. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/employment-and-growth/how-advancing-womens-equality-can-add-12-trillion-to-global-growth>

³ LERU Advice papers (2018): 'Implicit Bias in academia': <https://www.leru.org/publications/implicit-bias-in-academia-a-challenge-to-the-meritocratic-principle-and-to-womens-careers-and-what-to-do-about-it>

⁴ Leibbrandt, A. & List, J. A., 2014. Do Women Avoid Salary Negotiations? Evidence from a Large-Scale Natural Field Experiment. *Management Science*, 61(9), pp. 2016–2024.

⁵ McKinsey & Co (2018) 'Bridging the talent gap in Denmark: Insights from female representation in STEM': <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/europe/bridging-the-talent-gap-in-denmark-insights-from-female-representation-in-stem>



Samhällsvetenskapliga Fakulteten [Transparent Power: How Appointments and Positions of Trust are Filled at the Faculty of Social Sciences], author Signe Jernberg, visiting researcher at the Department of Business Studies and senior lecturer at the University of Gävle, examines how filling different positions of trust occurs at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Uppsala University. The report describes a situation where positions of trust are often filled in an informal process where the heads of department are in a hurry to fill the positions and often ask the individual they know will accept. These positions are often filled without all staff being aware of the need and without any discussion with regard to the position and its format. There is a risk that these kinds of processes disfavour or favour individuals and groups in their careers.

How

The abovementioned author suggests a number of measures in the report. Below is a selection of the suggestions for measures and reflections for departments:

- Hold a discussion at the departments on the content of positions of trust. To ensure more individuals will be suitable, new forms of collaboration and descriptions of the positions may be relevant.
- Resist the tendency to ask those who you know will accept the position.
- Keep individuals in mind who do not speak Swedish for positions that can be performed in English and reflect on when Swedish is actually required.
- Make it clear to everyone at the department what positions of trust there are.

To learn more about how to improve gender equality when filling positions of trust, read the report by Signe Jernberg for University of Uppsala's Social Sciences Equal Opportunities Committee: 'Suggestions for improving gender equality when filling positions of trust' ⁶.

3 Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH)

Key terms: organizational integration of gender knowledge and GE perspective Addressed to: the Rectorat and the Senat

What

Make GE part of the broader university policy with a specific focus on promoting GE in the faculties: GE is (currently) not firmly anchored in the broad breadth of the university, but rather centrally organized.

Why

Difficulties to implement appropriate measures and to increase awareness for GE for faculty members. GE is often financed by third-party funds, not by fixed university budget, which often leads to GE

⁶ <https://mp.uu.se/en/web/nyheter/-/forslag-for-mer-jamstalld-tillsattning-av-uppdrag>



experts losing their jobs and processes being restarted by other people, thus losing knowledge and time.

How

Make efforts to implement GE in the faculties, ensure that deans implement the GEP and consistently sanction non-compliance. Support the creation of permanent positions for (gender) equality work (centralized and decentralized), not only short-term positions funded by third parties. Find funds for it.

4 South-West University (SWU)

Key terms: enhancement of structural organizational collaboration

What

To promote policy and practice of interaction between the various management structures in the university and the administrative departments.

To support the joint efforts of the people from the university, who are already included in the community of stakeholders, to expand their activities to attract new stakeholders and their participation in the implementation of the measures set out in the plan.

To assist in uniting the efforts of the two Bulgarian teams from the two Bulgarian universities.

Why

The lack of unity among like-minded people leads to a waste of time, missing opportunities for useful activities.

How

This will be facilitated by the establishment of a Gender Equality Commission and a Center for Research and Qualification on Gender Equality. The Commission will encourage the various actors in the university to implement the GEP and will sanction non-compliance. And the Center will assist in staff training.

5 Plovdiv University (PU)

Key terms: culture, gender-specific management

Addressed to: Managers and Decision Makers of Higher Education and Research Organizations in Bulgaria (Rectorate, Deans, HR, etc.)

What

A common understanding in our country is that when it comes to academia and research there are no problems related to gender equality. For example in the National Strategy for Development of Scientific Research in the Republic of Bulgaria, 2017 - 2030 (Better Science for Better Bulgaria), it is written "... gender equality is approximately achieved among scientists in Bulgaria, with 53% of



women and 47% of men of the total number of researchers in the public sector and in the Higher Education sector. In this respect, we are among the leading countries in EU..."⁷. Similarly, the SWOT-analysis made in the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria, 2021 - 2030 indicates as one of the strengths of the state of the higher education system in the country "A balanced relative share of women in science and ICT"⁸.

On the other hand, the status assessment on GE performed in Plovdiv University shows that gender balance is partly distorted in some study fields, as in Pedagogy, Humanities and Social Sciences in favour of women or in STEM in favour of men. Recently, such imbalances (horizontal segregation) are recognized as a problem by more and more members of the academic community. Furthermore, not a small number of the female university teachers recognise the lack of women in senior positions in the academy as a problem and think there is a vertical segregation ("glass ceiling"). In addition to academic positions, the vertical segregation of women is also manifested in their participation in administrative and scientific management⁹.

Why

As of the end of 2021 Bulgaria had not adopted any specific laws, regulations, or recommendations on promoting gender equality in Academy and Research. As a result, the management of Higher Education and Research Organizations (HE&RO) has no formal grounds or incentives to take actions to improve gender equality in their organizations.

How

The managements of individual HE&RO or associations of several ones should make efforts to accumulate the necessary gender knowledge and to perform deeper analysis on equal treatment in order to transform it into gender-specific management applicable to the organizational structures and procedures. A good example of such an approach is the Flemish Inter-University Council that unites the five Flemish universities in Belgium. In June 2020, the Council issued a policy document signed by all five universities, which includes a new framework for improving gender equality in science and technology¹⁰.

6 Vilnius University (VU)

Key terms: culture, national network for GE practitioners

Addressed to national RFOs, RPOs and HEIs

⁷ <https://www.mon.bg/bg/143>

⁸ See note above

⁹ Kirova A., Assessment of the Gender Balance in Employment in the Field of Research in Bulgaria and the European Union, "Economic Development and Policies - Realities and Prospects" Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference of the III at BAS, 2020, pp. 426-435 - in Bulgarian only

¹⁰ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/legislative-policy-backgrounds/belgium>



What

National network of managers and experts working on GE in RFOs, RPOs and HEIs for creating some synergies on the national level.

Why

There is lack of understanding of / sensitivity to differences of women and men's situations in different fields of science, in the research organizations and in the society in general. Prevailing approach is based on numbers (e.g., "women compose majority in humanities so there are no gender equality related issues"), biases (e.g., "having children will impede women's career"), gender stereotypes (e.g., "women are not suitable for STEM"). These approaches feed resistance to gender equality focused initiatives with the arguments that it is not a good timing to keep concentrating on these issues and/or that all problems related with GE are highly exaggerated¹¹. Therefore, despite legal requirement to have gender equality and antidiscrimination policy in the organizations having more than 50 employees¹² (thus, including national RPOs, RFOs and HEIs), the main tendency is to introduce equal opportunities policy where focus on gender equality issues disappears among other topics. Therefore measures, which would ensure possibility to initiate collective actions as well as ensure continuous collegial and professional support from experts working in the same field, are of essential importance in the country.

How

Managers of RPOs (including HEIs) would be called to initiate national cooperation on strengthening GE in entire field in the country as:

- Work of representatives of different institutions would be more visible and stronger proclaim GE as value;
- Cooperative work would lead to better planned and wide-covering measures, which would lead to stronger impact;
- National network could not only connect the people, but also provide different types of support for the members.

Additionally, managers of RPOs (including HEIs) would be called to take active part in international communities of practice, networks, and other initiatives aiming to learn and bring the best GE related practices to the country.

7 Vytautas Magnus University (VMU)

Key terms: gender mainstreaming in curriculum, research, and innovation

¹¹ The information is based on personal experiences of VU SPEAR team members during discussions in VU departments and with other colleagues working with GE issues in other RFOs, RPOs, and HEIs.

¹² The Labour Code of Republic of Lithuania, art. 26

(<https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAP/3447732082b511e98a8298567570d639>)



Addressed to senior managers of HEIs (vice-rectors for studies and research, heads of academic departments (deans, heads of research centres) and heads of administrative departments for studies, teaching innovation and research, staff working in universities' equality units at HEIs)

What

At many universities the gender component is not sufficiently included into the university's curriculum and research. At the same time, inclusion of the gender component into the studies is crucial in promoting students' understanding of importance of gender in society and providing knowledge and skills in advocating for gender equality. It is important to mainstream gender in research and innovation content in the higher education curriculum.

Why

Gender mainstreaming in education, including higher education institutions is still poorly implemented and 'has not emerged as a serious priority in curricular reform' (Cassese et al., 2012)¹³, Grünberg, 2011¹⁴, Verdonk et al., 2009)¹⁵. In many universities gender component is dramatically absent in syllabi of study programs (Verge et al., 2018)¹⁶. There is a continued formal and informal resistance to integrating gender into the higher education curriculum (Atchison, 2013)¹⁷, Verge et al., 2018). Main resistant institutional actors are top managers, deans and academic staff.

Engendering the higher education curriculum entails the integration of gendered content into the courses of undergraduate and graduate programmes. Additionally, implementation of gender-responsive curriculum practices in science, mathematics and technical subjects in teacher education is still not sufficient. However, teachers and researchers don't have enough knowledge and competencies for including gender component into university's curriculum and research. University teachers are not familiar with gender-responsive curriculum practices and pedagogy. Projects with gender component are not sufficiently supported and financed.

How

Seeking to diminish institutional resistance of deans, top managers, heads of study programmes' committees, professorate it is recommended for universities to arrange forums and discussions on including gender component and gender-specific courses into study content. To overcome lack of knowledge and competences of teachers, institutions are recommended to enhance the gender competence of professors and researchers by providing gender training on how to include gender component into university's curriculum, research, and innovation. Institutions are recommended to

¹³ Cassese EC, Bos AL and Duncan LE (2012) Integrating gender into the political science core curriculum. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 45(2): 238–243.

¹⁴ Grünberg L (2011) From gender studies to gender IN studies and beyond. In: Grünberg L (ed.) *From Gender Studies to Gender IN Studies: Case Studies on Gender-Inclusive Curriculum in Higher Education*. Bucharest: Unesco – CEPES, pp. 7–15.

¹⁵ Verdonk P, Benschop Y, de Haes H et al. (2009) 'Should you turn this into a complete gender matter?'. *Gender mainstreaming in medical education. Gender and Education* 21(6): 703–719.

¹⁶ Verge, T., Ferrer-Fons, M., & González, M.J. (2018). Resistance to mainstreaming gender into the higher education curriculum. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, Vol. 25(1) 86–101

¹⁷ Atchison AL (2013). The practical process of gender mainstreaming in the political science curriculum. *Politics and Gender* 9(2): 228–235



provide institutional support to units and centres of gender studies, offering institutional financial and other support for submitting proposals and implementing research projects with gender component. It could be recommended to universities while organizing the calls for teaching innovation projects to include social responsibility issues and gender equality as relevant criteria.

8 NOVA University Lisbon (UNL)

Key terms: training, culture, recruitment

Addressed to: HR and senior managers involved in selection and recruitment processes, researchers and academics.

What

We need to create the appropriate environment to understand and deconstruct biased and challenging attitudes that need to be reflected upon. The organisational situation of NOVA requires an update/review of the existing recruitment and selection procedures to avoid unintentional judgment that might interfere in the decision-making process. The importance of multidisciplinary teams has already been addressed extensively by others in different contexts¹⁸¹⁹, but diversity and gender balance will give a broader perspective and results might be enhanced²⁰²¹. Therefore, training is an important initiative, which we would like to do more, but it was difficult to start organising sessions due to COVID restrictions. We intend to promote and organise training sessions, workshops, and events with others to make role models more visible for all community.

Why

Culture and society have a great impact on how one perceives the world. This often leads to the creation of stereotypes and “pre-existing” notions on several topics, including gender. Therefore, to eliminate the prejudice on this matter we, as a Higher Education Institution, should recognise the existence of the sexist assumptions imposed by others and challenge them in a way to guarantee not only HR selection and recruitment improvement, but also career progression, support, and retention. As an example, the LIBRA project released a Recruitment Handbook, in 2017, that compiles a series of recommendations to help find the most suitable candidate for determined position avoiding unintentional judgements and opinions²².

¹⁸ West, MA & Anderson, NR (1996) *Innovation in top management teams*, J Applied Psych, doi: 10.1037/00219010.81.6.680

¹⁹ WHO Study Group on Integration of Health Care Delivery (1996) [WHO Technical Report Series – Integration of health care delivery: report of a WHO Study Group](#), WHO

²⁰ Beilock, S (2019) [How Diverse Teams Produce Better Outcomes](#), Forbes

²¹ Alexander M (2021) [5 ways diversity and inclusion help teams perform better](#), CIO

²² Corrales, C; Herzig, M; Lloyd, C; Meixner, B & Steiner, M (2017) [LIBRA Recruitment Handbook – Inclusive, Transparent, and Unbiased Recruitment Processes](#), LIBRA partners



How

Implement training and technical guidance to collaborators responsible for the selection, interviews, and recruitment in order to recognise and avoid biases based on gender stereotypes, specifically training in unconscious bias. Moreover, give assistance to the HR office in the revision of existing procedures or elaboration of new ones in order to it become aligned with a GE perspective and transversal to all university.

Also, create conditions to have mentoring courses to improve visibility, self-confidence, negotiation and leadership skills, focused on the underrepresented group.

It would be of utmost importance to share career development good practices and have role models for the underrepresented group (researchers and academics).

9 University of Rijeka (UNIRI)

Key terms: gender sensitive language usage, gender bias, culture

Addressed to: university members (researchers, administrative staff, students)

What

Introduction of guidelines for gender sensitive language at the University.

Why

The use of gender-sensitive language can be a strong gender mainstreaming asset, especially in terms of reducing gender bias. Croatian is one of the few European languages that is strongly “grammatically gendered”, so it is very difficult to render it in a gender-sensitive way (there are many grammar rules that change according to gender). The Croatian Translators’ Group at the EU level issued a summary guide pointing out the need for specific adaptations in different fields of industries/activities.

How

UNIRI Senate adopted a Declaration about the use of gender sensitive language at the University of Rijeka in July 2021 by which it expressed its support for the use of nondiscriminatory and inclusive language in all written documents and in written and oral communication at the UNIRI, in accordance with existing recommendations and regulations on the use of gender sensitive language and gender-neutral forms of speech (the European Parliament Guidelines on Gender-Neutral Language and the Guidelines of the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union on Inclusive Communication in particular). Following this Declaration, the UNIRI Gender Equality Council Task force for gender sensitive language was formed with the task to prepare the academia- and research-specific guidelines for gender-sensitive language use to be adopted in early 2022²³.



²³ References:

- Council of the European Union, General Secretariat, Inclusive Communication in the GSE, 2008, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/35446/en_brochure-inclusive-communication-in-the-gsc.pdf
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- Office of Ombudsperson for Gender Equality of the Republic of Croatia (2015), Uvođenje rodno osjetljivog jezika u službenu uporabu, <https://arhiva.prs.hr/index.php/odluke-prs/prema-osnovidiskriminacije/spol/1821-uvodenje-rodno-osjetljivog-jezika-u-sluzbenu-uporabu> (in Croatian only)
- Project EGERA (EGERA Consortium) (2015), Antwerp charter on gender-sensitive communication in and by academic institutions, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/egera_antwerp_charter_on_gendersensitive_communication_in_and_by_academic_institutions.pdf

