

LeTSGEPs Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research performing organisations



LeTSGEPs

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D6.17 3rd International Stakeholder Workshop Report

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronyms	
GB	Gender Budgeting
GE	Gender Equality
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
RPO	Research Performing Organization
WP	Work Package

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the *third international event* with a focus *on the Gender dimension in research content and increase in the quality and societal relevance of produced knowledge, technologies, and innovations*, developed by the Consortium under the *Institut de Ciències del Mar (ICM/CSIC)* leadership, that is part of Task 6.2 Stakeholder system implementation of LeTSGEPs project.

This task responds to the Work package objective 6.2. *To develop, along the project, a strategy to build up and maintain high commitment and participation among partners - inside their institution, with relevant stakeholders - outside, and therefore ensure the sustainability of the action, implementing the LeTSGEPs Stakeholder System.*

The LeTSGEPs Stakeholder System is organized at three different levels: 1) internal to the institution; 2) external at the local level (regional and national), and 3) international. The system *operates* through two types of tools: a) a participative design, and b) communication and dissemination tools.

The participative design drives to achieve the raise of awareness inside the RPOs (including the administrative personnel and with particular attention to the decision-making level), in the academic community in their regions/states, among the stakeholders - nationally and internationally, as well as to provide a knowledge transfer and exchange with all those actors.

The specific aims of this participative design, as well as the topics to cover when planning their agendas, are:

- to collect valuable information from all the actors who can contribute to giving and acquiring information for its implementation and exploitation (all WPs).
- to communicate the results coming from the Gender Audit and Budgeting.
- to make the training tools available in and outside the implementing institutions.
- to update as many actors as possible about the results of the implementation and receive their feedback to build up a community of practices, clustering with previous and current gender equality initiatives at different levels and with “newcomers” from the stakeholders involved.
- to discuss – and arrive at conclusions – about how to “include the gender dimension in research content and increase in the quality and societal relevance of produced knowledge, technologies and innovations”.

The process is based on 4 main steps:

1. **Local internal raising awareness events** (6 events along the project duration, 2 per year) starting from year 2 and organized corresponding to internal institutional events (meetings of the Scientific Board, Research Commissions, Senate) to ensure real understanding of what the GEP planned for the specific institution is, how to improve it, which stage is the RPO in implementing, what are the results and the training tools available.

2. **Local/national stakeholders' events** (3 local workshops, 1 per year by each RPO), one dedicated to the *research institutions* in the region/state, and two dedicated to *regional/national professional associations*.
3. **International stakeholders' events** (3 workshops along the project duration, 1 per year starting from year 2), with a focus on: 1) Gender Budgeting in RPOs; 2) Improvement of careers prospects for women and gender balance in decision-making bodies in RPOs; and 3) ***Gender dimension in research content and increase in the quality and societal relevance of produced knowledge, technologies, and innovations***.
4. The Organization of the **Final Conference** in Brussels at the end of the project will be the key moment of the LeTSGEPs Stakeholder System. It will be the moment to exploit the work conducted through the Stakeholder system, the good practices, and of gathering and acquiring the tools.

In the next section, further information about the third international meeting is presented.

International events have proven to be a privileged space for the exchange of knowledge and best practices around key issues on gender equality in RPOs and gender dimension in research.

Next Consortium joint action will be the Final conference that will take place in Brussels on 23rd November 2023.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP KEY INFORMATION

Partner	The workshop was organized and hosted by the <i>Institut de Ciències del Mar</i> (ICM/CSIC), one of the partners of the LeTSGEPs project
Type of event	International event with a focus on the <i>Gender dimension in research content and increase in the quality and societal relevance of produced knowledge, technologies, and innovations</i>
Date	<p>20th January 2023, Barcelona</p> <p>This was a HYBRID EVENT. This event was held simultaneously in-person and virtually. In-person, it took place at the Assembly Hall of the Institute of Marine Sciences (ICM-CSIC), and virtually, it was held on YouTube.</p> <p>The recording of the event is available on the link below: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqLY7uRETMM</p>
Objectives	<p>Science, like any other field of human activity, is not free from the cultural and social conditioning that support the development of stereotypes and biases. In many areas of knowledge, the sex variable and the gender dimension are still not sufficiently considered. There is a serious risk that “neutral” research and innovation, being sex and/or gender-blind, may have biased results that affect women and men differently by not considering their diversity.</p> <p>Awareness of this reality is increasingly permeating national and European projects’ calls. It is an objective of the European Commission that the gender dimension is fully integrated into Horizon Europe research projects, and the European Research Area considers it a priority that gender equality and gender mainstreaming be integrated into research as well.</p> <p>While gender mainstreaming in research is not always an easy task, as gender issues do not have a direct or obvious application in this area, it is important to address the social context that frames the research and its possible gender-differentiated impact.</p> <p>Actions aimed to build capacity for gender mainstreaming in research have to be built.</p> <p>The objectives of this workshop were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To contribute to a better knowledge of the European Framework on gender and research and its concreteness in its main research funding instrument, Horizon Europe. ● To contribute to a better understanding of how gender power operates, its indicators at the structural and cultural level, and its reflection in RPOs. ● To share practice on how to ensure that sex and gender analysis is considered in the design and outputs of research projects.

	<p>Also, the indirect objectives of this event were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To strengthen the synergies of organizations working to make the integration of the gender dimension into R&I a priority. ● To increase awareness of the importance of Gender Equality in general and particularly of Gender Equality Plans as tools to achieve real Gender Equality. ● To increase visibility and attract interested stakeholders by sharing activities, challenges, and achievements of the LeTSGEPs project.
<p>Main profile of participants</p>	<p>Overall, 140 registrants expressed their interest to participate in the workshop in-person or online. In the end, 85 registered participants joined the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-person: 46 persons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women 82,6% ○ Men 17,4%% ● On-line: an average of 35/40 people connected via the YouTube channel. <p>There have been (as of 25th January 2023), 163 views since the day of broadcasting.</p> <p>The distribution of the participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Institutions: Universities and RPOs predominantly, Government Agencies, EU representatives, etc. ● Profiles: young researchers, senior researchers, professors, senior decision makers, gender specialists, administrative staff of universities and other RPOs, employees of NGOs and Government Entities, as well as private entities. ● Countries: 15 countries of Europe (Albania, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Spain, and Turkey). ● By gender: there were 116 women (94 percent) and 7 men (6 percent). <p>Underline the high participation of RPO teams of the LeTSGEPs consortium, with 20 participants in-person and 5 on-line.</p> <p><i>(Find the table of participants attached in the annexes.)</i></p>
<p>Main contents / lines of discussion</p>	<p>As previously noted, the meeting was dedicated to the <i>Gender dimension in research content and increase in the quality and societal relevance of produced knowledge, technologies, and innovations.</i></p> <p>The workshop was opened with Opening Remarks interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Valentí Sallarés (ICM director), welcomed the participants, and underlined the ICM's commitment to equality and the important impulse given by the European project LeTSGEPs. It is within the framework of the LeTSGEPs project that the <i>ICM</i> has developed its first Gender Equality Plan at the institutional level, aimed to promote a structural transformation that involves the adoption and institutionalization of

gender equality as a cross-cutting principle of the ICM.

He also pointed out that the integration of gender dimension in marine research is one of ICM's challenges. With this challenge in mind, he showed his satisfaction in hosting the International Stakeholders Event, particularly since it focuses on the "Gender dimension in research content and increase in the quality and societal relevance of produced knowledge".

- **Carmen Mayoral** (vice president of the CSIC's Women and Science Commission), made a brief presentation of the CSIC, gave some key figures on the representation of women and men in the institution and introduced the two existing structures in relation to the promotion of equality, the Women and Science Commission and the Equality Commission.
- Prof. **Tindara Addabbo** (from the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Horizon 2020 LeTSGEPs Project Coordinator) elaborated more on the activities, achievements, challenges and future prospects of the LeTSGEPs Project. This presentation helped participants to get better acquainted with the Project's background.
- **Silvia Abad** (project Officer of LeTSGEPs at the European Commission) underlined the commitment of the EC to gender equality and had words of support and recognition for the achievements of the LeTSGEPs project.
- **Esther Garcés** (Senior researcher and LeTSGEPs project leader at *Institut de Ciències del Mar*), briefly introduced the purpose of the workshop and presented the speakers.

The rest of the workshop was organized as a **main session** with 3 speakers.

- **Aleksandra Drecun** (President of the INTERSECTION Center for Science and Innovation, member of the MISANU RRI Council, Horizon 2020, LeTSGEPs)

She centred her intervention on *Gender and research in the European framework*. She talked about the persisting gender gaps present in the research sector and the need for specific actions to overcome them. She also underlined the European Commission's commitment to the promotion of gender equality in research and innovation, and how it has its reflex in the European Commission Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025. It sets out the Commission's commitment to equality across all EU policies.

She explained that this commitment is also reaffirmed in its main research funding instrument, Horizon Europe, which sets gender equality as a crosscutting priority, and introduces strengthened provisions, including a mandatory Gender Equality Plan as an eligibility criterion for certain categories of legal entities. The program also defines the integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content as an award criterion evaluated under the excellence criterion, and commits to increasing gender balance throughout the programme, with a target of 50 percent women in Horizon Europe related boards, expert groups, and evaluation committees. It also defines gender balance

among research teams as a ranking criterion for proposals with the same score. She pointed out that the overall goal of this framework is to improve the European research and innovation system and create a gender-equal working environment, in which all talents can thrive. Also, it will contribute to better integration of the gender dimension in projects to improve research quality, which is relevant to the further development of the society of knowledge, technologies, and innovations (*presentation attached in Annex 2*).

- **Pat O'Connor** (Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Limerick (UL) and Visiting full Professor, Geary Institute, University College Dublin, Ireland).

Her presentation, entitled *Gendered power is irrelevant in higher education institutions and other research performing organisations*, focused on power and the legitimating discourses that obscure it in higher education and other research-performing organisations.

Her speech particularly focused on gendered power and its indicators at a structural and cultural level (vertical and horizontal segregation, gender stereotypes, gendered practices/day-to-day interactions/micropolitics that favour men and devalued women, etc), highlighting the legitimating discourses that obscure that power including those around excellence, choice, biological essentialism, and organisational gender neutrality.

She also introduced us to different manifestations of institutional resistance to gender equality, from denial of the problem to failure to undertake substantive change or actions to dismantle changes that have been achieved.

Finally, she raised the question of whether change is possible, and she concluded that this change is difficult but possible. Then she shared what might be the indicators of that change and what can be done to facilitate it (gender profile of top positions, reframing gendered constructions of leadership, change in stereotypical workload allocations, less steep hierarchical structure or senior men encouraging women to go for promotion) (*presentation attached in Annex 2*).

- **Helena Valve** (Senior Researcher, Finnish Environment Institute SYKE).

In her presentation, titled *The GenderWave tool: experiences from the preparatory process*, she introduced us to the GenderWave tool, designed under the Horizon 2020 project "Baltic Consortium on Promoting Gender Equality in Marine Research Organisations" (*Baltic Gender 2016-2020*). This tool was designed to support the incorporation of gender perspectives into marine research and innovation projects (but not limited to) and was developed in dialogue with past and (at that moment) on-going marine research and innovation projects.

She remained that research can have gendered impacts (there is growing evidence) and that it cannot be ignored by researchers and practitioners. In marine research, established methodologies may be used routinely so that some variations – including gender differences – are regarded as irrelevant without a second thought.

She underlined that gender research in contents may become manifested through analytical perspectives, concepts, classifications and data, and modes of engagement and dialogue, and also that researchers should be ready to rethink default assumptions, acknowledge diversity, identify inequalities, and become engaged (*presentation attached in Annex 2*).

After the presentations, there was a discussion among the participants and the speakers, and also they made a summary of the main points revealed during the workshop (see next section). Final remarks were made by Esther Garcés who thanked all the participants for their valuable input and interest in the meeting and in promoting Gender Equality in their institutions.

(*See attached Agenda in Annex 1*)

Main results, conclusions

Some of the main results and conclusions of the sessions are:

- ✓ The European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation and with Horizon Europe, the Commission reaffirms its commitment. Horizon Europe sets **gender equality as a crosscutting principle** and aims to **eliminate gender inequality and intersecting socioeconomic inequalities** throughout research and innovation systems, including by addressing unconscious bias and systemic structural barriers. There are 3 main levels at which gender equality is considered in Horizon Europe:
 - Having a **gender equality plan** in place, which becomes an eligibility criterion for certain categories of legal entities from EU countries and associated countries.
 - The **integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content** becomes a requirement by default, an award criterion evaluated under the excellence criterion unless the topic description explicitly specifies otherwise.
 - Ensuring **gender balance** among research teams, which is set as a ranking criterion for proposals with the same score.
- ✓ It is a key challenge for the RPO to meet the new EC demands. Most of our organizations are immersed in the implementation of GEPs aimed at leading systemic institutional change. This change should be structural, sustainable, and permanent to achieve true gender equality.
- ✓ As structural barriers to gender equality in research and innovation organizations persist (from women's under-representation in most STEM fields to lack of gender balance in research groups, gaps between women and men in career advancement and participation in decision-making, persistence of vertical and horizontal segregation or significant gaps in terms of gender leadership and access to research funds), there is still much work to be done.
- ✓ No research, in any field, should be gender-blind. Addressing the **gender dimension of research** implies that gender is considered a key analytical and explanatory variable in research. If relevant gender issues are missed or poorly addressed, research results will be partial and potentially biased. Gender can be an important factor in research excellence.

- ✓ Integrating the **gender dimension in research** is a major challenge for most of the RPOs given the limited steps that have been taken so far in this regard. The integration of gender dimension in research needs to be addressed by staff with appropriate skills and competencies and adequate tools (drawing on best practices and lessons learned by other RPOs/sister projects), but that also requires institutional commitment (and action) to gender equality.

Useful information:

- https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en
- <https://www.baltic-gender.eu/outcomes>
- <https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/>

Next steps

Next steps to consider after this workshop may be:

- LeTSGEPs RPOs will follow implementing their GEP measures to achieve systemic institutional changes that guarantee real gender equality at all institutional levels. As it is the last year of LeTSGEPs, special attention will be given to generating conditions for sustainability.
- Considering the integration of **gender dimension in research**, efforts will be addressed to provide support and capacity to researcher staff to apply/develop methodologies to integrate this dimension. To adapt or create tailor-made tools and/or methodologies will be another key issue.

As a Consortium:

- Keep networking with participants in the workshop by sending them news about the Project activities and drawing them again in next future activities.
- Maintain/foster cooperation with different institutions and projects that work in the same area of Gender Equality, like participating in conferences and workshops of sister projects to share research results and other insights.
- While we continue to consider it essential to take advantage of the experiences, products, best practices, lessons learned, etc. generated by other sister projects, to adapt them to our RPOs; during 2023 we will initiate the documentation of best practices and lessons learned by the LeTSGEPs consortium which will be collected in a handbook.
- The **Final Conference** in Brussels (20th of November 2023) will be the last event and a key moment of the LeTSGEPs Stakeholder System. It will be the moment to exploit the work conducted through the Stakeholder system and of sharing the best practices and lessons learned.