

GENDER ISSUES WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

IMPRINT

Gender Issues within Higher Education

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The European Students' Union (ESU)

Rue de la Sablonnière 20

1000 Brussels, Belgium

T: +32-2-502 23 62

F: +32-2-706 48 26

E-Mail: secretariat@esu-online.org
or sudc@esu-online.org.

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FOREWORD

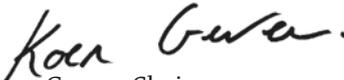
This handbook functions as a crown on the European Students' Union's work on gender equality over the past two years. Since the establishment of the Gender Equality Committee, a lot of work has been done to improve gender equality in higher education generally, and in student unions more particularly. This handbook gathers the experiences and lessons learned from that period of time, covering our most important political concerns as well as internal work for student unions.

Politically, it has become mainstream to say that the age of feminism is over, that women have entered into higher education successfully and that it is a matter of time until the labour market follows suit. Indeed, this has been the position of European universities within the Bologna Process. This view is, however, not only naive but also dangerous. While the road to equality has never been obvious or automatic, there are worrying signs of women increasingly dropping out of higher education before reaching the doctoral stage, women are highly underrepresented in natural sciences and suffer disproportionately from tuition fees and loans which are on the rise all across Europe. The fight for gender equality therefore still needs a lot more effort, in particular by universities which are often conservative in their strategies to tackle the problem.

This handbook, which is naturally focused on student unions, aims to change that picture. Student unions have always been at the forefront of combating inequality, while breeding young and untypical leaders. Within ESU, I am sure that the female network, the different seminars on equality and our gender mainstreaming strategy are helping to prepare a generation of men and women who can play a leading role in universities and politics in the near future and change these realities. The road to these measures has at times been difficult, but we must keep our conviction that achieving equality remains an area where much convincing still remains to be done. I hope that our

work will influence that of the readers of this book, as it is aimed to inspire student unions to continue their work on gender equality.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to this booklet, as well as all the members of our two consecutive gender equality committees, being Petra Nysten, Lotta Ljungquist, Regina Weber, Pascal Hartmann, Alma Joensen, Ligia Deca, Maris Mälzer and in particular Milica Popovic who have worked hard to promote gender equality within the European student movement. It is a great compliment to you that the work on gender equality is now broadly recognised within the organisation, and having so many of you in the leadership of this organisation is key to ensuring that the work will be continued.



Koen Geven, Chairperson.

1 GENDER EQUALITY

1.1 WHY DOES GENDER MATTER?

By Alma Joensen, Gender Equality Committee

Many forms of discrimination exist in today's society. Most forms of discrimination are against minority groups where people are being discriminated for being different from the norm in society. Gender discrimination is different from these forms, in the sense that neither of the two genders is a minority group.

Women and men are approximately equal in number and therefore we cannot say that gender discrimination is based on being different from the norm in society. Gender discrimination is namely based on something more complex, on traditional ideas and stereotypes which indicate that women have a certain role and way of behaving, and men have another. It is wrong to assume that this behaviour and roles are naturally linked to gender, and that girls and boys are different in these manners from the day they are born. It is society—the norms, gender stereotypes and traditional ideas about roles and behaviour—that produce these differences and inequalities between men and women. Thus, when a person discriminates against another person, based on the person's gender, it is usually unintentional and as a direct result of how society has shaped us.

From this we can infer that gender discrimination is different from other forms of discrimination, since it is not based on someone being different from the norm, but is rather a part of the norm. It is extremely difficult to combat discrimination which is unintentional and not even visible to most people. Gender equality is therefore usually tackled separately from other discrimination issues, but in order to do it in an effective way, radical action is needed to raise awareness on how gender discrimination takes place.

According to the United Nations »[G]ender equality implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence; have equal opportunities for financial independence through work or through setting up businesses; enjoy equal access to education and the opportunity to develop personal ambitions.«¹

The equal inclusion of men and women in all aspects of society will pay off for society as a whole. Society cannot afford to ignore the contributions and economic and social capacities of both genders. It needs to be recognised that gender equality will pay off and result in a better society. Today, many organisations have acknowledged this unequal situation of men and women, and set goals to take active measures in order to improve the situation. Many organisations, including the European Students' Union, have, for example, developed a gender mainstreaming strategy with a view to mainstreaming gender in the entire work and structures of the organisation by developing a strategy based on an analysis of current situation, and recommendations to ensure the elimination of gender discrimination. These strategies include very important steps to focus and act on in the near future, in order for these organisations to improve their gender equality status, and thus taking a very important step to improve organisations as a whole.

In May 2006, when ESU's board decided to establish Gender Equality Committee, it was the beginning of the development of ESU's focus and future work on gender equality. Today, two years later—having

¹ <http://www.unfpa.org/gender/empowerment.htm>

adopted a gender mainstreaming strategy and a policy paper on gender equality in higher education—it has become clear that ESU has set itself a goal it intends to achieve.

ESU has acknowledged the fact that democratic principles and basic human rights demand gender equality. Both men and women deserve to represent and to be represented, meaning that the equal participation of both is crucial in order for the organisation to reach its goals. If both genders within ESU are not addressed, recognised and treated in an equal manner, the organisation will be neither credible nor accountable. Men and women are roughly equal in number, and therefore should they be addressed, recognised and treated equally in all content, policies, data and recommendations. An organisation where all feel equal, are treated equally, have equal opportunities and where all perspectives are taken into account has more human benefits and is more productive.

Gender equality is not an isolated issue and therefore the effects of working on gender equality are manifold as well. Working on gender equality reaffirms ESU's commitment to human rights and equal opportunities for all. Continuous work on gender equality has a positive effect on the image of the organisation, the internal knowledge and working environment as well as on members' awareness and attitudes to gender equality. By underlining the importance of gender equality and making it visible in both ESU policy and externally, ESU can serve as a model and forerunner in the field of gender equality, and especially gender equality and higher education. ESU also makes this clear by requiring from members and prospect members that they take gender equality seriously.

Student unions play a very important role in shaping and developing the society in which they operate, by raising awareness and enforcing positive changes when it comes to tolerance, equality, democracy and human rights. By giving training, lectures and awareness-raising on gender equality among its members, ESU is passing on knowledge which the student unions themselves should pass on and use in combating gender discrimination in their home country.

The key to reaching gender equality is raising awareness, and by contributing to the fight against discrimination and disseminating knowledge, ESU and its members can leave a positive mark on the development of sustainable gender equality—which will hopefully become a reality in the very near future.

2 A SHORT HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

By Milica Popovic, Executive Committee of European Students' Union

The article below intends only to highlight the points we found interesting in the development of feminist thought, the women's movement and women's history as such, with a special focus on the higher education area, and does not by any means intend to be a comprehensive historical overview.

- In ancient times, Athenian democracy seemed to have treated women at its worst—the father, *kyrios*, had power over his children, women and slaves with the possibility of selling *immoralak* daughters or sisters, while Egyptian and Babylonian societies have given more family rights to women. There is a common notion that the development of private property has worsened women's position.²
- At the end of the VIII century, Carlo the Great forbade nuns to teach male students in their monasteries. This marked the beginning of the division of female and male students in the educational system.
- The Byzantine empire has evidence of a notable amount of women professors at their universities. There are traces of women professors coming from an islamic background at universities in Spain (Cordoba and Valencia), Iraq (Baghdad)

² Historical research into the position of woman through the centuries has always faced a difficulty in terms of the norm against which we are examining the position, thus a certain level of relativism can always pose an obstacle for objective scientific conclusions.

and Iran, especially in the areas of medicine and astronomy.

- Christine de Pizane (end XIV- beginning XV century) introduced two important ideas of feminism: the need for education and aspiration towards a pacifist society, through her main publication »The city of ladies«.
- The management of inns (rest houses), which was largely a female profession, was prohibited to women in the XVII century. The number of professions in which women were free to participate was progressively decreasing.
- The notorious witch hunts, responsible for the deaths of hundred of thousands of women, only came to an end in the XVIII century.
- Three women professors at the University of Bologna produced significant scientific achievements in their respective fields: Laura Bassi (1700–78), professor of physics, Anna Manzoli (1716–74,) in the field of anatomy and Maria Agnesi (1718–89) in the field of mathematical analysis.
- Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–97), in her work »A vindication of the rights of women« was fighting, amongst other things, for equality of the right to education. Wollstonecraft believed that both sexes contributed to the inequalities and took it for granted that women had considerable power over men, but that both would require education to ensure the necessary changes in social attitudes.
- What is thought to be the first scientific society for women was founded in the south of the Netherlands in 1785. This was the Natuurkundig Genootschap der Dames (Women's

Society for Natural Knowledge) which met regularly up until 1881, finally dissolving in 1887.

- In 1791, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen was amended by Olympe de Gouges as the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen.
- Around 1860, American workers' unions made their requests for the equal pay of women and men.
- The development of feminist theory is usually broken down into three waves. The first wave refers to the feminist movement of the XIX to the early XX century, which was mainly focused on the political and economic rights of women and marked by the Suffrage movement. The second wave, from the 1960–80s, has continued the battle for legal equality and against indirect discrimination. The last, third wave, started in the 1990s following the failures of the second wave and is continuing its struggle to the present day.
- Clara Zetkin (1857–1933) and Rosa Luxembourgh (1871–1918) introduced the concept of socialist feminism into the widely growing socialist world movement.
- Only in the XIX century was compulsory elementary education for both sexes introduced.
- In 1888, the founding council of International Council of Women in Washington was held and in 1904, the International Women Suffrage Alliance was founded.
- Women in Finland finally obtained the right to vote in 1903, which was later followed by other European and world countries.

- In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir wrote her masterpiece »The Other Sex«.
- Abortion was allowed in the United Kingdom in 1967, in the United States in 1973, in France in 1975 and in Belgium only in 1990.
- In 1972, the Equal Rights Amendment, which had languished in Congress for almost fifty years, was finally passed and sent to individual states for ratification. The wording of the ERA was simple: »Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.«
- In October 2003, Rwanda became the country closest to reaching parity between men and women of any national legislature. Currently, Rwanda has 48.8% of Lower House seats held by women and 34.6% of those in the Upper House.

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3

LEGAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

By Milica Popovic, Executive Committee of European Students' Union

Today's world has a wide range of documents which are trying to comprehensively provide legal and political obligations for countries, institutions and individuals to respect and promote human rights. The era after World War II brought with it significant changes in the field of international law, and in particular in the development of numerous mechanisms for the advancement of the position of all discriminated groups, including women. When Eleanor Roosevelt was chosen to chair the committee that drafted and approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rights of Men became Human Rights and there was a breakthrough in a long-standing battle which shaped the years that followed.

3.1 UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations started the promotion of the concept of gender equality in 1948 with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights³. For the first time, men and women are considered to have the right to equally enjoy universal human rights and the fact that this new concept was brought up to the international scene gave incentives for the further advancement of the position of women.

In 1952, the United Nations adopted and opened for signature the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, the first international document to introduce equal political rights for both sexes⁴. The Convention brought voting rights to women and the eligibility to par-

3 <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

4 <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/22.htm>

ticipate and run for elections for all public functions. Unfortunately, voting rights for women around the world are still an ongoing battle, though now mostly won.

1966 represented a milestone for international human rights' efforts—the United Nations adopted and opened for signature two essential documents: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights⁵ and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights.⁶

The Commission on the Status on Women (CSW), as an intergovernmental body, was one of the first bodies established by the UN Economic and Social Council. Set up in 1946, it monitors the situation of women and promotes their rights in all societies around the world. It prepares recommendations and reports for the UN on any issue affecting women. In the case of urgent problems, the Commission can press for immediate international action to prevent or alleviate violations of women's rights. The Commission in 1962 identified the value of nominating a National Commission for Women's Status and since then it has started to pursue an active policy on the international scene for the adoption of equal opportunities policies.

The first world conference on the status of women was convened in Mexico City. The Conference, along with the United Nations Decade for Women (1976–1985) proclaimed by the General Assembly five months later at the request of the Conference, launched a new era in global efforts to promote the advancement of women by opening a worldwide dialogue on gender equality. The General Assembly identified three key objectives that would become the basis for the work of the United Nations on behalf of women: full gender equality and the elimination of gender discrimination; the integration and full participation of women in development; and an increased contribution by women in the strengthening of world peace.⁷ The Conference adopted a World Plan of Action, a document that offered guidelines

5 http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ccpr.htm

6 http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm

7 <http://www.un-documents.net/mex-dec.htm>

for governments and the international community to follow for the next ten years in pursuit of the three key objectives set by the General Assembly. The Plan of Action set minimum targets, to be met by 1980, that focused on securing equal access for women to resources such as education, employment opportunities, political participation, health services, housing, nutrition and family planning.⁸

Within the United Nations system, in addition to the already existing Branch (now Division) for the Advancement of Women, the Mexico City Conference led to the establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)⁹ and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)¹⁰.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)¹¹ was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and represents the key document for women's rights. It defines discrimination against women and develops an agenda for national action against such discrimination. The Convention defines discrimination against women as »... any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.« The Convention emphasises the need to ensure women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life, education, health and employment. Countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations.

The Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi, held in 1985, was mandated to seek new ways of overcoming obstacles for achiev-

8 <http://www.acnur.org/biblioteca/pdf/3453.pdf>

9 <http://www.un-instraw.org>

10 <http://www.unifem.org>

11 <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>

ing the objectives of the Decade: equality, development and peace. The Nairobi Conference recognised that gender equality was not an isolated issue, but encompassed all areas of human activity. It was necessary for women to participate in all spheres, not only in those relating to gender. These conclusions created a basis for the future development of the concept of gender mainstreaming.

In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing where the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted.¹² The Beijing Platform for Action is the most thorough document ever produced by a United Nations conference on the subject of women's rights, as it incorporates the accomplishments of prior conferences and treaties. The Summit focused on the following critical areas of concern: unequal access to education and training; unequal access to health care and related services; violence against women; the effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation; inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources; inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels; insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women; lack of respect for, and inadequate promotion and protection of, the human rights of women; stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to, and participation in, all communication systems, especially in the media; gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment, and persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child. The UN Security Council passed a Resolution which made the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action obligatory for all UN members.¹³

The UN General Assembly adopted in 1999 an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women¹⁴ and called on all States party to the Convention to

¹² <http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/off/a--20.en>

¹³ <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/text.htm>

become party to the new instrument. By ratifying the Optional Protocol, a State recognises the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women—the body that monitors compliance with the Convention—to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups within its jurisdiction. The Optional Protocol entered into force on 22 December 2000, following the ratification of the tenth State party to the Convention.

In the Political Declaration adopted in by the United Nations General Assembly at its twenty-third special session in June 2000, Member States agreed to »assess regularly further implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with a view to bringing together all parties involved in 2005 to assess progress and consider new initiatives, as appropriate, ten years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action«.

In 2000, the General Assembly held its 23rd special session in New York, the outcomes of which are often referred to as »Beijing +5«¹⁵ and further call for the adoption of measures for the improvement and advancement of the position of women. The United Nations is continuously advocating for gender equality throughout the world through its numerous bodies focusing on women’s rights. The mechanisms already set have made it possible for women to achieve full enjoyment of human rights, but yet real improvement requires a still all-too-often asks lacking political will, as well as substantial societal changes.

3.2 COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe, bringing together 47 member countries, was founded in 1949 to promote the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights¹⁶, rule of law and democracy throughout Europe. Since 1979, the Council of Europe has dedicated special attention to the issues of equality between women and men. Its main focus areas are: violence against women, trafficking in human be-

15 <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5.htm>

16 <http://www.hri.org/docs/ECHR50.html>

ings, gender mainstreaming, positive action, balanced participation in decision-making, national machinery for equality and men and gender equality.¹⁷ Even if the Convention itself doesn't directly make reference to gender equality, it does prohibit discrimination on many grounds including on the grounds of sex, while the additional protocol signed in 2000 broadens the field of application of Article 14 (the one prohibiting discrimination).¹⁸

The Council of Europe has adopted a series of documents which provide the legal framework for member countries to further advance their efforts in the field of gender equality.¹⁹ It has advocated largely for the adoption of new approaches, strategies and methods in order to reach the goal of gender equality. One of the most important innovative approaches has been gender mainstreaming. The Council of Europe's Group of specialists on mainstreaming agreed on the following definition of gender mainstreaming: »Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.«²⁰ For the educational sector, certainly the most significant document is the Recommendation CM/Rec(2007) 13 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender mainstreaming in education.²¹

17 http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/

18 <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/EN/Treaties/html/177.htm>

19 <http://www.humanrights.coe.int/equality/Eng/WordDocs/Document%20list.htm>

20 http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/02_Gender_mainstreaming/

21 [http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/02_gender_mainstreaming/091_CM_Rec\(2007\)13.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/equality/02_gender_mainstreaming/091_CM_Rec(2007)13.asp)

The European Union has, from its foundation, obliged Member States to promote equality between women and men. Along with the Council of Europe's efforts, the EU has advocated for the introduction of the concept of gender mainstreaming. EU gender equality policy takes a comprehensive approach which includes legislation, mainstreaming and positive action. The principle of equal treatment for men and women has been implemented in a number of fields by EU legislation over the past 30 years, and developed in extensive case law by the European Court of Justice.

The institutional framework of gender equality within the EU encompasses following structures: the European Commission, the Equal Opportunities Unit within EU Commission Directorate General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, the Commissioners Group on Equality, the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities between men and women, the Social Affairs Council of Ministers and the European Parliament—the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. Within the Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities Directorate-General (DG), two Units deal with Gender Equality issues: the Equality between Women and Men Unit and the Equality, Action against Discrimination: Legal Questions Unit.

EU legislation established in the area of gender equality enforces the following: equal pay for women and men for the same work and work of equal value; equal treatment in employment and vocational training, promotion and working conditions; equal treatment in social security; protection of workers in cases of pregnancy and maternity and paternity; specific rights for parental leave for fathers and mothers.

Protection is ensured against direct and indirect discrimination based on sex, including marital or family status, as well as protection against harassment based on sex and sexual harassment. The EU pro-

²² The paragraph structure has been mainly formed based on the following source: http://www.gender-equality.webinfo.it/results/european_union.htm

motes preventive measures against discrimination by employers, especially in cases of harassment based on sex and sexual harassment. The EU also promotes positive action for under-represented groups, equality plans in companies and dialogue with non governmental organisations. EU legislation establishes a requirement to have bodies for the promotion of equality between women and men in every member state.

One of the effects of the Amsterdam Treaty²³ is that equal opportunities for women and men are now considered one of the fundamental aims of the Union. An important task in the EU is to supplement the treaties with laws—directives—that go into more detail about the goals that the Member States have agreed on in the treaties. In the field of gender equality there are a number of joint directives. Legislation currently covers directives in the area of employment, social security and goods and services. In the anti-discrimination field the two most important ones are the Racial Equality Directive (Directive 2000/43)²⁴ and the Employment Equality Directive (Directive 2000/78)²⁵ which require Member States to establish a legal framework to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age, disability and sexual orientation, and thereby put into effect the principle of equal treatment.

The Unit dealing with Equality between Women and Men coordinates gender mainstreaming and assists other services of the Commission to gender mainstream their policies.²⁶ The main document adopted for the further advancement for gender mainstreaming efforts of the Commission and EU is the »Roadmap for equality between women and men« for 2006–2010.²⁷ The innovative approach of the

23 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/treaty/pdf/amst-en.pdf>

24 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/legisl/2000_43_en.pdf

25 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/legisl/2000_78_en.pdf

26 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/index_en.html

27 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/roadmap_en.html

Roadmap brought in more precise and concrete measures for Member States to implement and this very aspect differs this document from many of the aforementioned ones which have, sadly enough, often ended on a declarative level.

Certainly, the European Union is carrying out numerous activities with the aim of achieving and promoting gender equality among its Member States, not to mention worldwide as well. The principle of gender equality is deeply embedded in the principle of participative democracy and a free society, which are the main backbones of the European tradition.

A certain number of European and world countries did comprehensively prepare national action plans; implement numerous measures of positive action and quotas, legislative changes and all other possible means in order to speed up the slow process of changing the societal structures of inequality. Unfortunately, this article does not enter into specific case studies but we do strongly recommend further research on the mechanisms implemented, especially in Scandinavian countries and Canada, among others.

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4

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

4.1

ABOUT THE GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE

By Ligia Deca, Gender Equality Committee of European Students' Union

The Gender Equality Committee (GEC) was created in May 2006 following a decision at Board Meeting 49 in Reims, France. It was agreed that the GEC would tackle the strategic development within ESU towards more gender equality; offer support to the other committees as well as to member unions regarding the gender aspect of their work; propose structural measures in order to achieve more gender equality and to help ESU be the number one organisation when it comes to expertise in gender politics in Higher Education. The additional important segment was the expert provision of knowledge and capacity building to member unions when dealing with gender issues, and the hope that the GEC will create a spill-over effect onto all of ESU's members.

In May 2006, ESU Board Meeting 50 in Belgrade, Serbia, elected 5 people from different European student unions to work on this committee and to carry out the plan written down in the mandate of GEC. During the first two months, the members of the new ESU structure spent time getting to know each other and the organisation better, thinking more precisely about the mandate and brainstorming about the activities for the future. Numerous challenges lay ahead to be tackled, while becoming an integrated part of ESU's working structures.

Important work of the GEC has also included combating prejudices within the organisation itself, as the battle for gender equality always comes along with a lot of opposition and conflicting viewpoints. As the European Students' Union has always been dedicated to pushing

for further progress in Europe in the field of equality, we can proudly say that the majority of our members stood behind the creation of the committee which certainly did make a break through in the students' movement as far as gender equality is concerned..

4.2 WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

Over these two years, the GEC has tried to influence the European students' movement in broadening the views on gender issues. As Delphine Michel states in the first issue of the GEC newsletter (October 2006): »The creation of this GEC will make it possible to make ESU an organization at the forefront of gender equality. [...] In order to have good external politics, you need to start internally. The most important for me is to have a concrete impact on the life of the European students in order to promote the equality in the higher education.«

Internal strengthening regarding gender issues, and gender equality capacity building for ESU members, are the two main strategic lines that the GEC has followed. The strategy for internal awareness and promotion of gender equality values has been crystallised in the Gender Mainstreaming²⁸ Strategy (GMS) that was adopted in BM53 in Vilnius, Lithuania. The GEC has been trying to support the national student unions' (NUSes) work on gender equality by taking a series of initiatives: appointing designated people responsible for the better dissemination of information, collecting information through a survey in order to have a better knowledge of members' activities in this area, distributing newsletters with information from ESU and different partners regarding gender equality, regular workshops in ESU events on gender equality themes, participating in events organised

²⁸ Gender mainstreaming was defined by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 1997 as »a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of ... the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.« Gender mainstreaming is a process with the goal of achieving gender equality.

by members and helping with expertise about GE issues, writing the GE NUS kit etc.

The committee members made various efforts to ensure gender mainstreaming thorough ESU content work. Briefing notes were developed on key aspects related to the Bologna Process and Lisbon Strategy on the following topics: social dimension, quality assurance, language barriers, research and innovation, three cycle structure and access, mobility, attractiveness of HE and lifelong learning. All student unions have gained access through the internet to these briefing notes, while many of them have been distributed in print at ESU events.

The GEC has also analysed ESU's policy papers and statements so that a gender perspective could be added in due time. Internal monitoring has been a challenging activity. GEC members have been taking statistics at Board Meetings so that it could be shown if delegates' behaviour reflects or not the democratic value of gender equality. In addition, ESU external representation has been monitored to have an overview of the way elected representatives understand how to gender mainstream their work or how gender balanced the representation teams seem to be.

GEC members have been volunteering for work on different ESU projects, ensuring a gender perspective to their work on the main priorities such as: student and staff mobility, equity in HE, The European Qualifications Framework, e-learning etc. Sharing expertise has been also done with external partners such as OBESSU (by providing trainers—March 2008).

As a political statement, a policy paper on the topic of Gender Equality in Higher Education has been drafted by the GEC and also discussed among ESU's members at BM 53. At BM 54, in May 2008, this policy paper was adopted. The paper points out the strong necessity for a comprehensive improvement of the current situation starting

from access to higher education through to research policy and institutional government.²⁹

The GEC's most recent work has focused on compiling information in the form of briefing kits on gender equality both for the elected representatives of ESU and our member student unions, on contributing to the very Gender Equality Handbook that you are currently reading and also on setting the framework for the new ESU structure dealing with Gender Equality: the Gender Equality Cross-Committee. Also, evaluation procedures have been designed so that the work on ensuring gender equality is properly monitored as well.

4.3 FUTURE VISION

The Gender Equality Committee of ESU has managed to achieve a formidable feat: placing gender equality in the centre of ESU's work and in that way fulfill its main mission. The tendency to ridicule content work on this issue has almost disappeared and the new demonstrated interest of male representatives in GE training sessions is a sure sign of an increase in awareness.

The new cross-committee will most likely not have the same time resources to spend on GE issues, but it should have a more complete overview of ESU's work. The Gender Mainstreaming Strategy will help in maintaining and developing the level of gender mainstreaming in all aspects of ESU's work. In addition, former and actual GEC members have tried to ensure a solid background of informational materials, contacts and practices that will help the set up of the new cross-committee.

It is very important that our member unions are assisted in their work on gender equality issues. This is why the future vision should encompass working with a functional network of designated people from each country that will act both as a sender and a receiver for information regarding gender equality. For gender equality work to

²⁹ <http://www.esu-online.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/335-policy-paper-qgender-equality-in-higher-educationq>

continue it is critical that political will is in place. Members help and awareness is also bound to give a boost to continuing what has been started.

Continuous and qualitative work in fostering gender equality in ESU, as the representative body of students in Europe, will truly be an example of good practice in dealing with and promoting gender equality issues in Europe.

5 GENDER EQUALITY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

By Maris Malzer, Gender Equality Committee of European Students' Union

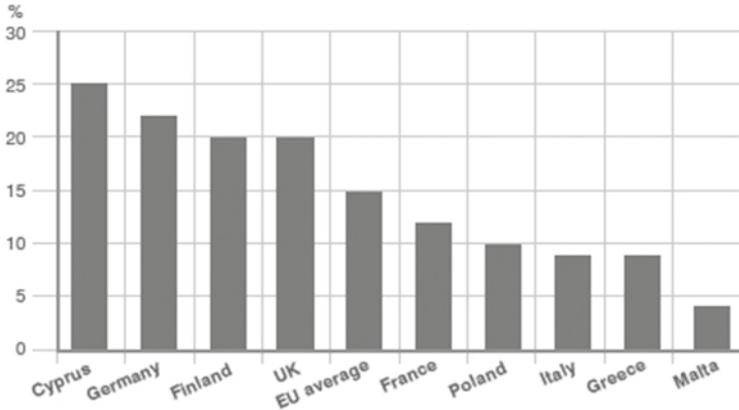
One of the tasks of ESU's Gender Equality Committee was to give an estimation of the current situation regarding gender equality issues in ESU. For this, several questionnaires and surveys were carried out. In November 2006 and January 2007, a general survey among ESU's member unions was carried out to find out their views on equality issues. One block of questions paid special attention to gender equality. The questionnaire was answered by 32 student organisations from 27 European countries. It covered 18 EU countries and 9 non-EU countries. The survey gives a broad overview about the student union opinion in Europe regarding gender equality. It also covers action that has been taken place in different countries among the student unions, and the situation within the unions themselves. The participation of men and women in the executive bodies of the organisations is also included.

5.1 RESULTS FROM THE SURVEY

Student unions were first asked their opinion on two questions: whether they think that women face any kind of unequal treatment or discrimination in any sphere of life in their country and in the higher education institution in their country. 31% of student unions think that women never or seldom face unequal treatment or discrimination, while 63% answered that women face this sometimes (38%) or often (25%). The perception of discrimination or unequal treatment

Gender pay cap in the EU, 2005

Source: Eurostat

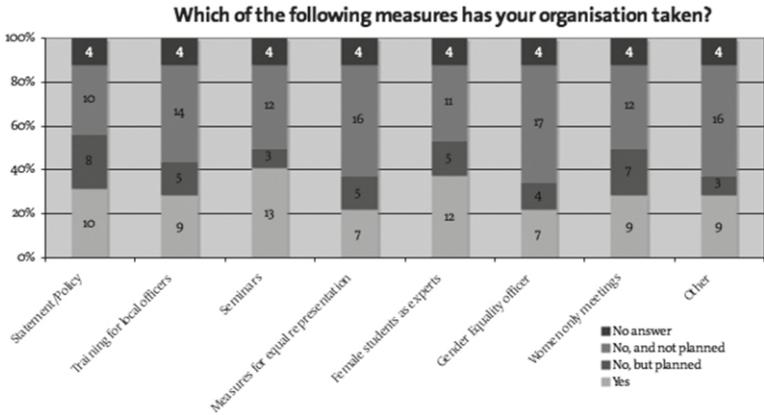


in the higher education sector is quite different. 31% of the unions expect women to face discrimination often or sometimes, while 63% expect this seldom (38%) or never (25%). This shows that a lot of student unions perceive the Higher Education sector to be less discriminating for women than the rest of society. This can be illustrated by the fact that the number of student unions which think that women never face any kind of unequal treatment in Higher Education has increased from 1 to 5. Only 3 unions think that women sometimes face unequal treatment compared to 12 who answered that women sometimes face unequal treatment in society.

The next set of questions were to find out if and what kind of actions student unions have taken to fight against gender based discrimination in their countries' higher education system. 75% of student unions had taken some positive measures to make higher education more equal, compared with 47% of unions who had done something specifically concerning gender equality and 25% of unions who said that they do not plan to do anything. The measures from which they could choose from were:

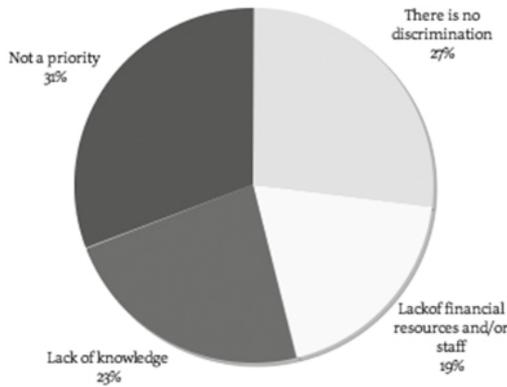
- 1 Women have the possibility to meet without men being present.
- 2 Having a gender equality officer in the organisation.
- 3 Including female students as experts in making a statement, organising events etc..
- 4 Ensuring equal representation by gender in the organisation (quotas e.g.).
- 5 Organising seminars, workshop on given issue.
- 6 Organising trainings for local higher education officers on the issue.
- 7 Making a statement on given issue.

Which of the following measures has your organisation taken?



Unions had the chance to explain why they are not taking any action. One third of the unions do not see gender-based discrimination as a priority in the organisation (31%), while one third says, that there is no discrimination (27%). There are also practical reasons like lack of financial resources (19%) and lack of knowledge (23%). It shows clearly that this subject has not been widely discussed and needs more attention. Surprisingly none of the answers stated that a reason not to deal with gender equality issues is a lack of support from members.

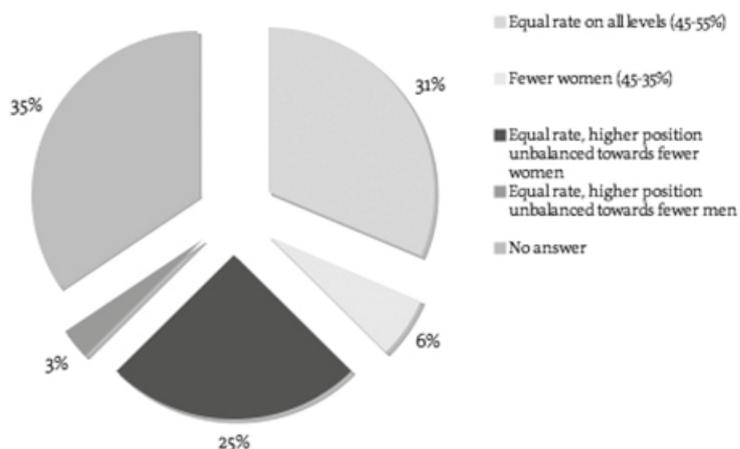
Why has your union not taken any measures?



A deeper look into the organisations concerned gives us more information about the situation there. Some student unions do have clear mechanisms for the empowerment of women, formally regulate within their statutes or based on informal agreements. However, the vast majority of unions do not have any specific measures for gender equality. Some mentioned that there is no reason for such a measure; some do not prioritise the issue. The existing measures range from quotas for elected bodies to informal female networks or special women's officers, which are only elected by women. The real participation of men and women in the organisations shows that there is a relatively high number of women in the organisation, much more

than usual in politics. But the look behind the surface gives us more information. The number of men and women are the same, but the positions and the fields of their work vary greatly. The answers from the organisations were classified into 7 groups (A—Equal rate on all levels (45–55% each), Bf—Less women on all levels (45–35%), Bm—Less men on all levels (45–35%), Cf—Equal rate, but higher position unbalanced towards less women, Cm—Equal rate, but higher position unbalanced towards less men, Df—Rarely women on all levels (35% and below), Dm—Rarely men on all level (35% and below)).

Rate between men and women in the organisation



5.2 CONTINUOUS WORK

Although these results are not what you could expect from an organisation that should be very young, outgoing in terms of new ideas and most of all, setting equality at all levels of life as one of the highest priorities, one could say that there have been some changes and these have been achieved by the European Students' Union's continuous work on improving the gender equality situation both inside of the organisation and also giving a positive impulse to its member unions.

Not long ago, mentioning gender equality at ESU events was a taboo, there were continuous arguments about the issue in terms of whether ESU should deal with this question or not. Now the organisation is in a position where gender quotas are an integral part of its statutes, there is a concrete plan for improving the situation with the implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy, and this topic is constantly mentioned during events, etc. This has a positive impact also for member unions who are trying to improve their own situation and to keep up with the standards that are placed for them. They try to bring gender balanced delegations to ESU events; they are trying to raise this issue among their members and to share experience. Maybe this is not enough and change is going too slowly, but I am sure that most of the people who once started to raise this issue in the organisation might be surprised with the results at the moment. ESU is moving slowly but steadily towards the point where it can once again proudly say that this is an organisation that is gender equal on every level.

Main findings from the Equality survey:

- 31% of the unions proved an equal rate of men and women on all levels that were described.
- More than one third of the unions (34%) proved to be gender biased at the more senior levels. Women and men are equally represented at the lower level (board or executive structure), but the executive structure or the chairperson/president is male dominated. One single organisation was biased towards fewer men at high level positions. The vast majority of those 34% of unions proved to have an equal level of men and women at the lower levels of the organisation, but mainly in the presidium/Executive committee did the ratio change towards more men.

- No organisation has less than 35% of men or women at any level. Such a gender bias was not indicated at all levels. Looking at the results of only those unions who answered the question paints a different picture of the results.
- Nearly half of those unions proved to have an equal rate of men and women at all levels of their organisation.
- 43% indicated a biased men/women rate only in higher positions. But of these, nearly all of the unions had more men than women in higher positions.
- Still, one out of ten organisations has more men than women at all levels of the organisation.

6 STUDENT UNIONS AND GENDER EQUALITY—BEST PRACTICES

By Pascal Hartmann, Gender Equality Committee

Student unions are one of the key players in civil society which might have the power and strength to move society towards better goals. This is why student unions should strive to enhance the equality of human beings within their field of action, and by that also to foster gender equality issues in their field of work. Although, in a rather heteronormative and male dominated society it might be difficult to think of specific things to do concerning gender equality issues. Thus, this article is in the first part focusing on the main outcomes of a workshop carried out at the European Students' Union Board Meeting 53 in Vilnius in December 2007, and the second part is presenting four best practice examples of different member unions of ESU, based on interviews conducted between May and August 2007.

6.1 BRAINSTORMING ABOUT POSSIBLE ACTIONS

During the workshop, numerous ideas turned up and we clearly saw it as necessary to share them with all our members and other organisations who might find these ideas spark their innovative minds in starting up a gender programme. They follow:

- Arrange Equality Weeks, dealing with the different strands of equality issues, and focusing on gender equality. A good practice example would be the concept of a ›Living Library‹, where students can ›borrow‹ a person from an underrepresented or discriminated group of people, e.g. a feminist, a LGBT person, a disabled person, a vegetarian, or any other. The students would then have an opportunity to discuss

various discrimination issues with the ›borrowed‹ person, in a more personal setting. The event is highly interactive, interesting for the media and wider public, while providing a personal approach to the issues raised which is often omitted when doing awareness raising campaigns.

- Encourage networks for female activists only, to encourage their participation and to enable them to network in the name of empowerment. These kinds of networks are important for the creation of ›safe spaces‹, where discrimination issues can be more freely discussed, but also for providing support for each other's activities and strengthening the importance of gender issues within an organisation.
- A necessary step in creating Open University environments is an evaluation of curriculum and textbooks from a gender perspective, LGBT or any other. Numerous materials used during our university years are still filled with stereotypes and prejudices which further reinforce an unwelcoming higher education area. Proper progress would also involve the active inclusion of positive role models and examples for minority groups (widening the scope of coverage of women's literature, women in science etc). Gender mainstreaming within pedagogy used at the institutional level is a required action requested from the responsible bodies at national and institutional level. It is also important to support the institutions to introduce gender specific programs for both undergraduate and graduate studies.
- The recruitment processes within universities/student unions should be encouraged to use affirmative action, encouraging the employment of the underrepresented sex. Promotion and recruitment strategies need to be adjusted, for instance in terms of where job ads are placed, how they

are designed and the wording used. Certain groups need to be targeted, for example women for engineering or men for childcare.

- When calling for people to NUS elections, use personal contacts, not only general emails and try to encourage female colleagues and co-workers to run.
- Provision of child care facilities is crucial to enable students with children to study. This is especially important for single parents, who are still overwhelmingly women.
- Introducing gender topics into the NUS's work is an important step of awareness raising among the student population. In time it should further develop into special gender mainstreaming strategies which the unions would implement, and which in that way would set an example for institutions and state bodies dealing with higher education. The employment or appointment of special gender issue-responsible activists within the union itself would enhance the abovementioned processes.
- Awareness campaigns should also lobby for gender training for all staff and activists within unions. This could be further widened to include all students at the respective institution/university.

6.2 GOOD PRACTICE: COMBATING GENDER INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH THE STUDENT MOVEMENT

Concrete projects and actions have already been an integral part of the work of several student organisations in countries all over Europe.

The following part looks deeper at these actions and follows three aspects:

- Description of the project
- Motivation of the organisation for the project
- Main aims and outcomes

AUSTRIA: WOMEN'S SPRING UNIVERSITY

The women's spring university of the Austrian student union Österreichische HochschülerInnenschaft took place in March/April 2007. With several women's universities taking place the 1980s it established itself as the first project of its kind in recent times. The main purpose of the university was to bring those women into academia. At the same time, the university provided a place for discussing the university and academia from a feminist perspective. Curricula and science could be discussed apart from the (mostly) male dominated university governance structures. The university also included knowledge building parts. There, women were able to build their competences in those areas that are usually male dominated (e.g. law, leadership).

The Austrian student union has been working continuously on gender equality for the last six years. The executive body of the union includes an office for feminist politics, which conducts work in the area of gender equality.³⁰ The project was conducted in cooperation between the Austrian national student union, local student unions in several Austrian universities and faculty student unions from faculties of local institutions in higher education. Local women's organisations and the municipality were also involved.

The 350 participants of the university took part in 50 workshops and two plenary sessions. The topics covered higher education, social

³⁰ <http://www.oeh.ac.at>

life and the social situation of women in society, as well as theory on gender.³¹ The structural connection to the student union and the rest of the organisation happened through the participation of elected officials in the university and by the organisational support of volunteers.

Even though the explicit connection to higher education policies and the Bologna Process was not obvious, the topics of the university covered several aspects of the social dimension. Other aspects of the Bologna Process were also included through workshops on science and the role of academia in society. Gender specific aspects of employability and working conditions are also closely related to the discussions on moving towards the European Higher Education Area.

UNITED KINGDOM: PRO CHOICE AND PROUD OF IT!

The National Union of Students (NUS) in the United Kingdom has been running the campaign »Pro choice and proud of it!« since 2005. It is a three year long-term campaign based on the idea that women need the capacity to decide about their own body for well being. While well being is a precondition for participation in decision making and leadership, it is a basic need for success within education and working life. The project aimed to support women in higher education to fight for their rights on well being.

The National Union of Students has run the women's campaign for more than 20 years and has a full-time employed women's officer. The unit works to combat sexism in all its forms and to ensure that women's voices are heard and valued. The officer coordinated the pro-choice campaign.

The campaign aimed at female students in British higher education. The result should be a safe space in the institution where they do not face harassment due to their opinion on fertility. At the same time the campaign targets national legislation on abortion. On a third

³¹ <http://www.frauenuni.net>

track, it aims at making pro choice the norm within the student union.

Student well being is a crucial part of the social dimension. Based on the belief that students can only succeed in higher education if they find themselves in conditions conducive for this, it logically follows that this also includes decision making about the own body and the way of life a person wants to choose for the own future.

FINLAND: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LEGISLATION AND REALITY

The national union of polytechnic student unions in Finland, Suomen Ammattikorkeakouluopiskelijayhdistysten Liitto (SAMOK) has mapped the gender equality plan of the Finnish polytechnics. Law in Finland requires gender equality plans to be in place. The project started in early 2007 and was finished in June 2007, and maps the existence of the gender equality plans, their correlation with the requirements of the legislation and the inclusion of students in those plans.

The project was the first project organised on gender equality by the Finnish student union. It was initiated by a gender equality project in Finnish polytechnics covering three institutions.³² It targeted the polytechnics, which have to present a gender equality plan for their institution by law. A successfully implemented plan should improve the situation for students who are facing harassment and discrimination in higher education institutions. Students who are leaving the higher education sector should also be educated in gender equality for their professional life.

The motivation for the project did not come from the Bologna Process. The Finnish union does not use the Bologna Process as a tool for working on gender equality, but strengthened the work on equality in all areas within the actual year. The project aimed at the implementation of legal requirements in the institutions and therefore

³² <http://www.6mix.nu>

shows a clear connection to quality assurance and the implementation of current reforms.

SERBIA: GET INVOLVED! GENDER EQUALITY IN STUDENT ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

The student union of Serbia (Studentska Unija Srbije, SUS) conducted a project on gender equality work and the active support of women from 2003–2004. The project led to a gender equality team, which remained active during 2005 as well.

Based on research conducted by various non-governmental organisations, the union saw that women in Serbia are not at all in an equal position in politics and decision making with men. The research of student union members stated that the problems of society reflect on the student groups and that there is no gender balance in the academic community. The problem is mostly present in participation in decision making processes and in the lack of initiatives coming from female students.

The aims of the project were encouraging and strengthening female students. They should be motivated for more active participation in student organisations and within institutions of higher education. The methods of the project were training and workshops, as well as a focus on raising awareness of the lack of female participation and promotion of women's political participation. The expected outcome of the project was to create a team of female student leaders with necessary skills who will continue the work on the issue of gender balanced participation. The future work of the gender equality team formed though the project was supposed to be focused on policy making.

The first part of the project consisted of one workshop, two training sessions and a round table. The five day workshop on the basics of gender equality and two skills trainings educated and strengthened a group of twenty female student activists. Core participants for the educational part of the project, organised in January, February and March 2004, were a group of 20 female student activists from Nis,

Novi Sad, Kragujevac and Belgrade University. The second part of the project was a campaign for promoting gender equality and active female participation. As part of the campaign preparations, a mini survey of students' opinions and attitudes was conducted.

It was the first project of the Serbian student union. The main motivation was the serious lack of gender equality in Serbian society and academia. At the beginning of the project, the Bologna Process was not much in evidence at Serbian universities. Also for the project team, the process was not a motivation to run the project. The connection to the process can be seen in the need to include students as active participants and equal partners in the higher education sector. This also requires the equal participation of men and women in negotiations and in university governance. The active promotion of female representatives is, due to the lack of gender equality within society, a tool to ensure student participation, which can reflect the student body and a democratically formed student opinion.

7 GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY—FUTURE ACTIONS

By Alma Joensen, Gender Equality Committee of European Students' Union

7.1 MAINSTREAMING GENDER

When ESU's Gender Equality Committee (GEC) was established, its main role was to analyse the current work and structures of the organisations from a gender perspective, and to come up with recommendations for ESU's future work on gender equality. The idea behind the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy was to take a different approach to solve the existing gender discrimination in the organisation. This approach aims at tackling the discrimination from where it starts, based on the assumption that there must be something within the structures, working mechanisms or development process of the organisation that places obstacles for either gender and produces this unequal outcome. Based on the analysis of the current structures and situation, we set ourselves goals and take active measures to stop the organisation from planting obstacles and enforcing discrimination throughout its structures.

7.2 ESU'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

The strategy has specific recommendations for elected representatives and staff, where the main goal is to make sure that they all have basic awareness of gender equality issues and are provided with tools and guidance on how to highlight the gender perspectives of their work. Furthermore, as the key players in the every day work of ESU, the elected officials and staff need to ensure that the recommenda-

tions are given a proper follow up. They cover the full range of the organisation's activities, including external representation, competences in selecting people for positions and preparing decisions for the board. Thus, in order to mainstream gender into the organisations' structures, the elected officials and staff have to be aware of ESU's goals and recommendations and have the knowledge to mainstream gender into their own work and day-to-day activities. Since they are the ones giving external representations, organising events and keeping in contact with the members, they need to take their roles in the process seriously.

When organising ESU events, or when giving an external representation on behalf of ESU, the elected officials and staff now need to be aware of and implement many of the strategy's recommendations, in order for the events to be absolutely free of any gender discrimination and to make ESU's commitment to achieve gender equality visible. They need to make sure that speakers, moderators and workshop chairs are gender balanced, and that the gender perspective of the event's topic is covered from various aspects. Furthermore, they need to take action in order to make sure that all participants are aware of and respect ESU's code of conduct where it's clearly stated that sexual harassment, sexist jokes and other such behaviour is unacceptable. ESU's events are vital to the implementation of the strategy and the effect the strategy is supposed to have on members, since it is at the ESU events where the elected officials, members and externals meet for discussions, training, policy development and decision making.

At the last board meeting in Slovakia, May 2008, ESU implemented new structures within the organisation, and for the first time, elected representatives for the new committees and positions. These new structures do not include a Gender Equality Committee, but instead a Gender Equality Cross Committee, consisting of one person from each of the content committees. When moving from having a whole committee focused entirely on gender equality to a crosscommittee, where members are also focusing on other things, it is extremely im-

portant to make sure the gender equality work will continue developing on the same track.

One of the basic criteria in the implementation process of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy is the participation of all. The organisation will never become gender mainstreamed if only a few people take care of implementing recommendations and others continue working according to the old structures. By that, we are only fixing the problems on the margins of the organisation, rather than addressing them at the core, which will only result in continued obstacles and discriminatory situations throughout the organisation. This can easily be tackled, by making sure that every elected representatives and staff member of ESU is given sufficient training and provided with knowledge on the recommendations of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy, the gender perspectives of ESU's working areas, and gender equality in general.

Once the internal structures of ESU have been addressed, by including all elected officials and staff in the implementation process, we can effectively spread the knowledge through to ESU's members, handing them a tool to take back home and continue spreading awareness on gender equality at the national level. If that is successfully achieved, we can proudly say that the organisation is gender mainstreamed, from the core to the margins, and even further. But this requires hard work, constant attention, active participation and taking the right steps at the right time. The strategy also includes recommendations on how ESU can continually disseminate gender equality knowledge to its members in a sustainable way. Firstly, by providing the members with a wide range of up-to-date information on gender equality and by keeping them updated on ESU's work on gender equality. Secondly, and most importantly, to set up a network of gender equality responsables from all the member unions, where information and best practice can be shared, and where the unions can seek help from each other when working on gender equality issues. By setting up this network, it on the one hand encourages unions that have been working on gender equality to share their knowledge

and get new ideas, and on the other hand encourages those unions that are new to the topic to give it attention, on a basis where they can be supported by unions that are either at the very beginning of their gender equality work or have done extensive and effective work in the past.

By reaching this level, where the members are distributing the knowledge further on, we are very close to achieving our goal: to have a gender mainstreamed organisation. Adopting the strategy, and agreeing to commonly set our minds to make it into a reality, was the first and most important step. Taking the other steps requires patience and a positive mind.

Throughout the process, it will safely be kept in mind that ESU has set itself a goal that's meant to be achieved: a goal where the victory is an organisation where men and women feel equal and are treated equally.

8 GENDER EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

HE THROUGH GENDER LENSES IN EUROPE—KEYNOTE ARTICLE

By Vanja Ivosevic, European Students' Union chairperson 2005

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This paper covers the topics of enrolment to higher education, progression from Bachelor to PhD level programmes and issues that women who choose an academic career face today in Europe. It offers a wide range of statistics which show the way women progress in higher education as well as the working conditions and status of women in academia, which are also broken down by country level where such a breakdown was possible. The literature list offers possible references for further reading.

8.2 ENROLMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Overall trends show that over the past decade general enrolment rates in higher education have increased. As estimated by UNESCO, in the period from 1990 to 1997 the number of students enrolled in higher education rose from approximately 69 million to 88 million students worldwide. However, the progress in numbers varies drastically between regions. While in developing countries enrolment rates rose by 50% (from 29 million to 43.4 million), the developed countries increased their enrolment rates by only 13% (from 39.5 million to 44.8 million).

Over this period women continued to progress towards achieving parity with men when it comes to access to higher education. At a global level, the share of women in tertiary enrolment rates in 1997 was 46.8% worldwide. However, it is important to note that already in 1990, women represented more than half of total enrolment rates (51.2%) in developed countries. The trend for a high proportion of women in enrolment to higher education continued in the developed world to reach 52.9% in 1997—in absolute terms an increase of 3.5 million. In developing countries in 1997, 6.2 million more female students enrolled in higher education compared to 1990.

Although general numbers at a global level show a significant increase in the number of students enrolled in higher education, followed by a trend for the increasing participation of women in Higher Education, no general conclusions can be made lightly.

Within Europe, the greatest discrepancies between regions can be seen in the general enrolment rates (GER). In Western Europe, the Baltic states and the Russian Federation, the majority of countries have a GER above 45%. Norway and Sweden have a GER even above 65%. Out of Western European countries, only Cyprus and Malta have GER rates below 30%, while Switzerland is between 30.1 and 40%. On the contrary, among Central, South-East and Eastern European countries only Poland, Slovenia and Belarus have a GER above 45%. Central and Eastern European countries are evenly divided between 15 to 30% GER (9 countries) and 30 to 45% GER (8 countries). (UIS 2006; data for year 2000).

Women in Europe in 2005 represented 55% of total enrolment rates in higher education.

Table 1: Enrolments to tertiary education (2005)

Source: UIS Database

Country (Region)	Total number	Number of women	Percentage of women
Central and Eastern Europe	18,965,467	10,409,358	55%
Albania	...	...
Belarus	528,508	299,984	57%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...
Bulgaria	237,909	123,940	52%
Croatia	...	...
Czech Republic	336,307	176,965	53%
Estonia	67,760	41,677	62%
Hungary	436,012	254,657	58%
Latvia	130,706	82,575	63%
Lithuania	195,405	117,493	60%
Poland	2,118,081	1,218,072	58%
Republic of Moldova	118,528	70,046	59%
Romania	738,806	403,697	55%
Russian Federation	9,003,208	5,136,885	57%
Serbia and Montenegro	...	...
Slovakia	181,419	100,334	55%
Slovenia	112,228	64,885	58%
The former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	49,364	27,987	57%
Turkey	2,106,351	881,919	42%
Ukraine	2,604,875	1,408,242	54%
Central Asia	1,606,300	862,593	54%
Armenia	86,629	48,060	55%
Azerbaijan	128,634	60,131	47%
Georgia	174,255	87,836	50%

Country (Region)	Total number	Number of women	Percentage of women
Kazakhstan	753,181	437,742	58%
Kyrgyzstan	220,460	121,828	55%
Mongolia	123,824	76,049	61%
Tajikistan	119,317	30,947	26%
Turkmenistan	...	...
Uzbekistan	...	...
Western Europe	12,447,404	6,875,367	55%
Andorra	342	174	51%
Austria	244,410	131,144	54%
Belgium	389,547	211,974	54%
Cyprus	20,078	10,442	52%
Denmark	232,255	133,376	57%
Finland	305,996	163,872	54%
France	2,187,383	1,207,887	55%
Germany	...	...
Gibraltar	...	...
Greece	646,587	330,440	51%
Holy See	...	...
Iceland	15,169	9,846	65%
Ireland	186,561	102,501	55%
Israel	310,937	174,092	56%
Italy	2,014,998	1,139,807	57%
Liechtenstein	527	152	29%
Luxembourg	...	...
Malta	9,441	5,319	56%
Monaco	...	...
Netherlands	564,983	288,081	51%
Norway	213,940	127,456	60%
Portugal	380,937	212,053	56%
San Marino	...	...
Spain	1,809,353	972,119	54%

Country (Region)	Total number	Number of women	Percentage of women
Sweden	426,723	254,325	60%
Switzerland	199,696	91,945	46%
United Kingdom	2,287,541	1,308,362	57%
Total Europe	33,019,171	18,147,318	55%
United States	17,272,044	9,884,782	57%

In almost all of Europe female enrolment rates exceed male enrolment rates. However, most countries only have a slight advantage, and it is just in the case of seven countries that there is one male student for every one and a half female students. In most cases the ratio is far closer to having one male student per one female student. The exceptions are Tajikistan and Lichtenstein which have less than one third of women in their total enrolment rates. Switzerland, Azerbaijan and Turkey are the only countries in Europe which have not yet reached parity in strict terms—50%—between men and women.

When it comes to graduates from Bachelor level studies, women are far less likely to drop out compared to their male colleagues. Out of the total number of graduates in Europe, women represent 57%. As visible in Table 2, only Lichtenstein and Tajikistan have less than one third women graduates, while Switzerland, Azerbaijan and Turkey are above 40%, but still haven't reached parity. However, it must be noted that 13 countries in Europe have more than 60% of women in their overall graduation rates.

Table 2: Graduates in tertiary education (2005) Source: UIS Database

Country	Total number	Number of women	Percentage of women
Central and Eastern Europe	1,333,825	783,373	59%
Albania	...	...
Belarus	102,033	59,295	58%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...
Bulgaria	46,038	27,110	59%
Croatia	...	...
Czech Republic	55,055	31,116	57%
Estonia	11,793	8,277	70%
Hungary	73,769	47,556	64%
Latvia	...	...
Lithuania	41,466	27,537	66%
Poland	501,393	330,492	66%
Republic of Moldova	16,061	9,470	59%
Romania	156,565	89,468	57%
Russian Federation	1,813,340	...	
Serbia and Montenegro	...	...
Slovakia	36,337	20,741	57%
Slovenia	15,787	9,750	62%
Macedonia	5,687	3,725	66%
Turkey	271,841	118,836	44%
Ukraine	470,873	...	
Central Asia	101,856	50,629	50%
Armenia	...	...
Azerbaijan	31,558	13,772	44%
Georgia	...	...
Kazakhstan	...	...
Kyrgyzstan	33,331	18,927	57%

Country	Total number	Number of women	Percentage of women
Mongolia	22,397	14,524	65%
Tajikistan	14,570	3,406	23%
Turkmenistan	...	...
Uzbekistan	...	...
Western Europe	2,501,569	1,416,538	57%
Andorra	63	30	48%
Austria	32,925	17,000	52%
Belgium	...	...
Cyprus	...	...
Denmark	49,704	29,299	59%
Finland	...	...
France	664,711	371,698	56%
Germany	343,874	182,174	53%
Gibraltar	...	...
Greece	59,872	36,811	61%
Holy See	...	...
Iceland	2,914	1,969	68%
Ireland	59,650	33,195	56%
Israel	...	...
Italy	379,933	222,574	59%
Liechtenstein	132	33	25%
Luxembourg	...	...
Malta	2,741	1,662	61%
Monaco	...	...
Netherlands	106,684	60,242	56%
Norway	31,929	19,743	62%
Portugal	70,023	45,668	65%
San Marino	...	...
Spain	...	...
Sweden	...	...
Switzerland	63,372	26,978	43%

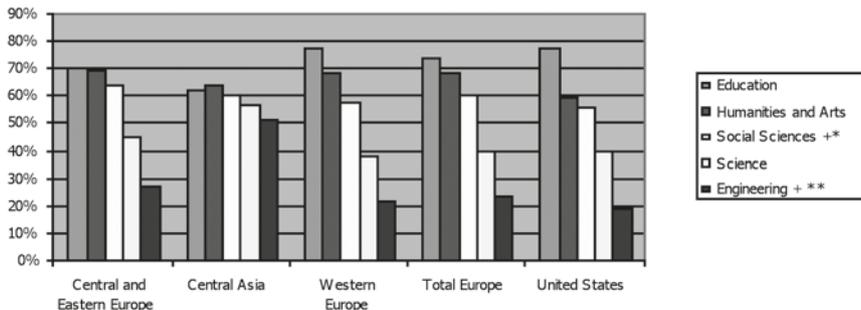
Country	Total number	Number of women	Percentage of women
United Kingdom	633,042	367,462	58%
Total Europe	3,937,250	2,250,540	57%
United States	2,557,595	1,482,496	58%

It's interesting to note that Central and Eastern European countries, as well as Central Asian countries have slightly higher female enrolment and graduation rates. Overall, the majority of countries with more than 60% of women in their graduation cohort come from non-Western European regions.

What makes the picture more complex is the data which reflects women's choice of studies. The following graph shows the proportion of women in graduation rates depending on the study fields.

Percentage of female graduates by field in HE (2005)

Source: USI Database



Social Sciences+ in the table and the following analyses also covers Business and Law programmes, while Engineering+ covers manufacturing and construction programmes as well.

With the exception of Central Asia where the share of women in graduation rates seems to be balanced, all other regions, and a vast majority of countries have less than one third of women graduates

in Engineering+ programmes. At the same time, more than 70% of graduates in the education field are women. Women also lag slightly behind men in science studies, where on average in Europe out of ten students four or less are women.

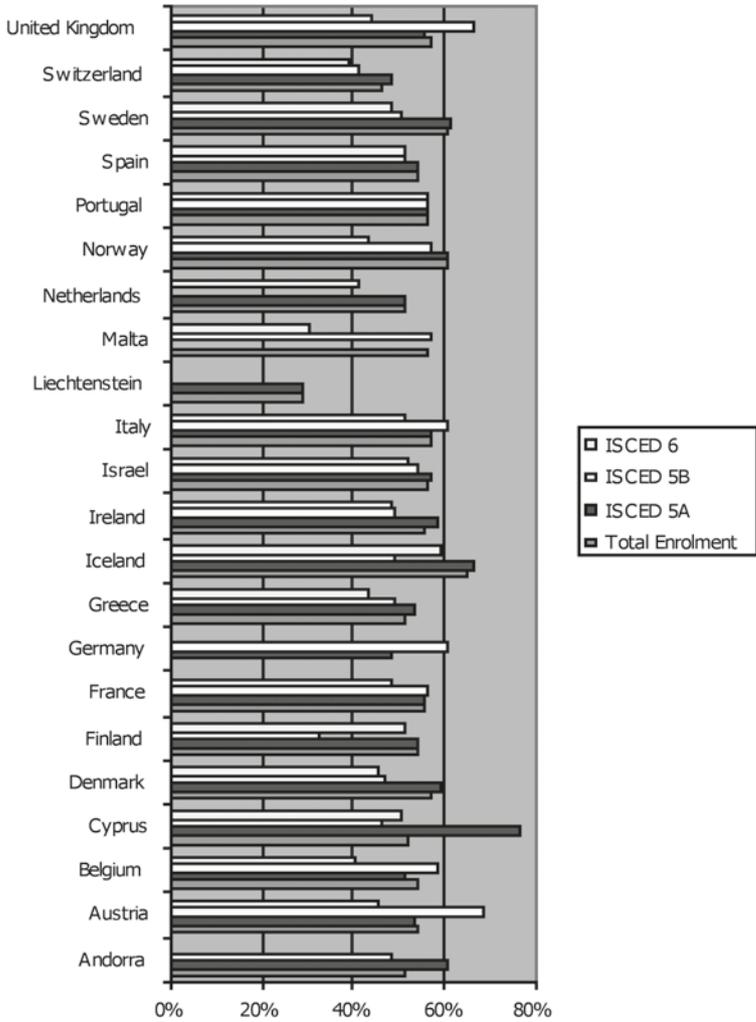
In OECD countries, within the science field there is a difference in the number of female graduates in life sciences and physical sciences. Women are more likely to choose and graduate from life sciences, and indeed in the majority of countries women today outnumber men in these fields. Physical sciences, however, still remain a challenge and in this field, the discrepancies between countries are the widest. In a number of countries women are close to parity, a number of countries are likely to have 40% female graduates, but some bigger countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have problems with achieving even one third of women graduates in physical sciences. Additionally, OECD data shows that next to engineering, computing programmes are dominated by men. In Belgium, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, the proportion of female graduates is less than 20%. Only Finland, Portugal and Sweden have more than one third of women graduates in computing programmes.

8.3 FROM BACHELOR DEGREE TO PHD

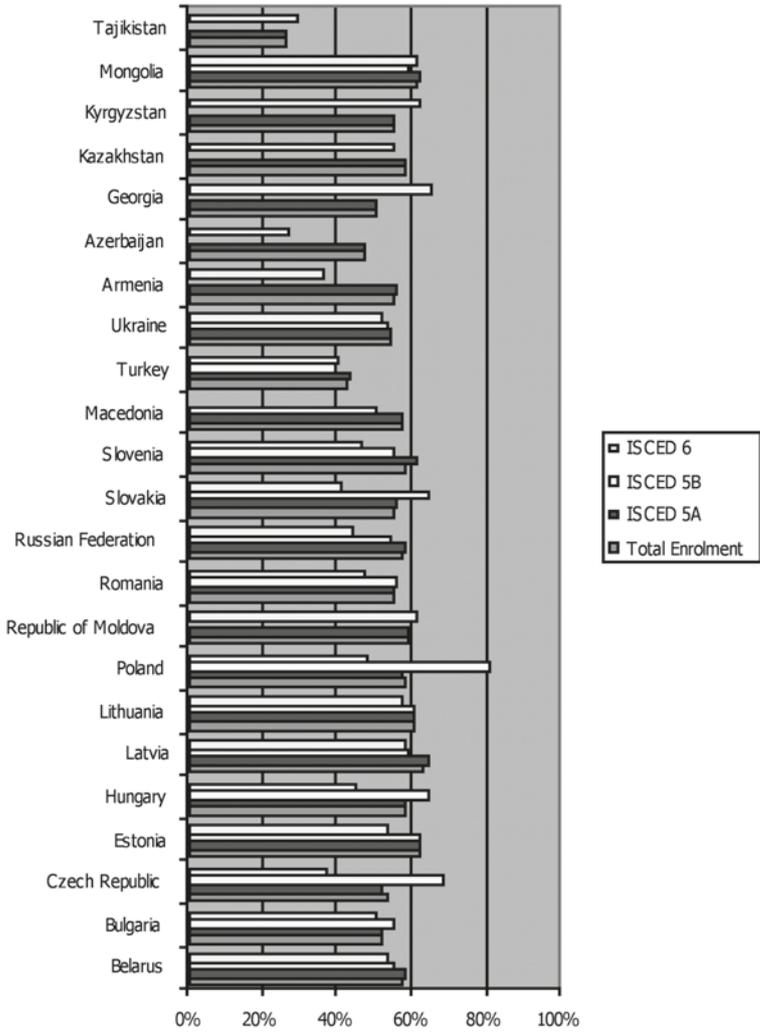
So far the data showed refers to general enrolment or graduation rates. The following two graphs show the enrolment rates by level of studies, as well as comparison to total enrolment rates to tertiary education.

According to the ISCED classification of study programmes, students at the first stage of higher education are at ISCED level 5. Within level 5 there is a differentiation between theory-based programmes, which provide sufficient qualification to gain entry into advanced research programmes and professions with high skill requirements (ISCED 5A programme) and programmes focused on practical, technical occupational skills oriented towards direct entry into the labour market. ISCED level 6 refers to the second stage of tertiary education.

Western Europe



Central Asia, Eastern and Central Europe



Tertiary programmes at this level are devoted to advanced studies and original research. They lead to the award of an advanced research qualification.

It is rather difficult to make broad conclusions on the preferences of female students when choosing between 5A and 5B programmes. In each region, there are a couple of countries in which female students in 5B programmes significantly outnumber female students in 5A programmes, although the opposite situations exist again in all the regions. One of the problems in analysing female choices between type 5A and 5B programmes is the national classifications of study programmes—e.g. study programmes in nursing and teaching are classified differently in different countries—and this can contribute to disparity between the numbers of female students enrolled in those two types of programmes.

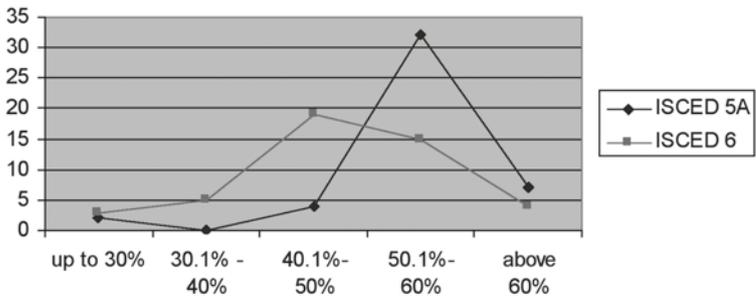
However, once we move to comparing female enrolments to ISCED 5 and ISCED level 6 the situation becomes somewhat clearer. Before a gender sensitive analysis it is important to note that general enrolment rates to level 6 programmes account for less than 1% of tertiary enrolments worldwide. The comparison between the developed and developing world is particularly disturbing—in developed countries, the enrolment rate to level 6 programmes constitutes approximately 5% of tertiary enrolments. Additionally some countries in Europe don't have PhD programmes, or have a limited offer of PhD programmes, meaning statistics for very small countries might be altered by these facts.

In Europe, female enrolment to ISCED 6 programmes ranges between 36% and 57%, with the exception of Malta which has only 13% of women enrolled in this level of programme. What makes the analysis interesting is that countries which lead the way in the proportion of women in level 6 programmes—contrary to common beliefs—are the Baltic countries and a number of Mediterranean countries such as Portugal, Cyprus and France which all have more than 50% women in level 6 programmes. Eastern European countries have no less women

than those in Western Europe, but the majority in both regions is still closer to 40% than parity when it comes to level 6 of higher education.

What makes the data worrying is that the vast majority of countries show a significant difference between enrolment to ISCED 5A and ISCED 6 of more than 10 percentage points. The case of Norway is a good illustration of this the problem, while in Norway at the first study level, the proportion of women is 60%, whilst in terms of PhD programmes women enrolling represent only 43% of all students.

Numbers of countries in different percentage brackets of woman enrolment to different HE levels

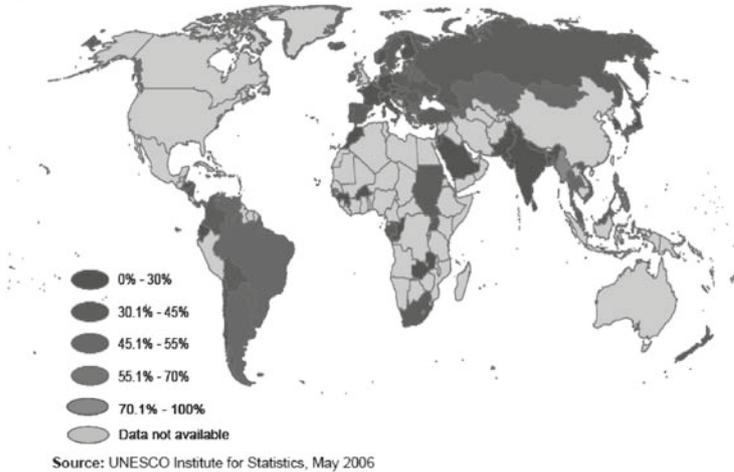


The often given explanation is that only recently have women broken the barrier between secondary education and tertiary education, and that more time is required for an increase in female participation at the higher levels of tertiary education. However, Europe itself challenges such a premise. For over a decade, countries in Europe had a ratio of women in overall enrolment rates higher, often substantially higher, compared to the ratio of men, and yet at level 6, women continue to be underrepresented. It is fairly safe to conclude that the progression of women to level 6 programmes, and therefore also to opportunities in the pursuit of an academic career, remains limited to women despite the overall increase in women in tertiary education.

8.4 WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Woman as a share of the total numbers of researchers (headcount),
2003

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, May 2006



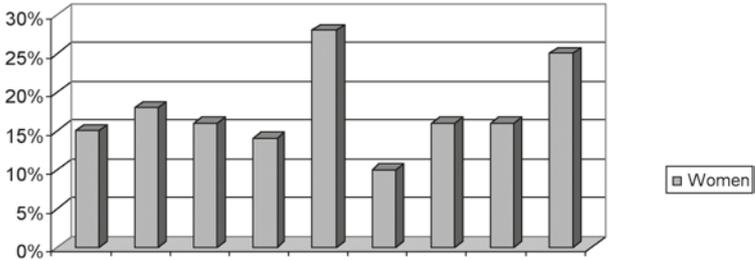
UNESCO estimates that just slightly more than one quarter of all researchers are women, although there are many countries for which the data is lacking altogether. In Europe, 32% of researchers are women, with only five countries reaching gender parity. In particular, in Western and Central Europe only two countries—Latvia and Lithuania—report gender parity. Overall more than 70% of researches are male in 11 countries of this region, out of the 25 with available data. A more balanced situation is found in the remaining (Southeast and East) European countries, where women account for 43% of researchers. Gender parity has been reported in Belarus, Bulgaria and Macedonia, highlighting a trend found in many formerly socialist states. In the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), women’s participation in research is significantly higher (44%) than the world average.

There have been attempts at gathering gender sensitive data on women as teachers at the tertiary level of education. According to the data available from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) for the year 2005, women worldwide represent 39% of all teachers at the tertiary level of education. It is important to notice that these figures represent the total numbers of women involved in teaching process at any type of higher education institutions offering education at ISCED level 5. Thus women not holding an ISCED 6 qualification, but involved in teaching in one way or another (e.g. as teacher assistants) are included in this statistic equally as the women holding the highest research and teaching positions at a higher education institution who also might teach at ISCED 5. Therefore the term ›teacher‹ in this chapter is used to refer to any female or male involved in the teaching process at ISCED level 5 in tertiary education.

North America and Western Europe have a solid average of 40% of female teachers, yet a number of large countries are closer to 30% than 40%—these are Germany, Greece, Italy and Switzerland. Again, Malta has the lowest West European average with a disturbing 23% of women teachers. The world's only regions that have, on average, achieved parity between men and women teachers in tertiary education are Central and Eastern Europe as well as Central Asia. With the exception of Slovenia (33%) and Tajikistan (32%), all other countries have no less than 40% of women teachers. Nowhere else in the world do women exceed parity between men and women in favour of female teachers except in this region where 8 countries have broken through the glass ceiling; Kazakhstan (61%), Latvia (58%), Mongolia (55%) and Belarus (56%) having the highest numbers of female teachers at tertiary level education in the world.

However, as the following graph 5 shows, women in all developed countries are by far less represented in the highest senior positions within each system of higher education.

Share of women professors with the highest ranking position in academe, Sources: She Figures 2006 and Robinson 2005



Less than two female teachers hold the highest possible position within a system of ten male teachers with the same position in some of the most developed countries of the world. Only the United States manages to get close to one-third of women as the highest ranking researchers, with 28% of women holding the highest possible position. The USA is closely followed by Turkey which ranks second with almost a quarter of the highest ranking professors being women. For other countries the glass ceiling is set below 20% of women in highest ranks within academia. It also seems worthwhile highlighting that within the EU, Western European countries rank lower compared to those in Eastern Europe. While Austria, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands all have less than 10% of women at the highest ranking positions, it is Romania who has the highest proportion of high ranking women (29%) followed closely by Latvia (27%). Yet, can we call almost reaching one-third a success?

As associate professors, the next highest rank in the hierarchy in all countries, women hold approximately one-third of the all 'second best' positions. Therefore, it is not difficult to conclude that most women hold low-ranking positions. Due to the complexity and variations between national systems when it comes to the hierarchy among teachers and researchers in tertiary education, it is not possible to look closely at the divisions within low ranking positions. However, it is safe to say that in the majority of cases, more than half of the

women that do have the status of a teacher or a researcher at a higher education institution have a low ranking position.

When women in the highest ranking positions constitute less than 20% of academic staff, they will be far less visible compared to their male colleagues. Women are in such a small proportion that they will either be very thinly scattered across the institution or will be concentrated in particular areas and nearly completely absent from others.

The trends observed in female enrolment to different fields of studies are also found in the number of women working as researchers and teachers. In most cases, the percentage of women working as full professors is lower in those fields where the low enrolments of women are persistent, or have only recently acquired a higher number of female students.

Which studies can be considered to be 'feminised' in terms of academic staff varies greatly from country to country, however some general conclusions can be still be made. For engineering, the overwhelming majority of academic staff are men, as is also the case in computing sciences. On the other hand in life sciences, in almost three-quarters of countries women have achieved parity or even a slight advantage compared to their male colleagues in academia (UIS, 2006).

Although there is not much data available on how much time women need to progress through an academic career compared to men, some national researchers suggest that the time needed for women to attain a PhD degree and progress through lower ranking positions is considerably higher than the time needed for a man. The research based on interviews with women who have reached the highest ranks in academia suggests that women in the early stages of their career often need to organise more than their academic responsibilities and have high private as well as societal expectations to fulfill in terms of their more traditional roles in families, while their male colleagues have more family support which enables them to focus on their academic career.

The reasons for the slow progression of women through the academic hierarchy could be two-fold. On the one hand women, especially in the early stages of their careers, have to organise their time between ›two careers‹—one in academia, and one with their family. While men receive support from within the family to focus on their careers, women often divide their time since they don't receive the same amount of support, if they receive any family or society support of family at all. On the other hand the promotion criteria is often quantitative rather than qualitative in order to ensure ›objectivity‹. The criteria often focuses on the number and length of articles rather than on their quality, which hinders women in meeting the criteria, since they have less time to produce a high volume of articles. It is important to note that women do write as well as men, however often in smaller quantities in the early stages of their careers (Siemienska, 2003).

8.6 WOMEN AS LEADERS IN UNIVERSITIES

The low visibility of women in high ranking positions within universities may also have a noteworthy effect on women as university leaders. Although the previous set of data compares a limited number of countries, it may be presumed that the progression of women through an academic career is limited in other world regions too, especially if we take into account the data that already shows an increasing disparity by level within tertiary education. The following world wide data could confirm the previous presumptions.

A very small number of women have led or lead universities today. According to the data provided by the Universities Associations, Table 3.1, in most regions only 5% of institutions have women as Rectors (or Presidents). Arab States stand out with only 2 universities out of 103 being governed by a woman. On the contrary, Latin America stands out positively with 47 of 177 universities being governed by women.

Table 3: Universities run by women (%) Source: UNESCO 2000

University Association	Members	Run by women
Africa	120	5%
Arab States	103	1.9%
Commonwealth	463	8%
French-speaking	270	5–7%
Europe	497	6–8%
Asia/Pacific	140	5%
The Americas	350	5%
Latin America	177	26%

Therefore a legitimate question remains in terms of how much influence women have in the governance of higher education institutions, as well as in the development of science and knowledge which, at the end, influences the development of economy and society.

8.7 WORKING CONDITIONS AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ACADEMIA

Despite broadening public demand and the importance given to building a 'knowledge-based economy', tertiary education is affected by an ongoing process of devaluation. Public funding has been decreasing over the past decades, and one of the responses of higher education institutions has been the casualisation of the teaching profession in tertiary education.

The growing trend of casualisation has equally been reported in the more liberal education systems (Australia, UK, USA, and Canada) as well as in systems with a long history of public funding (Europe). Academic staff, particularly in the early stages of their academic career, are increasingly on short-term and low paid contracts (Enders, 2003; Robinson 2005). Robinson also shows that women are particularly affected by casualisation trends.

In 2004, women in Australian higher education institutions made up approximately 36% of full-time equivalent academic staff. Women also made more than 55% of all casual staff. In Canada, of all tenured appointments, women held less than 25% and just one-third of all full-time staff in 2001–02. In the case of the USA, in 2003 women made up just over 39% of all full-time faculty staff, but accounted for 48% of part-time appointments. Additionally, women were much more likely to hold full-time positions without tenure. Half of the men employed full-time held tenure, but only 36% of women were employed with tenure. In New Zealand, of the full-time staff, about 37% were women in 2003. Women made up about 50% of part-time academic staff. There are no official statistics available on the use of tenure positions in New Zealand. In the case of the United Kingdom, the number of women full-time faculty staff grew by 30% in the period between 1995–96 and 2003–03, which was an increase of 30%. During this time the number of male full-time faculty staff fell. Despite the gains, women are still more likely to be employed on a part-time basis—25.5% of women are employed on a part-time basis compared with 12.6% of men. Furthermore, women are more likely to be employed on fixed term contracts. In 2002–03, nearly half of women academics were on fixed-term contracts compared with 38% of men. (Robinson, 2005)

Clear documentation on the casualisation of academics and their effect on women in Europe also exists in the case of Poland. Prof. Siemienska argues that the casualisation of employment conditions at universities in Poland affects women in particular. Siemienska asserts that women are often welcomed by the management of universities as well-trained and motivated 'cheap labour'. She draws a connection between the trend of a lowering attractiveness of an academic career in terms of salaries and higher numbers of women in academia. Siemienska claims, based on statistics, that in those research fields where an economic gain is higher in the private sector, men leave their academic careers and the places are then filled by women colleagues, while the academic careers which still offer a higher income than the private sector, or which offer a good opportunity for a future lucrative

career in the public or private sector (e.g. law) still remain male dominant. Therefore she coined an expression ›winners amongst losers‹ to describe the current situation of women academics. (Siemienska, 2003)

Data on the salaries of academic staff is also very limited. Data is available for the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the EU. The gender pay gap in academia is still rather notable. The gender pay gap ranges between 13% and 25%. Notable differences exist between different fields of science, with the pay gap widest in engineering, applied sciences but also social sciences.

8.8 CONCLUSIONS

Although many international and national stakeholders show increased interest in tertiary education, and in women academics, comparable statistics on ›women in science‹ often remain limited. Some progress has been made on recording the number of women working as teachers and researchers in higher education, as well as their representation across different study fields, but when their status in terms of ability to progress through their academic careers, their contract status and financial situation is concerned, internationally comparable data becomes scarce.

Yet, for each part of the ladder in tertiary education, women enrolments are in the vast majority of countries lowering, most European countries show higher female enrolment and graduation rates at the first level of higher education. However, the data shows that women perform better and drop out less than men across a number of fields including science and technology, particularly at the early stages of higher education (UIS, 2006). However, higher enrolment rates don't necessarily create higher numbers of women PhD students and graduates. This is particularly true for traditionally male-dominated fields such as science and technology. Hence, it seems that the lowering level of enrolment for each step of the ladder in tertiary education is still dependant on cultural and societal attitudes and stereotyping.

It seems that the academic career of a woman differs significantly from that of a man. Real obstacles to progression still exist for women in academia. Furthermore, men generally seem to work in better conditions than women.

Women as teachers hold a significant number of positions within the academic community in Europe today; however the status of researcher is, in the majority of cases, still awarded to men. Women are also concentrated in the lowest and most low-ranking positions within the academic hierarchy with only a few women being awarded the highest positions. Additionally, an almost negligent amount of women have ever led a university in Europe. Women are also far more likely to hold part-time positions, and when they do hold a full-time position, it is more likely that these positions will be off the tenure track.

The persistently low number of women researchers influences the content of research and the development of new knowledge, as well as prioritisation when it comes to the financing of research. Martha C. Nussbaum shows how each discipline (history, philosophy, but also economy, medicine, etc.) changed when women got the chance to contribute with new ideas, the development of new methodologies, new concepts and models. The involvement of women shifted science from a predominantly male-oriented domain to one with models, concepts and methodologies which encompass and enable research, analysis and knowledge of society as a whole (Nussbaum, 1997). It may be concluded that the concept of leadership has not changed over the past few decades, despite the growing enrolment of women in higher education, as well as their slow but growing numbers in academic staff. This also raises real concerns regarding the role women play in decision-making and governing bodies, which in turn decide on the environment there are working in, the criteria they themselves will be evaluated against, their employment and working conditions. Furthermore, it poses questions about women's roles in society, the attitudes and prejudices that still exist when it comes to concepts of power and leadership in the world of academia, as in society itself.

Consequently, a lot more needs to be done in terms of policy and action if we are to achieve equality between men and women in higher education in Europe.

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GENDER SEGREGATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION—FOCUS ON EUROPE

By Pascal Hartmann, Gender Equality Committee of European Students' Union

Gender equality is an issue which still dictates the society we live in. As higher education is not a societal framework by itself, but rather a set of institutions embedded within the whole of civil society, the same norms, habits, sociological problems and economic forces exist, leading to structural discrimination against women. Discrimination based on gender can be clustered into three different types of segregation: vertical, horizontal and ›contractual‹ segregation, which will be analysed further in depth within this article.

HORIZONTAL SEGREGATION WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

There is horizontal segregation, which means that female students and faculty members are concentrated in different areas of academia compared with males and are still studying different disciplines. This can be led back to the gendered socialisation process, in which males and females are brought up differently and where their interest is raised towards certain gender-related orientations. This can already be seen for example in secondary education, where male and female pupils are praised or get critique out of different reasons of behaviour. This phenomenon can be perceived in higher education as the number of males and females is not the same in different disciplines. In social sciences and liberal arts, the share of women enrolling as undergraduates or in higher positions is substantially greater compared

to other fields of study, even though female professors are still highly outnumbered by their male colleagues.

This marked differentiation can also be seen statistically looking at PhD graduates in different disciplines. Women constitute 60.5% of education graduates in the EU, followed by subjects such as humanities and the arts, health and welfare, which also have a majority of female graduates, at 51.4% and 51.1% respectively. Looking at agriculture and veterinary studies, parity is almost reached at 49.6%, followed by a drop to 43.1% in social sciences, business and law, 40.0% in science, mathematics and computing, and finally 21.9% of female graduates in engineering, manufacturing and construction. Even though national data is quite volatile around the European mean, female graduation rates in engineering, manufacturing and construction range between 11.4% in Germany and 43.9% in Lithuania, which serves to show that these fields are still perceived as rather ›male‹ areas of study and are rather dominated by men.³³

An interesting statistical index for showing horizontal gender segregation would be the dissimilarity index, showing the number of one gender having to change to another field of research in order to reach parity in terms of gender involvement. It could be seen as a hypothetical distance from a balanced gender distribution. In the EU-27, the dissimilarity index in the higher education sector would be 0.14—meaning that almost every seventh researcher would have to change into another field of study, where his/her gender is under-represented in order to reach a gender balance. According to the statistics, the least horizontal segregation exists in Ireland (every 33rd), Spain (every 25th) and Iceland (every 14th); while the most in Luxembourg (every 2, 5th), Slovenia (every 4th) and Estonia (every 4th).

Vertical Segregation within Higher Education

Vertical segregation basically means that women are well represented at undergraduate levels and, in many countries, on graduate

³³ European Commission: She Figures 2006 http://kif.nbi.dk/She_Figures_2006.pdf (02.05.08)

levels but then mysteriously disappear out of the academic system, making the share of women lower and lower the higher the positions that are examined. This phenomenon, with certain groups dropping out at a certain level during their studies, is sometimes also referred to a leaking pipeline. This drop in female participation within higher education is also often referred to as the gender pyramid. In higher education, there are a large number of female students at the bottom and a disproportionately small number of female professors and academic leaders at the top.

The next part on statistics will first concentrate on the different levels of a higher educational career, and conclude with a résumé of the findings.

Looking at the first cycle, and thus at the number of students enrolling at university, it is a common trend in all European countries that women slightly outnumber men. This gap has even increased in the last few years, comparing the EU-25 average within the first cycle which went up from 52% female and 48% male students in 1999 to a distribution of 54% females and 46% males in 2003.³⁴ The national figures for 2004 range between 49.7% of females enrolled at that level in Germany and 63.2% in Latvia.³⁵

This phenomenon of more female students enrolled changes substantially when the other cycles within academia are examined. While at the first cycle, women do graduate in much greater numbers than men, with 59% of female graduates and 41% of male, they suddenly disappear within tertiary programmes, which lead to an advanced research qualification such as PhDs. In these programmes, women only constituted 46% in the EU-average for 2003, compared with 54% of male graduate students. The figures look even worse in terms of the

34 European Commission: She Figures 2006 http://kif.nbi.dk/She_Figures_2006.pdf (02.05.08)

35 http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/Dialog/varval.asp?ma=006_GEECTertStud_r&ti=Tertiary+students+by+Field+of+Study%2C+Level+of+Education%2C+Sex%2C+Measurement%2C+Country+and+Year&path=../DATABASE/Stat/30-GE/04-EducAndcommunicat/&lang=1 (02.05.08)

students graduating in PhD-comparable programmes, with a distribution of 57% males to 43% females.

While the distribution of entry-level employment positions for PhD students remains equal, at 58% to 42%, the distribution varies greatly when it comes to the higher positions within academia. In positions with certain influence, the proportion of females drops to 32%, in comparison to 68% of males.

Finally, considering the highest positions at which academic research is conducted, women only make up 15%, while males dominate academia with 85% of positions held.³⁶

The glass ceiling index is an indicator measuring the relative chance of women reaching a top position compared to men. A glass ceiling index of 1 says that there would be no glass ceiling effect, the higher the number, the thicker the glass ceiling. The EU-25 average shows with a glass ceiling of 2.1 in academia, that it is still much more difficult for women to have an academic career. Malta has the strongest vertical segregation with a glass ceiling index of 11.7, Romania almost none with 1.4.

To sum up, statistics show that while female students make up 54% of the student population of the EU-25, their number dips slightly until the first possible academic post, where their proportion is 42%. When considering the single highest posts in which research is normally conducted, women make only up 15%.³⁷

The problem of a lack of women also includes the lack of role models, which leads to a negative spiral; if women don't see women in different areas of higher education, they might (unconsciously) not feel able to even try to start working/studying within different fields, or to reach upper levels.

³⁶ European Commission: She Figures 2006 http://kif.nbi.dk/She_Figures_2006.pdf (02.05.08)

³⁷ European Commission: She Figures 2006 http://kif.nbi.dk/She_Figures_2006.pdf (02.05.08)

Contractual Segregation within Higher Education

Moreover, there is also a ›contractual‹ segregation, meaning that men are more often found on permanent research tenures while women more often have limited tenures and funding.³⁸

9.2 CONCLUSION

There is a widely painted picture of academia as a field where there is a fair contest between brilliant minds, where no attention is paid to things like gender, ethnicity or physical abilities of those competing, and where staff positions and grants for research are distributed on no other grounds than merit and scholarly achievements. From such a point of view, the lack of women at the higher levels of the academic system, as just pointed out with the help of concrete statistics, might appear as the result of poorer performances or a lack of ambition, or even of poorer intelligence and talent. Are women less intelligent than men or are there other reasons for the lack of women in leading positions?

This is not a only picture of the academic system. It can also be seen from a point of view where personal contacts and informal networks are essential to advancement. Comparison can be made to the French sociologist Bourdieu's theory, which states that every member of society occupies a position in a multidimensional social space which takes account of the amount of social, cultural and symbolic capital he or she possesses. In a society where most of the upper hierarchy is comprised of men, it might be much harder for a woman to acquire social capital, and thus the right networks, acquaintances etc. In addition, socialisation means that women tend not to be raised as their male peers and to behave in what has been classified as a rather ›female‹ classified way, which in our patriarchal society is unfortunately seen as weak and inferior to ›male‹ behaviour.

³⁸ ETAN Expert Working Group on Women and Science (2000) Science policies in the European Union. Promoting excellence through mainstreaming gender equality. Luxembourg, European Commission.

The downside of the peer-review system becomes visible when men in influential positions act as so-called gatekeepers, blocking the career paths of women and promoting the careers of other men. This creates barriers between levels of the pyramid, commonly termed glass ceilings, which was pointed out in chapter 2, and which functions as obstacles for female students to progress to and beyond post-graduate studies and into academic careers, eventually leading to positions as professors and academic leaders.

Discrimination against women in terms of admissions to PhD studies, in giving grants for research or in employment at higher levels of the educational system is often the result of unintentional undervaluing of the merits of women in comparison to the merits of men, rather than making intentional attempts to exclude them.

Merits and skills are not things worn visibly, but something that must be seen and recognised, as are knowledge and achievements. If teachers, tutors and colleagues do not take the time to listen to what female students and staff members have to say, and read what they have written, they will not be able to notice if the work is good. And if female students and staff members are not taken seriously, expected to perform on the same level as their male colleagues and given the same amount of encouragement and constructive criticism and feedback, they will not be able to perform as well as they could.

To sum up, it is highly important to acknowledge that gender-based discrimination still persists within our higher education systems and that it is still needed to implement affirmative action to support women, and also to try to dismantle gender stereotypes, as they can be perceived as the principle reason for inequality, prejudice and discrimination.

Even though open discrimination against women is no more imaginable nowadays, it is an important goal for further efforts to eliminate the still existing barriers of structural discrimination against women within higher education.

INNOVATION, MST AND GENDER

By Vanja Ivosevic, ESU chair 2005

The text is fully based on the contributions and discussions of participants taking part in the *Gender perspective and regional development* session held at ESU's seminar entitled *Gender Equality in Higher Education—does X make the difference?* in Vilnius, Lithuania in 2007. The workshop was co-chaired by Stef Beek and Vanja Ivosevic.

Within Europe, particularly the EU in light of the Lisbon Agenda, further economic development is closely linked to the new buzz word 'innovation' and to investment in maths, science and technology (MST) studies and research. Enrolment and progression through MST studies is closely monitored, also from a gender perspective, and is strongly encouraged by the EU and a wide range of European governments. We can notice that the allocation of funds to MST studies, as well as the research opportunities to these fields, are favoured and prioritised.

Women are under-represented in these fields of study, and indeed many actors believe that it is crucial to increase the participation of women in MST studies as a way of increasing the overall participation of students in MST. Too often, the reasons for this imbalance are solely or dominantly linked to gender roles, and while they do play a part in a female's choice of studies, they are by far not the only reason. Little is said of the student's expenses linked to studying MST, their structure and inflexibility and the curricula and research priorities which have been designed by men for a large number of years. All these factors play a role in deciding between MST studies and social sciences, humanities and art, and need to be properly addressed if women are to be genuinely attracted to study in MST fields.

Additionally, the development of research and science in the fields where women have been equally represented over the past decades has shown that the research priorities and themes have changed with their progression and influence. Thus it can be expected that women would have an effect on the research themes and curricula of the MST studies. As mentioned above, the lack of women in shaping the curricula and research in MST possibly results in the small number of women enrolling and progressing through MST studies. Therefore, MST sciences need to ensure the equal participation of women in the setting of research priorities and in funding decision-making bodies, even though they are still under-represented in these fields overall.

Furthermore, the prioritisation of MST research over other sciences poses a threat to the possibilities and position of female researchers in the academic community. If the fields in which women are equally or predominantly represented are seen as less valuable to furthering the development of society and its economy, and are in fact also affected by reduced funding opportunities, the position of female researchers could easily deteriorate further.

10 MOBILITY AND GENDER EQUALITY— A FEW FACTS

By Ligia Deca, Gender Equality Committee of the European Students' Union

10.1 MOBILITY IS?

Mobility, as it is commonly understood, refers to a study period taken abroad and returning home afterwards. When talking about student mobility, academic and cultural experiences and individual growth have traditionally been emphasised and are still the most important skills to be gained from a study period abroad. Also, experience of cultural and academic diversity promotes tolerance and reduces discrimination. There is a diversity of different types of mobility such as free movers, horizontal and vertical mobility, and these require special attention. This diversity is a source of enrichment for everyone and offers a fertile ground for innovation and the quest for quality. But ESU keeps emphasising the importance of the academic value of a study period abroad as pointed out in ESU's Policy Paper on Mobility³⁹: »Issues such as recognition, comparability and language tuition must be determinedly addressed in order to make the exchange period genuinely meaningful for both the individual and the institution.«

³⁹ <http://www.esu-online.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/336-policy-paper-qmobilityq>

10.2 IS IT EQUAL?

Keeping in mind these benefits, mobility opportunities need to be accessible and increased to reach all individuals wishing to be mobile. Mobility is embedded in the Bologna Process. Thus, the social dimension that is regarded as a priority in the Bologna Process is essential in fostering mobility. The 'Trends V' study of the European Universities Association⁴⁰ (page 42) reveals the imbalance between countries importing and exporting mobile students, according to socio-economic background (fig. 1).



A basis for the social dimension is the question of equal opportunities. For equal opportunities to be effectively implemented, discrimination must be absent both in policy and in practice. This may be achieved formally through national legislation in line with European anti-discrimination standards, providing guarantees that higher education is accessible to all without direct or indirect discrimination on any actual or presumed ground such as sex, race, sexual orientation, physical or other impairment, marital status, colour, language, reli-

40 http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/Final_Trends_Report_May_10.pdf

gion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, association with a national community, property, birth or other status. Council of Europe recommendation R(98)/3 on access to higher education⁴¹ also points out that, »the promotion of effective equality may require the adoption of special measures where this is necessary and consistent with the principle of non-discrimination to take account of the specific conditions of individuals or groups in society.«

The student and staff mobility promotion programme Erasmus celebrated its 20th birthday last year and has now entered into a new phase. During this last period, lots of statistics have been collected about mobile students.⁴² Among many others, specific objectives concerning gender equality promotion have also been set out.

10.3 AND GENDER EQUAL?

The *Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of Erasmus Students*, commissioned by the European Commission in October 2005, shows that more than half of the students who take part in Erasmus programmes are female (59–66%). The only exception was Austria where men predominated. Most student mobility is created by Language and Philological and Social Sciences, which are considered female-dominated areas, while males dominate mainly in studies related to engineering.

A separate look at doctoral students shows some interesting developments. Although overall, women persist in being a majority here also, there are some interesting differences in terms of distribution by country. For example, more than 65% of doctoral students from Spain and France are female compared with Germany and the UK where the female percentage is around 40%. It also appears that doctoral mobility from former eastern block countries: Czech Republic, Poland and Romania, is to a large extent male (male: 55–60%; female: 40–45%).

⁴¹ http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/HigherEducation/Resources/access%20to%20higher%20education_recommendation.pdf

⁴² http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/news505_en.htm

More than 60% of Erasmus students are between age 21–23 years, 93% were single and 99% had no children.

At the moment, there is not much analysis done about gender equality or inequality of mobile students.

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EXTERNAL DIMENSION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT—A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

By Vanja Ivosevic, ESU chair 2005

This section is fully based on the contributions and discussions of participants taking part in the *Gender perspective and regional development* session held at ESU's seminar entitled *Gender Equality in Higher Education—does X make the difference?*, Vilnius, Lithuania in 2007. The workshop was co-chaired by Stef Beek and Vanja Ivosevic.

Student mobility from non-European countries to the European Higher Education Area, particularly the EU, is rarely analysed from a gender or socio-economic perspective. Taking into account that a number of countries, in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in Asian and Arab states, have worryingly low general enrolment rates of women in higher education, the gender aspect of mobility between continents is relevant. Based on the low enrolment rates of women, it seems safe to presume that this is also reflected in the numbers and gender distribution of mobile students. Furthermore, the consequences of unbalanced mobility to Europe from third world countries could possibly have a significant impact on the development of regions worldwide.

Participation in mobility programmes in universities across Europe is usually seen as a prestigious opportunity, and will therefore have a further effect on decisions to continue higher education up to PhD level, promotion criteria at university, career, as well as the role played by those who had an opportunity to take part of their studies in Europe. Consequently, a possible lack of women in mobility programmes would have a profound effect on their academic progression, as well as on the role they play in their academic and

societal communities, hence further hindering further women's progression to higher positions in academia.

Additionally, overall access to higher education in some third world countries must be of particular concern. Financial barriers to access to higher education in a number of third world countries remain persistent, while educational reach and poor division becomes stronger and access remains limited.

Higher education plays a crucial role in the development of stable democratic societies where equal opportunities are of the highest value and human rights are respected. Mobility programmes should be designed to take account of all these aspects, as well as of the prohibitive religious or traditional barriers that ban women from having a fair chance in academic development. More data reflecting socio-economic background and the gender of incoming students need to be collected and analysed, in particular for ERASMUS MUNDUS. Furthermore, European policy on the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area should reflect on the development impact of unbalanced incoming mobility in terms of gender, and commit strongly to ensuring that equal opportunities for women and men, regardless of their socio-economic background, are a founding block of the policy towards the attractiveness of the EHEA.

IS MONEY NEUTRAL?—TUITION FEES AND GENDER EQUALITY

By Maris Malzer,

Gender Equality Committee of European Students' Union

INTRODUCTION

Tuition fees are the charges made by the higher education institution (HEI) to the student for teaching and/or supervision. In recent years, governments have been cutting the funding for HEI's whilst also increasing the numbers attending. This has resulted in severe strains on the infrastructure of the institution, rising class sizes and outdated facilities. HEI's have been lobbying hard for increased funding to make up for these shortfalls, however, one of the options that some governments have considered as a way of increasing funding for higher education without increasing general taxation is through taxing the individual who receives the education. This has taken several forms, from up-front tuition fees which the student must pay before attending the course through to a graduate tax which the student pays after receiving the education. The OECD has done several surveys on tertiary education in Europe and has suggested many of them to implement tuition fees in order to increase equity, funding and student responsibility in higher education. Much less has been discussed in terms of how implementing this kind of financing form affects equity in, and people's access to, higher education opportunities, but provides examples from many different countries that have gone down the path of collecting tuition fees which show that the negative effect cannot be underestimated.

Although there are presently more students enrolled in higher education than ever before, implementing tuition fees has still proven to be negative in terms of the decision to start studying or not. Research results show that women, especially from a lower socio-economic background, are more sensitive to the cost factors of education and consequently more debt averse than their male counterparts. *A DEST-sponsored survey of 7000 year 10–12 students published in 2002 found substantial gender differences in high school students assessment of the impact of the cost of a university education.* The report found that »an alarming 41 per cent of lower socio-economic status (SES) females reported that they believe costs may make university impossible for them« (compared with 34% of lower SES males). Similarly, 43% of females from lower SES backgrounds surveyed believed their families could not afford the costs of supporting them through university. The gender disparity between higher socio-economic male and female students was much less apparent.« (Carrington; Pratt 2003, p 10)

Tuition fees also have an effect on the choice of subject. In a lot of countries, the number of females exceeds the number of male students, but the choice of subjects still shows significant gender differences. Humanities, social sciences and arts, education and health are female-dominated areas, and hard sciences like engineering and technology are male-dominated areas. This pattern has been usually explained through gender stereotypes but also these fields of studies have differences in their costs. Engineering and technology studies are more expensive than, for example, humanities. As discussed before, female students are more cost-sensitive than males, which also means that if students are expected to pay upfront tuition fees for their studies, females are more likely to take up cheaper studies than males. There are also significant differences in the returns of these different areas of study. Usually salaries in the field of so-called soft subjects (education, social science, etc.) are smaller than for hard sciences (engineering, technology, etc.) which also means that females are go-

ing to take longer to pay back their student loans than males. This can be illustrated by an Australian case where upfront tuition fees were introduced to postgraduate students. Research carried out to map the situation of gender equality in the Australian higher education system suggests that this has had a negative effect on it. »... Postgraduate coursework is an area within the Australian higher education sector where gender equity has not been achieved. Second, this brief discussion of the relevant literature suggests that, at best, the deregulated fee environment has not helped to achieve gender equity in this area of higher education, and that, at worst, means deregulated fees have hindered progress towards gender equity.« (Carrington; Pratt 2003, p 22).

11.3 PAY GAP INFLUENCE ON PAYING BACK STUDY LOANS

Introducing tuition fees means that students need to find money to start studying in higher education and usually there is no other option than to take out a loan. Recent decades have shown a great improvement in the educational and employment level of women, but it is still a harsh truth that women with the same qualification level tend to earn less money for the same work as their male counterparts. This phenomenon has been termed the gender pay gap. Even though women in Europe are better educated than men, the Eurostat survey shows that they still earn an average 15% less. There are even countries where the pay gap is more than 20%.

PICTURE: PAY GAP IN EUROPE

The pay gap is not only causing women to earn less but also influences them when they need to start paying back their study loan. As they tend to earn less, the average time for paying back the loan is longer, which also means including interest which is an inseparable part of every loan, with the result that they have to pay more. Recent calculations made in the UK on the basis of the British Household

Panel Survey and the Labour Force Survey estimate that a male student who entered higher education in 2006–07 will take an average of 11 years to repay their student loan, while this will be 16 years for women graduates. An even more radical situation is in New Zealand where a parliamentary committee inquiry in 1999 noted that the average male university student would take around 17 years to repay a loan of \$20 000, while it would take the average female student 51 years to repay a loan of this size. The same kind of pattern is an unfortunate reality for almost every country and female in the world who takes a student loan.

11.4 COMPLETION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES

Changes in the financing schemes of higher education have had a worrying effect on gender equality. As research results show, women are more cost conscious of their education than men, which means that the introduction of tuition fees affects to a greater extent their decision to start studying in post secondary education than it does men. This situation is not made better by the implementation of a loan system for students designed to cover their educational expenses, but if one takes a look at the pay gap situation or the areas traditionally studied by females, it is clear that compared to males, females will take longer to pay back their study loan.

Higher education is a public good and one way for granting everyone in society the opportunity to achieve their potential so that the situation where people decide to start studying in tertiary level education should not be based on financial reasons. Tuition fees and loans create gender inequality in higher education which means that specific measures should be taken to improve this situation for in order to actually achieve a discrimination-free higher education.

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By Regina Weber, Gender Equality Committee of ESU 2006/2007

The system that keeps women away from leading positions in academia as well as in their professional life is known as the ›glass ceiling‹. This characterisation sees the quantitative lack of women in higher positions as the result of structural barriers which are usually not visible, like a glass ceiling in a room while looking upwards. It describes the insurmountable obstacles that appear when women try to get into higher positions. The concept of such a ›glass ceiling‹ implies that this is not solely the result of a personal failure but of structural discrimination which women face just because of them being a woman. Old perceptions and prejudices in terms of how a ›man‹ and a ›woman‹ should behave and act remain within all our minds. They lead to an unequal judgement being made about people based on their gender. Whether we perceive a person as capable to fulfill a specific job is highly depended on these stereotypes we have in our mind. This fact results in a situation where women are kept away from higher positions even though their qualifications and work experience are equal to those of their male counterparts. But not only has the different perception of men and women in their professional lives created the glass ceiling, but the invisible demands made on men and women in terms of their private lives also supports the ongoing lack of women in higher positions. The existing work division regarding

family and household influences the real ability of women to participate in a job which is specially-tailored towards a full-time employee. The concept of a glass ceiling was introduced during the 1980s to describe the above-mentioned effects. Since then, its existence has been approved by a various number of research pieces.⁴³

12.1 NUMBERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education does not make any exceptions regarding the participation of women in higher positions. The relationship between men and women in academia is often described as the ›pyramid‹, having a large number of women at the bottom and only very few at the top. There are a large number of programmes in which women outnumber their male colleagues at the Bachelor level.⁴⁴ In the second stage of Higher Education (Masters level) the number of women decreases significantly in almost all European countries. The decrease continues at the third stage (PhD level) as well as within the different grades of academic titles. While 54% of all EU-25 Masters' students are female, only 42% remain at PhD level. The single highest post in research is reached by only a small number of women. 15% of all so-called Grade A-holders are women. This ›pyramid‹ is called the ›vertical segregation‹.

›Horizontal segregation‹ describes the fact that women and men choose different subjects. Women more often choose education and health sciences, while they are lacking in engineering sciences. While women make up 54% of the students at Masters level, their participa-

43 For example: The Anatomy of the Glass Ceiling Barriers to Women's Professional Advancement, http://www.lexisnexis.de/downloads/the_anatomy_of_the_glass_ceiling.pdf

44 Numbers on this can be found in: European Commission (Ed.): SheFigures 2006 (http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/pdf/she_figures_2006_en.pdf), as well as in: Eurostat (Ed.): The life of men and women in Europe—2008 Edition (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-80-07-135/EN/KS-80-07-135-EN.PDF) All numbers in these article come from EC (Ed.): She Figures 2006.

tion remains at 30% in the fields of science and engineering. Bearing in mind the different values of these courses of study, this situation leads to ongoing inequality regarding the financial situation of adults. In almost all European countries, working conditions are considerably better in the natural science and engineering fields. Salaries are usually higher compared to education, social science and health science graduates. The equal lack of women in all fields of academia, as well as on all levels, is therefore one important reason for unequal social situations.

12.2 RESEARCH

As part of a society which validates men and men's work and achievements higher than women and women's work and achievements, the glass ceiling and the male norm are also present within the research. This is shown, for example, by looking at the comparably low number of women active as researchers. (See Picture 2)

Not only is participation in active research important for the glass ceiling effect, but coming back to this concept of an invisible barrier, we have to explain the mechanism that can establish the ceiling. Research can only be done if it is asked for. The whole of academia is a very hierarchically structured field. Since all scientific work to reach a certain grade requires a supervisor, usually another researcher who is more experienced, research leans towards a self-referential system in which supervisors and advisors become gatekeepers for the young. This is getting more and more important as more equipment and financial means become necessary for research. In almost all European countries, scientific boards decide upon the majority of funds and support schemes. It is worth having a look at the composition of those scientific boards, even though they vary from country to country in structure and number. There is no country in Europe where the number of women and men has reached parity. Norway, Finland and Sweden are the only countries which are coming close to equal participation (47–48%), in some countries, the participation of women in

Proportion of female academic staff by grade and total, 2004
 She Figures 2006, p. 57.

Table 3.1: Proportion of female academic staff by grade and total, 2004

	GRADE A	GRADE B	GRADE C	GRADE D	TOTAL
EU-25	15.3	32.2	42.0	43.3	36.4
Austria	9.5	16.2	35.6	37.9	29.7
Belgium	9.0	20.7	33.1	46.6	32.7
Cyprus	10.2	17.2	37.5	33.5	31.0
Czech Republic	10.3	22.1	40.2	48.8	34.0
Denmark	10.9	24.4	37.6	42.7	31.8
Estonia	17.2	37.1	56.6	66.6	49.2
Finland	21.2	46.6	52.9	42.8	40.9
France	16.1	38.7	:	39.3	32.9
Germany	9.2	16.1	25.9	35.6	29.2
Greece	11.3	22.7	31.9	39.4	29.0
Hungary	15.4	30.9	46.0	36.7	36.3
Italy	16.4	31.4	43.8	:	31.2
Latvia	26.5	37.0	65.0	:	57.7
Lithuania	12.1	37.4	49.5	59.9	49.1
Malta	2.3	31.7	14.2	25.0	26.6
Netherlands	9.4	14.2	27.0	39.4	31.4
Poland	19.5	27.4	41.0	:	34.9
Portugal	20.9	34.4	43.4	50.4	41.8
Romania	29.1	49.1	:	55.2	42.9
Slovakia	13.5	31.5	48.5	54.3	41.1
Slovenia	12.9	25.8	39.3	47.9	31.4
Spain	17.6	36.1	52.2	50.6	42.1
Sweden	16.1	38.6	40.0	50.0	42.5
United Kingdom	15.9	31.2	46.1	46.1	41.2
Bulgaria	18.0	34.9	:	52.4	43.8
Iceland	15.1	29.9	53.0	:	33.8
Israel	10.6	21.6	33.6	44.7	24.6
Norway	15.7	28.2	45.5	48.8	37.6
Switzerland	16.5	23.3	33.8	41.3	30.8
Turkey	25.5	27.4	40.5	41.6	35.7

Source: WIS database DG Research, EU-25 calculated by DG Research
 Exceptions to the reference year: TR: 2000; FR: 2001; AT: 2002; CY, NO, PT: 2003
 FTE instead of HC: NL, IL (2001)
 Data unavailable: IE, LU; Grade C unavailable: BG, FR, RO; Grade D unavailable:
 BG, FR, IT, LV, IS, PL

BE-sum of BE-FL + BE-FR
 Data estimated: SI
 Data are not necessarily comparable between countries due to differences in
 coverage and definitions

scientific boards goes down to 7% (Poland and Cyprus). This is also a result of the lack of women in higher positions, since the boards are mostly comprised of Grade A researchers. But the lack of women in scientific boards perpetuates gender-biased research. Since academia is more accessible to men than to women, the outcome of research takes into account different needs and perspectives. This by no means goes to say that women and men have different interests and perspectives by nature, which can only be represented by people of the same sex. But it means that the system of academia itself contains structural barriers which keep women away from the institutions.

Since we truly believe that women and men are equal, we have to dispose of the glass ceiling. This leads us to the question of the reasons behind it. As it was already mentioned, the idea of a typical ›male‹ and ›female‹ existence is the source of inequalities and discrimination. As long as we have different ideas on how a man shall behave and how a woman shall behave, we will always value this behaviour differently. In our society, male behaviour is connected with rational, efficient working methods and thinking, ›hard‹ working, competence and reliability. Women are connected to ›soft‹ skills, have a caring attitude towards other people, and tend to be emotional and more personal. Talking about the required competences for leading positions leads to the fact that women have to demonstrate their competencies much more often. Additionally, the usual representation of women in the media and advertising contributes significantly to the way we perceive a woman or man standing in front of us. The persistent stereotypes of men and women in society make it easy to diminish women. But these mechanisms are difficult to figure out, especially since they appear to the person in question not like a structural problem of society. They appear instead as a personal failure, when a woman tries to get a job in a high position and fails to do so. Only rarely do people state that they prefer to have a man in a certain position, which is connected to celebrity and influence. Mostly, we are not aware of those decisions, which are built upon a basic understanding of the stereotypes that already affect young children.⁴⁵

But the glass ceiling is a clear result of those processes. This leads to a situation where people are suppressed, if they do not fulfill society's expectations. Defined by their biological sex, men and women have different chances to reach specific positions, influence and social

⁴⁵ A good basis on the social construction of gender gives Judith Lorber: »Night to his day«—The social construction of gender (http://www.meac.org/Resources/ed_services/SG_WEB/SeeingGender/PDFs/SocialConstructionOfGender.pdf)

stability in their life. Therefore, equal participation is not only a matter of democracy, but is also needed to ensure that there are no longer structures which constantly keep specific people out of a system.

MECHANISMS

Since the glass ceiling effect is not the result of a lack of competence, skills or experiences, there must be other mechanisms at work which serve to exclude women from scientific life. The first female party leader in Norway, the professor and former minister Berit Ås, found out that, during meetings, she wasn't treated in the same way as men. When she was talking, men acted in a different way than another man was talking, and her suggestions weren't responded to in the same sense as men's. Her analysis resulted in a mapping of five different methods men used in order to gain power over women, and thereby diminishing them. She called them »Master suppression techniques«. These techniques are not only used in politics, they can be transferred to academia as well. As in politics, these techniques help to diminish a person and to keep that person down. These techniques are:⁴⁶

- Making a person invisible.
- Ridiculing someone.
- Withholding information.
- Double punishment: Whatever you are doing, it is the wrong thing.
- Heaping blame and putting to shame.

⁴⁶ »Master Suppression Techniques«; KILDEN (the Norwegian Information and Documentation Centre for Women's Studies and Gender Research), Norway (<http://www.women2top.net>)

12.4 MAKING A PERSON INVISIBLE

Some of the many different ways of making a person invisible are to whisper, look through papers and other similar ways of showing a lack of interest while someone is speaking. Other ways of neglecting people are to ignore someone's contribution and to repeat what someone just said without referring to that person and taking all the credit. Another way is when a chairperson at a meeting ›forgets‹ about suggestions, or when a question at a meeting remains unanswered. In a meeting or scientific discussion, it is pretty important that one's opinion is heard and referred to, either in a positive or negative way. A controversial discussion about a scientific topic helps all sides to bring up their topic and to improve the quality of their research. If a person is not heard, the thoughts and ideas are not kept in academic discourse. This self-referential system of citations and ›knowing someone‹, significantly decreases the chance towards positions and participation.

RIDICULING SOMEONE

Making someone look ridiculous can both happen behind someone's back as well as in front of a person. To make fun of proposals or to diminish people by saying things like »don't you have a sense of humour« are other ways of ridiculing as well as of reducing someone to a sexual object, or to someone of less importance because (s)he is ›only a student‹, rather than an intellectual person. If someone is ridiculed in an academic environment, especially by a supervisor or a higher graduate, this can have a significant impact on the conviction of that person about her/himself. It has also a big impact on how other people taking part in that conversation perceive the ridiculed person. Not taking a researcher seriously is one of the worst things that can happen in academia, as encouraging and enabling people to contribute to ›scientific truth‹ is a key factor in further success.

WITHHOLDING INFORMATION

To be able to participate in a decision, it's really important that everybody gets access to the same information. People without the right contacts or the possibility to join are then left far behind. For research, it is extremely important that work is up-to-date in terms of academic discussions. Information about research is therefore one of the most important things that a researcher needs. Bearing in mind the hierarchical nature of the academic system, this information usually needs to come from the person who is giving the grades and who is also the more experienced. How much information is given to a student or a PhD candidate, and to what extent that person is perceived as ›worth‹ the information to might highly depend upon the perception of that person.

DOUBLE PUNISHMENT: WHATEVER YOU ARE DOING, IT IS THE WRONG THING

Whatever you do is wrong! For example, if you're quiet during a meeting, you're seen as not interested in what's going on, and if you're talkative you're seen as taking over others. If women don't grab power, they're portrayed as wimps, but when they grab power they're regarded as unfeminine. Gender-segregated work and family situations often bring women into a situation where they have to take care of their children and do their work at the same time. No matter what they do, they are accused of not doing their part properly.

HEAPING BLAME AND PUTTING TO SHAME

When saying to someone that they have to blame themselves for something that has happened, this person obviously feels diminished. Sexual harassment towards a woman can also be seen as her own fault, since she's so pretty. Not to take someone seriously by judging their appearance is another way of achieving the same result.

In the area of science, this can be seen in the following example: If a woman is ridiculed in a discussion or at a conference based on the abovementioned stereotypes, she might be accused of not being prepared properly in advance.

12.5 CONCLUSION

The glass ceiling effect is, in the first instance, the result of gender stereotypes that affect both men and women. Since work and stereotypes, connected to a ›typical man‹ are valued more highly in society, the glass ceiling keeps women out of positions with higher influence and recognition. The mechanisms and procedures that lead to this are manifold and very subtle. Therefore, it is very difficult to make them visible and to point them out. The glass ceiling is an invisible barrier which is usually perceived as a personal problem. The only way to overcome it is to work constantly on the visibility of its procedures and mechanisms.

Even though women make up more than 50% of those starting out in higher education, they remain few and far between in senior positions. Academia was once built by men for men. In most cases, it still remains a place for healthy, middle class men.

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BACK TO THE STONE AGE—GENDER STEREOTYPES AND THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

By Angelika Striedinger, Committee of Commodification of Education of ESU 2005/2007

The criticism of German TV host and author Eva Hermann's book *The Eve Principle* was more than legitimate: The »grace of the God-given division« of labour between men and women is still too »otherworldly« for many. Still, Eva Hermann is not the only one trying to legitimate current gender relations with arguments relating to the Stone Age and the fairy tale of the hunting man and the berry-collecting woman. She doesn't only find soul mates in beer-pub conversations, but also in well-established intellectuals, who again and again find »proof« of the »natural« differences between men and women in »scientific« research.

The Harvard professor Louanne Brizendine explains the female brain as being steered by the need to love and by hormones. And the English psychologist Simon Baren-Cohen is the proud inventor of the E- and the S-brain: E as in emotions, S like systems—it's not so hard to guess which brain he assigns to which gender. A study of Shaywitz from 1995 wants to show how male and female brains process language differently: According to the study, women use both brain halves simultaneously, while men mainly use one brain half at a time. The conclusion: Women are better in holistic thinking, men can focus better. Already, however, on a methodological level, this

study has been strongly criticised as unscientific, and although the results are based on a sample of only 19 women, it is up until now one of the most media-quoted studies in this field. Similar studies that could not see a gender difference are not only less interesting to the public—they are also not such good material in explaining why men and women are simply ›different‹.

Legitimizing gender inequality with theories from the Stone Age is easy and convincing. Ancient history serves as a point of reference for ›originality‹, taking other kinds of animal as a comparison and arguing that biological differences are useful in order to mark out the ›unchangeable‹ in nature. This strategy is not new, and it's been used for two centuries in order to justify hierarchical systems. Men are rational, women emotional. Lower classes are born with certain vices. Homosexuality is a brain irritation. Whites have bigger brains than blacks. On a societal level, those ›truths‹ already existed before they found proof in scientific studies. Even Darwin's theory on evolution mirrors the principles of modern society, with the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest as the key pillars of this theory. Power relations create theories about what is ›natural‹, and it is not a coincidence that those things that reflect the respective societal hierarchies are declared ›natural‹—or at least, those studies that find exactly this proof are much more widely disseminated, referred to and quoted.

There are also other studies that appear less in the media, like the results of a study at the British Columbia University about the effect of prejudice: Over 200 people were divided into three groups, each of those groups received different texts about the mathematical abilities of women. According to text 1, women are less talented at maths for biological reasons; text 2 explained the lack of women's maths talent of with a lack of encouragement and training. The third text stated that both genders have similar talents and abilities in maths. Afterwards, the participants were asked to solve maths tasks.

The women in the third group had significantly better results than their female colleagues from the first two groups.

Another piece of research found that the media stayed silent about evidence that stone age women did participate in hunts. Those who stayed at home were mainly children, old and lame people. But of course, if those findings were taught in schools, instead of the idyllic picture of hunting male heroes and caring female berry-collectors, a dream would be in danger. So science and research not only provide progress for society, but often actually enhance its stagnation or even regression. The mere virtue of being academic or scientific does not mean that any research, study or theory should be a dogma.

GENDER EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION—A DREAM OR A REAL POSSIBILITY?

By Milica Popovic, Executive Committee of European Students' Union

Today, when we enter a university of, for example, technology sciences, the first woman we would probably encounter would be the cleaning lady. If we go to our classes, the majority of the class would be male students listening to a male teacher talking about the new funds that the ICT field has just got yesterday approved by the male government. Afterwards, we would be listening to the funny comments of our teacher at the expense of the few 'better half' female students in the classroom—at the end of the day, it is true that there were only ten female students present out of the 100 in total. Later on in the day, for some administration issues we would be talking to the female administrative assistant but we'd have to wait for the male rector to sign our documents. Once we have got our diploma, we would get an amazing job (for which it takes us only twenty years to pay off our student loan) but as the field is very demanding, sometimes in the calm and lonely nights and although satisfied with our career, we would be envying our female friends in professions like nursing or teaching which leave them time to have a family. And when in our early 40s, we give birth to our lovely baby girl, after finally settling down in a less paid but more family-friendly position of assistant professor at the university (because the world of corporate institutes and science overwhelmed us with its working hours and very closed community), we just hope to ourselves that she will choose to study languages or arts.

Some might say the story above is too harsh, too biased. But after reading the analysis presented above, it unfortunately seems like the truth that we are facing nowadays.

On the other side of the coin, we have strong voices in Europe as part of the knowledge-based economy, along with the intensive promotion of research and development as the basis for economic growth. At the core of the developed knowledge-based society lies tertiary education, with the university as its main actor. We are in the age of the development of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area, with strong leaders of progress in the 21st century expected on the global level. If we wish to truly step into a new society that innovates and progresses with new educational concepts, one has to wonder whether this could actually be possible without challenging traditional gender roles. In the same way that at one time, gender equality discussions about women's position in the labour market were questioning the possibility of a flourishing labour market without making full use of the potential of all qualified people, the same questions might be asked of the higher education and research area. The lack of women in certain fields undoubtedly does influence the quality but also the quantity of scientific research. Gender-biased decisions on the funding of research topics does influence overall future research development and thus the overall future development as such. And this does not apply only to the old European continent, but to the whole world. Women are being undermined everywhere in terms of their ability to enter traditional male fields, to earn better wages for the same work, to objectively bring scientific conclusions and to participate in public life without having to deny themselves the right to a family.

In the current circumstances, the importance of tertiary education is growing. Tertiary education is critical for developing the skills, knowledge and expertise needed for the economic and social development of countries, but moreover. for the individual development and provision of opportunities for a more dignified and happier life of individuals. Within this context, it is crucial to further emphasise the

responsibility of academia for society. We often hear the usual clichés about »university being a driving force of progress in a society«, »academics, especially students, always being the most open minded society groups«, »world innovation is coming from universities« etc, as much as »universities as ivory towers«, »the conservative boys clubs within academia and research communities«, »women teach, men think«.

Gender equality brings an additional momentum to building an equal and just society. Growing awareness of the issues of gender inequality and discrimination mechanisms by default provides an incentive for further awareness raising on other discrimination issues, for example introducing the human rights approach to the world of academia. Certainly, we must not omit to take a comprehensive approach when solving the issues of discriminated groups and their inclusion in the ›elite‹ of the educated population, as all these issues are closely interconnected and could be resolved through numerous wider means.

Through taking a greater responsibility for the world's development, universities are certainly assuming a larger responsibility for the equity of that same world and the equality of its inhabitants.

And the tools for universities and HEI to take this step, which are small for them but significant for human kind, are already present. All the strategies, mechanisms and mainstreaming approaches are only waiting to be implemented. Academia needs to move from its inertia tendencies to a more serious commitment to the principles of gender equality. The importance of data collection, stated over and over again, is bridging the gap between the ignorance of knowledge. By acknowledging the problem and its urgency through transparent procedures, we can take positive action. Enlarging the pool of talent brings in a substantially broader point of view, with more sensitivity and respect for different perspectives—invaluable for any structure or organisation. The mobilisation of people and organisations to create gender equal universities and research communities in now taking place in a conducive political climate with strong commitment

from institutions at all levels—from the intergovernmental, through state and institutional ones.

So could we actually dare to imagine a different university in a different world?

Today, when we enter the university of, for example, technology sciences we will find staff that are equally distributed across both sexes. If we go to our classes, the class will be equally representative across the sexes, ethnic communities, religious communities and sexual orientation communities—with the whole diversity of the world reflected within. Students would be listening to a female or male teacher who is talking about the new funds that the ICT field has just had approved by the government, once again with the aim of creating of socially just societies. Later on in the day, for some administration issues we will resolve them with the help of the new technologies which are now being used by students across the country. Once we have got our diploma, we will get an amazing job (and thanks to public funding which has been put aside, we can invest in our quality of life, charity funds and provide some pro bono work for underdeveloped countries as we do not have any loans to pay off) but as the field is very demanding, sometimes in the calm of the evening and although satisfied with our career, we will have the luxury of contemplating changing jobs for the sake of personal development and curiosity. And when in our mid 30s, we give birth to our lovely child, after finally settling down to an equally paid and equally family friendly position of assistant professor at the university were we finished our studies (because the world of corporate institutes and science shares the same working hours and welcoming community as anywhere else)—we are happy to know that, no matter which gender our child will be, we can provide her/him with equal access to education, and that any field s/he decides to enter will reward him/her with equal pay for equal work, or work of same value. And thus a happy and a dignified life will ensue.

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Ligia Deca has recently obtained a Masters degree in Maritime and Port Management, after completing a Bachelor degree in Maritime Engineering. Her experience regarding educational policies started while being General Secretary of the National Alliance of Students' Organizations in Romania (ANOSR) from 2005–2006, and President of ANOSR from 2006–2007. She was a member of the Gender Equality Committee within ESU in 2008. Her professional experience includes working in the Quality Assurance field by being active as a consultant in the development of quality management systems in various institutions (HEI, public institutions and private companies) and by taking part in both internal and external institutional QA evaluations (such as the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme). She was also the coordinator of the Coalition for Clean Universities—a campaign aimed at fostering academic integrity and fighting corruption in the Romanian educational sector.

Pascal Hartmann is a student of Law at the University of Vienna and of Economics and International Business Administration at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration. He worked in the Office for International Affairs in the Austrian National Union of Students, followed by one year in ESU's Gender Equality Committee.

Vanja Ivosevic is a student at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb. She has been active in Croatian Student Union as the international officer and a vice-president. In 2003 she was elected to the Executive Committee of ESIB and in 2005 as the Chairperson. Since the end of her mandate in 2006, she was involved in several evaluations of Quality Assurance Agencies and Universities as a student expert on the international evaluation teams. Recently, she has been carrying out research in the field of higher education. Amongst others on Academic Malpractice with Magna Charta Observatory and ESU, Gender Perspective of Working and Employment Conditions of Academic Staff and the Gender perspective of teacher pension system

reforms in Europe for Education International, as well as a Comparative analysis of financing higher education in South East Europe with the Centre for Education Policy in Belgrade.

Alma Joensen is a member of ESU's Executive Committee, and a former member of ESU's Gender Equality Committee, where she was mainly responsible for the development and implementation of ESU's Gender Mainstreaming Strategy. She is studying Political Science and Gender Studies in the University of Iceland and currently is doing an exchange in the University of Copenhagen, focusing on Gender Research.

Maris Malzer is a student from Estonia. Maris is former vice chairperson of Federation of Estonian Student Unions (FESU) and member of European Students' Union Gender Equality Committee.

Milica Popovic holds a BA in Law from the University of Belgrade in Serbia, where she is currently also pursuing her Master degree in International Law. She has been active in the student movement in Serbia from 2001, where she mainly dealt with issues of students' rights and gender equality. In ESU, she has been elected member of the Gender Equality Committee 2006/2007 and member of Executive Committee 2007/2008. She has also been employed by ABA/CEELI and UNDP, mostly working on judicial reform and rule of law issues.

Angelika Striedinger is a student of Sociology at the University of Vienna. She worked for two years as Officer for International Affairs in the Austrian National Union of Students, followed by two years as Secretary General. In 2004, she was elected into ESU Committee on Commodification of Education where she was active until 2006.

Regina Weber is a student of political science and history at Potsdam University in Germany and a student of law at Fernuniversität Hagen. She has been a member of ESU's Gender Equality Committee 2006/2007. Besides that, she has been an Executive committee member of the German national union of students—FzS for two years, where she was also responsible for women and gender politics. She has been appointed to the German national Bologna Follow Up Group

for two years and currently is a member of the Register Committee for the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education.

16 ANNEX II: POLICY PAPER ON GENDER EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

16.1 INTRODUCTION

Today's situation in Higher Education is far away from an equal participation of women and men in the different stages of the higher education career. The distribution of power and financial means is not the same for women and men as well as the personal benefits that result out of the education. This is a direct result of the biased situation in society, which is has a lot of benefits reserved for men, but also due to the old structures and the atmosphere within the institutions of higher education. Higher education plays a key role in shaping society and building active citizens. A lot of the people who will take powerful roles in a society have a background in higher education. This implies that a gender equal higher education has also a very huge long term impact on the gender equality within the society. Therefore ESU fights for a gender equal environment in higher education that preserves equal chances for both women and men.

ESU stresses that gender inequalities are interrelated with other strands of discrimination. This results in multiple based discrimination and requires strategies to fight the existing exclusion. It is necessary that all participants of the higher education process are aware of structural discrimination in the society and are able to recognize this discrimination within their own behavior.

ESU sees an urgent need to improve the situation of women and men in academia. Both women and men are tackled by outdated gender stereotypes, which may force them into a behavior that does not

suit everybody. The choices of subjects, the expected jobs taken are often based on those stereotypes. The students who do not stick to the typical male or female behavior are likely to face unequal treatment and discrimination. The losers of the patriarchal academic system are still women. Even though they make a big number of the student population, they are rarely present in higher cycles and leading positions. Those women in higher positions earn less money and are often subject to discrimination. ESU sees the role of higher education also in creating equal opportunities for all people and therefore stresses the importance of affirmative action to overcome the actual gender based discrimination in higher education. Active measures are required in order to reach gender equality.

16.2 ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

Gender refers to the socially constructed attributes of being female or male, or of femininity and masculinity. Society has different concepts of a female and male gender, which influences the perception of how a person should behave and act. These concepts build up an ideology, which is reflected in regulations and structure in four spheres of life: (i) the family and household, (ii) the market, (iii) the community and (iv) the state.⁴⁷

The higher education sector, being a part of society is also influenced by the existing gender categories and stereotypes of the society. The power division of society between men and women is reflected in academia. Even though the academia perceives itself as progressive part of society, which is the key for innovations, the reality looks different.

In nearly all European countries the number of female and male students is more or less equal. In some countries, the number of

⁴⁷ Based on: IWRAP Asia Pacific. Building Capacity for Change: Training Manual on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of discrimination against Women (2001) Session 4.

women in tertiary education exceeds the number of men.⁴⁸ This contradicts with the enormous lack of women in leading positions of the higher education sector, the economy and within politics. Even though women are in many countries more and better educated than their male colleagues, they still do not reach high positions in society and for their life. Informal structures are resulting in a »glass ceiling« that is preventing women from reaching higher positions.

The choice of subjects in higher education is strongly connected to the gender of the students. Even though the number of female graduates in mathematics, science and technology has slightly increased during the last few years, mostly men enroll in such subjects.⁴⁹ On the other side more than 80% of the students in »education« and »health & welfare« are women. The level of doctorate students shows a very different picture. In some countries, the participation of women in this level decreases by nearly 30%.⁵⁰ As a result, women do not have access to higher positions in the same manner as men and therefore also have less access to money and powerful jobs.

Gender segregation can be found on all levels of higher education. It also comes with a very different face on the different levels. The gender stereotypes, which are present in society, create also a picture of a typical student in each subject, a typical doctoral student, a typical professor and a typical governor of an institution. These stereotypes may force those who want to be successful in higher education to act, think and behave in a specific way. People who do not stick to the rules are likely to face discrimination and have to fight more and stronger for equal results. This affects both men and women and has a negative impact on a lot of individuals. Mostly the stereotypes are to the benefit of the men. Hence higher education has a high impact on the future of a society, as research and development are a product of the thinking and acting of it. ESU stands for a higher education area,

⁴⁸ Europe in figures—Eurostat yearbook 2006–07, p. 92.

⁴⁹ Education and Culture DG: Key data on Education in Europe 2007, p. 168/9.

⁵⁰ Education and Culture DG: Key data on Education in Europe 2007, p. 50.

which is free of discrimination and unequal treatment. We therefore demand special attention to measures that overcome gender based discrimination.

16.3 STUDENTS WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

At first sight, there do not seem to be problems with gender inequality at the entrance of higher education. In a lot of countries, the number of females slightly exceeds the number of male students in the first cycle, which still can not be seen as a reason for neglecting gender inequalities or even thinking that this fact might lead to gender equality. The choice of the subjects is still motivated by gender stereotypes. Usually a pre-decision is already made in school. When children choose their subjects in secondary education they are influenced by what their teachers, family and friends think. Teachers and their behavior at school have impact on how girls and boys develop their interest in different subjects and disciplines. Teacher's education needs to focus on the construction and stereotyping of gender in schools, as teachers need to be aware of their own prejudices while accompanying their pupils. Gender specific thinking in families has to be taken into account when a decision about a further profession, a choice of a specific school/university or branch is taken. This can only be reached with good cooperation of students, parents and teachers.

Since different professions have not the same impact on the future personal situation, the expected income and positions, the choice of a subject is more than a choice of what books to read and what content to know about. The choice should be led by a genuine interest in the field. This is only possible if the future possibilities of women and men within a specific area are equal. This precondition will be eliminated when neither sex has to explain or justify the own choice of subjects. Thus, any sort of a concept of a ›traditional norm‹ with regards to choice of subjects for either sex is to be abolished. Advertis-

ing and information of programmes has to be reconsidered regarding their gender impact. Those presentations as well as the illustration of textbooks and the curricula need to have a clear strategy to break gender stereotypes and show unusual pictures of the academia.

Entrance exams tend to strengthen the effects described above. While students have to make a decision that leaves less space for experiences and testing without losses, entrance exams are a barrier to unusual decision about future studies. A woman who applies for an engineering programme in front of a male interview team of professors, and has to explain why she wants to become an engineer will face as many stereotypes as a man who applies for a kindergarten teacher's programme in front of mostly female kindergarten teachers. For both of them it is less likely to enter the programme than for their gender counterparts. Open access to higher education opens more possibilities for those who do not stick to the norm and the ideas of those who are already within higher education.

The question of financing is still a main aspect for the decision on taking a course or not. Tuition fees and a lack of finances keep young people away from higher education. Experiences of several countries have shown that the bad effects of loans and student debt are much stronger on women than on men. As women earn less money on average and expect much more often to leave their job for family reasons, they suffer much more from debt. Knowing about fees and the lack of financial support this can keep them away from higher education. Loans and interest results in higher financial burden for those who are leaving the job for family care—usually women. Therefore fees also have to be abolished for gender equality reasons. A sustainable financing of living costs is essential for a free decision of profession and subject from a gender perspective.

DURATION WITHIN THE INSTITUTION

Students in higher education institutions are very much dependent on the lecturers and teachers as they judge on the work done by the students through exams and grades. Those decisions shape the future of students very much. The presuming stereotypes of men and women are part of any judgment and teachers need to be aware of that fact. Professional education of teachers and professors must include gender awareness trainings to avoid unfair treatment of students based on gender. Examination situations are the best possibility for unequal treatment and judgment based on stereotypes. Institutions must ensure that their examination procedures assure that all students are treated equally. Performance appraisal needs to be transparent before the exam starts. Especially oral exams should be taken e.g. by two examiners, which are gender balanced, or including externals, in order to avoid gender bias and sexual harassment. Moreover, a legal framework has to be given, forbidding gender discrimination considering evaluations and decisions regarding study progress, access and selection within higher education. Efficient systems of complaint and appeal have to exist in order to fight encountered gender-based discrimination.

Teachers also play an important role as role models for students to take a scientific job or to proceed in the academic career. The aim of every institution must be reaching an equal relation between women and men in higher positions of the university to provide role models apart from the typical subject and job division. Thus, this also has to be a substantial aspect for the selection of experts, if they are included in the curricula.

Horizontal mobility has a strong gender specific aspect. While looking at the mobile students, a lot of countries have a bigger participation of female students abroad.⁵¹ This is also due to the gender specific choice of subjects that lead women more into subjects that are

⁵¹ Survey of the Socio-Economic Background of ERASMUS Students DG EAC 01/05, Technical Annexes of the final report, p. 17.

usually more mobile, such as language, social sciences and cultural science. But on the other hand, the access to mobility is more restricted for female students in other parts of the world. In some countries, women are even not allowed to study or they face huge discrimination. Women in subjects that focus on these countries and regions face disadvantages, when mobility becomes a key issue for the future job. Institutions need to ensure that institutional cooperation are equally open for all students and that the support and counseling of the institution is supporting students in countries where even no legal equality is given.

All over Europe, 5–10% of the students has children and has to combine the child care with their studies. In nearly all countries more women than man have children while they are studying. In a vast majority of the countries, there is no special financial support for students with children. A consistent financial support is needed for the additional expenses students with children have to pay. But childcare is not only a financial problem for students but also a problem of time and availability. Childcare has to be available for students' children during the time of classes. Flexible curricula are needed for parenting students to combine the unpredictability of childcare with their studies. Only good study conditions for student parents enable an equal division of the childcare between women and men.

EMPLOYABILITY AND SCIENTIFIC CAREER

Student employment is a part of everyday life in a lot of countries in Europe. As the general gender pay gap is constantly wide in all European countries, this is the same for student work.⁵² This increases the amount of work for female students or leaves them with less money. Students are often working within the institutions as tutors or student staff. At least here is a responsibility for the institution to give equal chances for women and men. Recruiting procedures should

⁵² European Commission, DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities: The gender pay gap—Origins and policy responses, July 2006.

stick to the aim of reaching an equal number of male and female student staff in the institution. This is extremely important in positions, where jobs as student staff give an opportunity for further employment in the institution and an academic career.

First figures show, that the access to master's level changes the relation between women and men in higher education. The »pyramid«, which is showing the decreasing participation of women in the academic career, gets an additional barrier through the three-cycle system. Sustainable data is crucial to find out reasons for this additional barrier and to implement measures against. Tuition fees also impact very negatively on gender equality. As fees suggest an investment in the own human capital, an unusual decision can among other things cause deep financial problems through not finding a job in a field where it is not usual to work in as a woman or a man. The gender pay gap increases the bad impact of student debt for women, as they have to pay back for a longer time and more money as their male colleagues.

Women should be encouraged to apply for research or professor positions within higher education. One way of reaching this goal would be to introduce temporary gender quotas for specific positions, in order to create gender-parity. It is crucial for the evolving of higher education that woman and men are given the opportunity to engage and be successful in every field of study and every discipline, to overcome the persisting horizontal and vertical segregation.

16.4 GENDER KNOWLEDGE IN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Gender specific knowledge should be integrated in the curricula in all subjects. While social science is often dealing with gender studies in their field, natural science, engineering and economics lack this content in their programmes. Curricula need to be revised based on the fact, that the academic society is male dominated and often forgets

women and their contributions in history, which leads to the perception of a constant and even historical lack of role models. Such a perception may lead to the belief of female of not being suited for these fields. The beliefs and ideologies, which have been excluding women from participating in higher education, have resulted in a view of science and education, excluding the bodies, lives and experiences of women from being a suitable subject for research and education. In the case that such societal perceptions still persist, action should be taken to overcome them.

Gender specific knowledge cannot be outsourced in specific lectures on »gender« but has to be integrated into the average courses and seminars. The definition of employability must include awareness regarding gender stereotypes and gender based discrimination. When curricula include soft skills, gender knowledge has to be a part of those competences.

The basis for gender knowledge in the curricula is research on related fields. Without a sustainable financing of gender related research, the necessary scientific background cannot be provided. It is essential, that gender related research is funded and given a priority in the institution. Also the research teams must head for an equal participation of women and men. Researchers are role models for students and play an important role in breaking gender stereotypes.

16.5 HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE

Gender inequalities do not only come up among students and within curricula, but also in institutional governance. Most governance structures are male dominated, only a very few female rectors or presidents exist all over Europe. This is first of all mostly caused by the lack of women among professors, which is often a requirement for the rector's or president's position.⁵³ The equal participation of women and men is needed in a democratic institution. Therefore ESU stresses

53 European Commission, DG for Research: She-Figures 2006.

that the legislation shall aim to reach an equal participation of men and women in the decision making of higher education. Also the institution itself has to support the participation of the underrepresented gender in all decisions. This usually affects women in the overall decision making as well as men in participating in gender politics and formal gender structures.

Quality Assurance can ensure, that the institution fulfills specific criteria regarding gender equality itself. As a good system of Quality Assurance has to come along with more transparency and includes continuous possibilities to reform, it also gives great opportunity to increase Gender Equality in Higher Education. Gender Equality should be an overall aim of the institution as well as the institution should have concrete measures and structures in place that help reaching that goal. If internal structures and measures for Quality Assurance exist, they should be supervised from a gender specific perspective. If there is any body responsible for Gender Equality in the institution, it should be involved in the Quality Assurance process.

A Gender Mainstreaming Strategy needs to be evolved in each institution. Such a strategy must cover all parts of the higher education institution, including education, research and government. The institution needs to allocate financial means and a structure, which ensures long term measures and monitors the impact of tools and gender equality work.

16.6 CONCLUSIONS

ESU stresses the importance of an overall gender mainstreaming strategy for the higher education sector. The strategy needs to include specific aspects to be useful:

- 1 Analyzing the present situation of gender differences in all areas of the higher education institution

- 2 A continuous way of collecting the relevant data to monitor the impact of the strategy and its measures
- 3 Clear and well-defined responsibilities for the execution of the strategy and a mandate and power for the responsible people that allows the execution
- 4 Transparent decision making procedures both for the strategy itself and for the higher education institution
- 5 Financial support for the execution of the strategy, that assures an implementation of all measures including the monitoring and follow up process
- 6 Student participation on all levels of the strategy as well as a gender balance among the responsible actors while developing and implementing the strategy

The need of gender mainstreaming needs to be formulated on the institutional level as well as on the national level and the European level. It needs to be extended to the international level in the future. A strategy for gender equality in higher education may not be reduced to the higher education sector. Same action needs to be taken in vocational and professional training and within primary and secondary education.

ESU states that gender inequalities continue to primarily disadvantage women. The fact that women are outnumbering men in some parts of the educational sector has not yet changed that. The power division between men and women remains beneficial for men; women suffer much more from the discrimination that occurs to both genders. Therefore ESU stresses, that gender equality mechanisms mostly means to implement affirmative action to support women. Nevertheless, the gender stereotypes need to be dismantled, as they are the principle reason for inequality, prejudices and discrimination.

Any gender mainstreaming strategy needs to be connected to a wider concept of anti-discrimination work. Gender and other strands of discrimination are mutually interconnected, which needs to be reflected in the actions taken.

