D3.6 Methodological framework for QCA-based research

Jörg Müller (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)

Authors & contributors name and organisation	Role
Jörg Müller, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya	Lead author
Rachel Palmén, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya	Contributor
Lorena Pajares Pajares Sánchez, Notus	Contributor
Maria Caprile, Notus	Contributor
Yvonne Benschop, Radboud University	Quality assurance editor

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Executive Summary

This document provides the methodological guidance for carrying out Task 3.3. of assessing impact drivers for Gender Equality Plans, using Qualitative Comparative Analysis. Overall 35 case studies will be carried out, distributed in two waves by 5 Consortium partners.

The deliverable includes a short conceptual framework regarding the identified hindering and facilitating factors that condition the impact of Gender Equality Plans. Different sources of the scientific literature from the US and Europe converge on the importance of for example senior management support, clear targets and objectives, availability of data, the importance of competence development, or the importance of bottom-up, stakeholder buy in among other factors. Although the literature agrees on the list of impact drivers to a large degree, the relative importance and interplay among each other and with other factors remains unclear.

This methodological framework uses a case study research design to capture differences and similarities between gender equality interventions and their impact on gender equality in research performing organisations. The research approach builds explicitly on the fact that similar GEP interventions can produce quite diverging outcomes and impact, depending on the specific combination of interventions and the historical and site-specific context of the organisation. GEP impact is conceived as a product of multiple programme-specific, organisational and wider contextual (e.g., national legislation) factors interacting in a non-linear way. Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) is used as a specific method to unlock the complex interaction among several factors that condition GEP impact.

Fieldwork is divided in two waves, comprising a first wave to carry out 15 in-depth case studies, followed by a second wave of 20 light-weight case studies. These two waves are not only carried out one after the other but also follow a methodological distinction: while the 1st wave of case studies is geared towards in-depth exploration of implemented measures and existing/emerging GEP impact drivers, the 2nd wave of light-weight cases studies will use Qualitative Comparative Analysis for systematic comparison across cases. We therefore build our evidence base on key GEP impact drivers as we advance from bottom-up *within-case* analysis towards top-down, comparative *cross-case analysis* during the second wave.

For in-depth case studies, a program evaluation approach will be used, focusing on specific GEP interventions. The results of the first-wave case studies will provide the necessary definitions, calibration and anchors for "sets" used during the second-wave case studies. These sets provide the foundation for carrying out a systematic analysis, using QCA truth-tables.

In addition to a broader conceptual sketch and overall methodological approach, this document provides guidance on case definition and selection, sampling of interview partners, detailed interview guidelines, contacting templates and a minimal codebook for codification of collected documents and interview transcripts. Section 5 also outlines the main analytical topics to be addressed in each individual case study report.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

Gender equality in R&I has been addressed in many countries in the EU but change has neither been uniform nor sufficient. Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)[1] are among the policy instruments strongly promoted by the EC, either via structural change projects or more recently via making GEPs an eligibility criterion for Horizon Europe funding. Nevertheless, despite the importance of GEPs for EU level policy making in R&I, there is to date a lack of systematic studies that scrutinize the interplay of facilitating factors of GEP implementation and impact.

So far, we have achieved a solid understanding of the problem: a substantial literature has documented and is continuously providing further evidence on gender inequalities in R&I. This includes the periodically updated She Figures (European Commission 2021b) which document the persistent horizontal and vertical segregation or the lack of women in leadership and decision-making positions across the EU countries. We also have a fairly solid understanding of the diverse factors that contribute at the individual (Stoet and Geary 2018), team (van Knippenberg and Mell 2016; Salas, Reyes, and McDaniel 2018), organisational (Amis, Mair, and Munir 2019) and wider national (Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences 2019) level to the reproduction of gender inequalities in academia. Implicit bias, higher care burden, sexual harassment (Cortina and Areguin 2021), access to networks (Woehler et al. 2021), masculine work cultures (Belghiti-Mahut et al. 2013; Collinson and Hearn 1996), gendered notions of excellence (Jong, Franssen, and Pinfield 2022), or the role of status in interaction (Ridgeway 2007) are but some of the factors that have been identified by research. Good overviews on gender inequalities are also available by the National Academies Press in the US: *Promising Practices for Addressing the Underrepresentation of Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine* (National Academies of Sciences 2020) and *Advancing Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in STEMM Organizations* (Barabino et al. 2023).

This work on the scope and causes of gender inequality in academia has been accompanied by the development and implementation of corresponding policy measures, moving from "fixing the women", to "fixing the structures" and "fixing the knowledge". The available set of policy interventions has been well documented (EIGE 2016; Kalpazidou Schmidt and Cacace 2017) and categorized. For example, the Horizon Europe eligibility criterion establishes five overarching recommended thematic areas that GEPs should address, including work-life balance and organisational culture, gender balance in leadership and decision making, gender equality in recruitment and career progression, the integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content, and policy measures against gender-based violence. Some publications have started to discuss the effectiveness of these interventions. For example, the effectiveness of implicit bias training interventions is far from clear (Atewologun, Cornish, and Tresh 2018). Although implicit bias is consistently highlighted as a key factor for the perpetuation of gender inequality in academic, the corresponding implicit bias training sessions deployed as part of most GEP have been shown to produce mixed results at best or be outright counter-productive at worst (Bohnet 2016; Dobbin and Kalev 2016). Overall, as Dobin and Kaley (2016) maintain for the corporate sector, progress towards gender equality has been

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[1] A Gender Equality Plan is a set of commitments and actions that aim to promote gender equality in an organisation through a process of structural change (European Commission 2021a).

slow in part because the wrong actions - grievance procedures, hiring tests, diversity training, performance ratings - have been deployed. In contrast, engaging managers in problem ownership, exposure to diverse (colleagues) at the workplace, and encouraging social accountability for change has been shown to effect change (Dobbin and Kalev 2022). Others have analysed in a similar fashion the effects of specific interventions, including the burden of gender equality certification schemes (Tzanakou 2019) or more recently the effects of interventions against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment[2].

The analysis of which policy interventions can make a difference has been further complemented by an account of which organisational level factors need to be in place to achieve impact. As abstract policies alone won't change organisations, the question which hindering and facilitating factors condition their success comes centre stage. EIGE's GEAR Tool starts to answer this question by naming several "impact drivers" (EIGE, 2016) which are less concerned with the thematic content of GEP actions rather than the organisational factors that condition the effectiveness of any type of action. For example, senior management support has been identified as a necessary condition for the implementation of a GEP, as it provides legitimacy, reduces resistance, or facilitates stakeholder buy-in (EIGE 2016:28). Similar, the availability of resources has been highlighted as an important impact driver, as the best thought-through GEP will not dent any organisational procedures if lacking sufficient resources for its implementation. As section 2 will show in more detail, summarising the experiences of structural change projects in the US as well as the EU have come to a similar set of hindering and facilitating factors. However, relatively little is known how these factors interact and combine with each other, and how these combinations affect the overall impact achieved. Under ideal circumstances, we can assume that "the more the better": each "driver" is equally important and contributes an equal amount (fixed net-effect) to the overall outcome of interest. The fact that factors might contribute differently to a common goal or depend upon the existence and interaction with other impact drivers and the wider context has not been sufficiently addressed (van den Brink and Benschop 2012). Similar, the timing of impact factors – at which stage of the GEP lifecycle a specific factor is most needed – is a topic which has not received sufficient attention so far.

A more complex understanding of the relative importance of different impact drivers and how they operate and interact with other factors is thus currently missing from the literature. Such a more complex approach, however, is closer to the reality encountered in many organisations where not all impact factors can be satisfied to an equal degree. Lack of resources, knowledge, and skills, turn-over, resistances, diverse agendas and non-overlapping schedules and timings within institutions make it the exception rather than the rule that the complete set of impact drivers can be equally addressed simultaneously. Under such conditions, insights for prioritizing factors or finding combinations of factors that proof resilient and highly effective are needed.

The reason for why we know so little about the actual effectiveness of impact drivers for gender equality has to do with the highly context-sensitive nature of policy implementation and the lack of adequate research methods to capture variation and persistence across many cases. When writing about the experience of the ADVANCE programme in the US, Laursen and

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[2] See results of the UniSafe project https://unisafe-gbv.eu/

Austin (2020) insist that ready-made recipes for change have little chance of succeeding. Rather, institutional transformation projects need to design interventions that respond to the specific needs of the organisation in its wider context (see also Ní Laoire et al. 2021). However, as institutions differ, the content of their GEPs and their impact drivers are also likely to differ. Consequently, the persistent gap between policy and practice makes it difficult to understand which actions work best under which specific conditions. Comparative case studies to build the knowledge-based of what works across institutions could be a solution: "A systematic approach to developing case studies of mature change projects would also be useful in cross-institutional discussions and exchanges of experience and knowledge" (Laursen & Austin 2020:220). While cross-case comparisons have been carried out for example in the framework of the Efforti project or the ADVANCE context, these remain largely descriptive and additive, capturing insufficiently the complex configurations at play: impact drivers are treated as equally important while possible interactions among these factors (configurations) are not analysed.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis is proposed as a step forward to the methodological challenge of addressing the complex interplay of several factors for achieving GEP impact. As Ioana writes, QCA's "core motivation is to account for the complex interplay of different factors in bringing about the outcome of interest" (Oana, Schneider, and Thomann 2021:6). It allows us to understand better how specific GEP interventions and impact drivers interact to achieve certain outcomes (or not). Hill et al., (2019) describe this in relation to the comparative study of policies:

> The translation and scale-up of evidence-based programs require new methods to guide implementation decisions across varying contexts. As programs are translated to real-world settings, variability is introduced. Some program components may have minor roles to play in producing positive outcomes, and some may have major roles, but only if adapted to meet different contextual demands. While some sources of variability are likely to improve program outcomes, we currently lack methods that allow us to determine the critical components or combinations of components that serve as causal pathways to a desired outcome and then to advise practitioners accordingly. (Hill, Cooper, and Parker 2019)

In summary, the primary aim of T3.3. is on the complex interplay between hindering and facilitating factors for GEP impact. This targets primarily the organisational factors during GEP implementation, and secondarily the content of these actions. Thus, we do not aim to further document existing gender inequalities. We also do not primarily intend to further map and document the set of gender equality interventions (their content) that are implemented across different organisations in Europe. Rather, the focus is on GEP impact as an outcome determined by organisation level impact drivers in the first place, and adequately selected actions (e.g., bias training) in the second place[3]. Research carried out via the case studies therefore should generate new knowledge regarding the interplay between impact drivers while adding to our existing knowledge on the relative effectiveness of different policy interventions for change.

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[3] Although our first wave of case studies will contemplate a temporal dimension of GEP implementation in research performing organisations, this will not be specifically addressed in the QCA. A trajectory-based Qualitative Comparative Analysis (Pagliarin and Gerrits 2020) is an option for future studies but too complex to apply at the cross-European level as foreseen in the context of INSPIRE.

The methodological framework presented in this document is rather long. This has several reasons: first, section 2 summarises the main conceptual ideas regarding impact drivers. It provides the conceptual foundations which guide our fieldwork and research questions. Second, since QCA is a new method used in the Consortium, some basic notions are introduced in this document. Third, the design of the research is itself rather complex as we distribute a total of 35 case studies in two waves with different methodological orientations. The fact that case studies will be carried out in a distributed manner between 5 partners further adds to its length as rather detailed instructions are provided for interview guidelines or the analytical process.

2 Conceptual Framework: GEP Impact

In what follows we briefly summarise the existing knowledge on sustaining organisational change, focusing on the organisational level facilitating and hindering factors. As it will become apparent, it thereby complements the insights emerging from the literature review carried out in WP2. For instance, lessons learned from the design and implementation of gender equality policies point out that policies need to be tailormade to specific contexts. Responsibility, transparency, monitoring, evaluation and accountability are further key elements of policy design. To address change in different levels there is a need to: 1) increase the representation of marginalized groups in knowledge production, 2) implement realistic, concrete, and time-bound actions, 3) foster cohesion and coalitions across different levels and 4) prioritize care as a core value. Furthermore, this study points to the relevance of communities of change to support equality interventions and change agents and drive sustainable change forward. As the following paragraphs will show, these and other factors need to be aligned and integrated into T3.3. and the case study design.

2.1 Definitions of GEP impact / success / failure

Carrying out a systematic cross-case analysis with QCA requires the definition of an outcome set. As we are interested in the configurations of factors that condition GEP "success", we need to define how we understand "success" and "failure". Achieving such a definition is not an easy task which contributes to the slow progress for achieving equality:

> "A major stumbling block for the translation of this information on inequality into a concerted effort to achieve equality is the absence of a clear definition of equality. There is an insufficient and incomplete vision of how to define equality in organizations." (Woods, Benschop, and van den Brink 2022)

Building upon available definitions - such as the one put forward by Woods et al. (2022) who defined "intersectional equality" as the equal distribution of advantages and disadvantages among individuals in four dimensions (procedural, discursive, material, and affective) - the research process carried out in T3.3. aims to contribute to such a definition based upon the fieldwork carried out. What might constitute a "successful" or a "failed" GEP or intervention will be part of the interviews and analytical report, especially during the first wave of case studies. Having a better understanding of what "success" looks like is also important from a monitoring and evaluation perspective. Laursen and Austin (2020) describe this need in the context of the ADVANCE programme:

> For example, the ADVANCE community may want to join together in asking what "success" may mean. What are appropriate and reasonable criteria for short-term success at the institutional level (within five-year time frames, for example), and what are useful indicators of longer-term institutional change? (Laursen & Austin 2020:219)

A definition of GEP success, including its associated measurement and indicators will be required as a preparatory step in setting up the QCA analysis as we move from the first to the

second wave of case studies. The important point to note from the outset is that definitions of success / failure and their measurement are not confined to either quantitative or qualitative indicators, and are not constraint to either formal structure and outputs.

2.2 Key organisational enabling and hindering factors

A good starting point to formulate our research questions on hindering and facilitating factors for organisational change is certainly the report on *Structural Change in Research Institutions* (European Commission 2011) which highlighted the importance of three elements: "knowing the institution", "securing top-level support" and "generating effective management practices" for structural change. Building upon the initial structural change report, EIGE has expanded both the recommended policy measures as well as the impact drivers in its GEAR tool (EIGE 2016). Basic requirements and success factors include:

- Senior management support
- A well-equipped and well-located gender equality body
- Cooperation among different categories of stakeholders
- Embedding into existing structures and management procedures
- Stakeholder involvement in planning and implementation
- Clear targets and objectives
- Flexibility and resilience
- Availability of sex-disaggregated data
- Competence development
- Evaluation

The report also lists separately a list of hindering factors and obstacles and how to address them. These include:

- Resistance (individual, organisational, implicit, explicit)
- Lack of understanding of gender equality and/or a GEP
- Conviction that commitment to merit and/or excellence negates the need for gender equality work and/ or GEPs
- Perception that gender equality work is not required, or denial
- Lack of autonomy of research organisations and higher education
- Lack of sufficient, regularly available resources: human and financial
- Lack of institutional or organisational authority
- Lack of relevant data and statistics
- Not engaging potential key allies and/or actors early in the GEP process
- Absence of a historical background in gender studies within an organisation
- Ensuring the sustainability and resilience of gains related to gender equality

The *Gender Equality Impact Drive*rs model (Mergaert, Cacace, and Linková 2022) develops these categories further, reorganising and merging facilitating and hindering factors into more

abstract concepts. It lists overall 12 dimensions and proposes a set of indicators for each to enable organisations to assess how well they comply with each dimension:

- core team of change agents
- capacity/skills of the change agents for driving institutional change
- leadership actively committed to gender equality / gender mainstreaming
- availability of resources
- data collection and statistical analysis
- involvement of internal stakeholders
- involvement of external stakeholders and experts
- coverage of the different dimensions / areas of gender equality institutional change
- transparency and accountability
- institutional policy making based on a robust understanding of gender equality
- organisational culture
- organisational governance

These impact drivers which have been synthesized across many EC funded structural change projects concur in turn with the facilitating and hindering factors identified in the Efforti case studies (Palmén and Kalpazidou Schmidt 2019).[4]

- governance framework
- top-management commitment
- bottom-up: participation and buy-in
- framing synergies with other initiatives
- resistances and strategies for tackling resistances
- resources
- sustainability of actions
- gender competence, experience, and knowledge
- transparency, targets, standards, and monitoring
- lack of accessible data and information for implementing the intervention

Differences between these two sets of impact drivers exist on the level of emphasis rather than on a substantial level. While the latter incorporates a dedicated item on "resistance" for example, the issue on how to deal with resistance is subsumed under the capacity/skills of the change agents in the Impact Driver model. Other important issues might be implied in certain facilitating factors but are not spelled out explicitly, such as for example the importance of "engaging men" (Anicha et al. 2017; Benschop and Van Den Brink 2018), the "affective dimensions" of incremental, organisational change (Gherardi 2012), or the effects of "critical mass" (Kanter 1977; King et al. 2010).

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[4] The Efforti comparative case study report D4.2 mentions in addition "Promoted as Equal Opportunities or Positive Discrimination" and "Attitudes: interest and motivation to participate".

The European experiences overlap as well to a large degree with the emerging insights from the US and the ADVANCE programme (DeAro, Bird, and Mitchell Ryan 2019). Laursen and Austin (2020) summarise not only their own experience of participating in institutional transformation projects but also their knowledge gained through evaluating other projects in the ADVANCE framework. The main factors they identify are:

- Taking a systemic and strategic approach to transformation
    - Identifying and framing the problem: understanding what problem(s) should be addressed by the change process
    - Analyse context: identifying the specific institutional problems to be addressed, considering historic, geographic and other specificities of the organisation.
    - Choosing comprehensive and complementary strategies and interventions. Interventions should be mutually reinforcing and complementary, addressing the structural, human resources, political, and symbolic levels of the organisation (Bolman and Deal 2017).
    - Three main anchoring strategies for change: implicit bias training, strengthen institutional leadership especially at the middle and higher levels, improve organisational/department climate.
- Key factors during the implementation process
    - Ensuring the involvement of committed leaders; composition of leadership teams
    - Getting started (take small steps) and maintaining persistence (managing expectations, changes take time)
    - Establishing buy-in, identifying allies, and communicating effectively
    - Tracking, monitoring, evaluating the change outcomes and processes to steer implementation process

Individual publications coming from organisations funded in the ADVANCE framework support the findings of Laursen & Austin (2020) while providing further details. Mcquillan and Hernandez (2021) for example, emphasize the importance of making cultural change part of the institutional transformation process (similar Anicha et al. 2017). This is crucial to avoid idealising the "measurable numeric effects of targeted interventions" (ibid., 302) at the cost of neglecting the broader picture of (monitoring) cultural change. In addition to their critical reflections regarding the definition of "success" and "impact" in terms of numerical representation, the authors also highlight the doubled edged role of equality offices. Although consistently highlighted as a crucial success factor, these equality offices were not sustainable: "When the NSF funding ended, so did the office and staff" (ibid., 315), missing the opportunity to mainstream equality procedures into existing organisational decision making or administrative processes. In contrast, unexpected impact drivers concern faculty who has been involved in previous ADVANCE projects and that make their commitment and insights into gender equality part of their practice as they reach leadership and decision-making positions. A track record of participation in institutional transformation projects becomes here a valuable indicator of top-management committed *and* capacity for driving change.

The insights gained from ADVANCE in the US and Athena SWAN in the UK have been summarized by Rosser et al. (2019). Rather than a new approach, this publication changes the emphasis for some identified factors. The authors focus primarily on collecting high quality

data, the role of different forms of leadership including the involvement of men, and caution about the difficulties to remove negative policies once in place. Both, the ADVANCE programmes as well as the ATHENA SWAN certification also face new challenges in terms of incorporating an intersectional perspective.

Among the few publications that specifically highlight the challenges of institutional change from an *intersectional* perspective is the publication by Armstrong and Jovanovic (2017). They identify 5 "intersectional facilitators" to support underrepresented minority women in science which include (a) establishing accountable leadership, (b) promoting community structures, (c) overcoming epistemological hurdles, (d) understanding the (N)umbers game, and (e) identifying climate zones. While the first three factors overlap with the impact drivers identified so far, the latter two are more specific from an intersectional perspective. To identify climate zones requires to create an awareness "that every institution has multiple climates that may require different strategies for intervention and change." Creating this awareness might be a problem as change agents are often dealing with "small N", i.e. that only a small number of individuals are concerned. However, this should not be seen as "a signal to give up, but rather a sign of particular challenges that require certain actions".

The main difference between Laursen & Austin (2020) and the EU-based impact drivers is the emphasis on the design versus the implementation phase of GEPs. Whereas the former goes into some detail on how to design a solid GEP by taking a "systematic and strategic approach to transformation", the EU-based literature capture mostly the key (organisational) factors during the implementation phase of the GEP. However, both strands of the literature operate in parallel to some of the wider perspectives available in organisational research, such as the importance of "organisational learning" or capitalising on "organisational discourse" (Maria, Angeli, and Eleftherakis 2023).

- First, the perspective of "organisational learning" provides a slightly more encompassing approach to a key factor for change touching upon the role of individuals in relation to long-term change. Institutional turn-over[5], especially of administrative and equality staff and hence a short-term institutional memory, has been described as a limiting factor for institutional change (Mcquillan and Hernandez 2021). Harris (2017) shows that group dynamics, partial knowledge or biased reporting standards can contribute to ineffective organisational learning. Communities of Practice on the other hand have been identified as a positive lever for turning individual into collective learning that affects institutional memory via the integration of new organisational practices and processes (Gherardi 2009; Palmén and Müller 2022). The emphasis on pursuing a "reflexive approach" (Wroblewski 2015; Wroblewski and Palmén 2022) for gender equality contributes further to this perspective on organisational learning by highlighting that GEP design and implementation cannot rely on ready-made recipes but needs to plan ahead by looking (monitoring) back.

- Second, GEPs and the individual interventions therein contained can draw upon more or less transformative concepts of gender, social justice, equality. This includes on a very basic level to frame equality from a moral perspective or as a business case. As Maria et al. (2023) suggest, the framing of gender equality as a business case mostly

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[5] See also Case study 1 Case Western Reserve University in Laursen and Austin (2020:182)

hinders the effectiveness of the policies as it promotes a double agenda which leaves the underlying power-structures untouched. Similar, measures that simply frame gender equality as primarily a women's issue that needs to be "fixed" through skills training have been criticised extensively for neglecting the transformation of gender organisational structures[6]. Framing inequality in organisations from an intersectional perspective is certainly a further element to be considered at the basic design/conceptual level of a GEP. As Barbera, Espinosa-Fajardo, and Caravantes (2022) argue in the case of implementing intersectional polices in the Madrid city council, diverging interpretations of what "intersectionality" means was an important obstacle to its wider adoption and successful implementation. Most impact drivers so far have been analysed in structural change projects with a focus on gender inequality. Are these valid for institutional transformation targeting race (Barabino et al. 2023; Ray 2019), disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and other dimensions of social discrimination? Overall, the way a GEP takes into account recent developments and existing evidence regarding understandings of gender, intersectionality (defined, for example as within-group variety among a target group), institutional transformation needs to be considered as one element among many success factors.

- A third and related impact driver to be considered concerns the relative absence of conceiving change processes in terms of a clear-cut struggle for power. Some of these concerns can be read in-between the lines about "resistance", "stakeholder" involvement, or "capacities of change agents", but none of the impact driver models reflect more carefully on the role of power in its relation to organisational change. An omission which is also striking when it comes to gender-based violence. Different forms of violence are key for the perpetuation of power structures and are directly linked to the symbolic dimension of institutional change. The literature has captured to some degree the issue as when gender- and race equality concerns become a bureaucratic exercise to "tick the box" without engendering real change within institutions (Ahmed 2007; Davis, Kingsbury, and Merry 2010; Garforth and Kerr 2009). Tzanakou and Pearce (2019) show how the participation in certification programmes of gender equality can penalize women who should be their primary beneficiaries. Others speak of "secondary institutionalization" (Larreche and Ulloa 2018) or "institutionalization in dispute" (Ruiz Bravo and Pizzaro 2022) as when gender equality interventions have been institutionalized but remain ineffective. That the dimension of power-struggle beyond organisational processes is important emerges also forcefully from the Latin American context, where the involvement of students and political activism is stronger than in the European context[7]. Overall, the inattention to organisational power structures has been identified as an important limiting factor (Maria et al. 2023).

- Clarity and consistency of (gender equality) change vision. This involves achieving buy-in to a shared vision by multiple stakeholders within the organisation which in turn emphasises the importance of a comprehensive communication plan about the

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[6] For a counter-example of how individual-level measures such as mentoring and training can contribute to structural change see (de Vries and van den Brink 2016).

[7] See for example Álvarez Enríquez (2020); Motta et al. (2020); Zerega (2019) and the literature review on Latin America in Deliverable 2.1.

necessities of change and progresses achieved (mentioned by ADVANCE explicitly). The importance of a shared vision is also highlighted by Benschop and Van Den Brink (2018) when discussing the politics of knowledge of different stakeholders involved in change processes: academics (theory), equality practitioners (practice), and consultant (in-between). Maria et al. (2023) summarise the related point on the importance of "capitalising on the organisational discourse", as when gender equality aims are aligned with wider organisational policies regarding innovation or social responsibility for example.

- How to preserve the momentum for organisational change is an issue in the literature but not necessarily incorporated in the success factor models presented so far. Laursen & Austin (2020) mention in passing "how to get started and persist". However, as Correll (2017) argues, an explicit strategy to celebrate "small wins" should be formulated as it shapes where and when to implement which action. As Correll writes "[k]ey to this model is that researchers work with teams of managers to produce concrete, implementable actions that produce visible results. I argue that small wins motivate further action and are the building blocks to larger organizational transformation". Mackay (2021) has recently highlighted the implications of such an approach not only from the organisational perspective but also for activists because it allows them to make sense of their experience as change agents. A "small wins" approach then has implications for monitoring (small) progress by using adequate indicators. It also has implications for developing a comprehensive, complementary change strategy while breaking it down to small steps in each field and each level of action. Maintaining momentum through "small wins" also implies a reflection on the type of actions according to the "cost of implementation" and the expected outcomes and impact. Is it better to go initially for the low-hanging fruit and build momentum and allies of change agents before tackling more structural issues or is it better to work holistically and start with ambitious, long-term goals from the very beginning? *Backlash* currently experienced by some countries/organisations with a long trajectory of gender equality efforts might be considered from this perspective of lost momentum.

- Missing from the literature on impact drivers is also a closer attention to the temporal aspect of GEP design and implementation. Factors that might be crucial during the initial phase of a structural change process might not be as important at a later stage. Current views on GEP implementation are to a large degree static, assuming that time is not a decisive factor.

Overall, as this short overview demonstrates, the described impact drivers from the equality literature and the organisational, generic factors operate not necessarily on the same level. Whereas the equality literature is largely descriptive of the facilitating and hindering factors, the organisational literature is more strongly grounded in theoretical/conceptual frameworks. This is especially clear when considering for example "leadership commitment": while highlighted as a key impact driver in the equality literature does not engage in a deeper conceptual discussion regarding leadership that is available in the organisational or management literature (e.g. in terms of "leadership style").

2.3 National culture, legal and policy environment: defining context

National level policy is an important framing condition for organisational change as are wider, transformations such as globalised capitalism and neoliberalism impact on gender equality plans (see D2.1 literature review). The research on organisational change has identified national legal requirements and supporting policies as an important contributing factor to organisational change (Wroblewski 2020). National policy is conceived as a contextual factor because it conditions organisational change without organisations being able to directly change or influence these wider policy measures. In order to conceptualise the policy environment in more detail and identify wider national non-policy factors that can affect gender equality issues within organisations we suggest following the literature on women participation in R&D labour market more broadly. Although the numerical participation of women in the labour market is only a poor indicator of gender equality in R&D (Wroblewski 2020), the relevant literature nevertheless provides a good, first approximation to these wider contextual factors, including the identification of main policy areas and cultural elements.

According to a quick review of the existing literature (Cipollone, Patacchini, and Vallanti 2014; Ferragina 2020; Hegewisch and Gornick 2012; Jaumotte 2003; Pfau-Effinger 2017; Profeta 2020), the following broader factors have been identified to influence the participation of women in R&D labour market. These factors are also related to wider gender equality concerns beyond the numerical representation. Overall, they provide a good first approximation to the wider contextual factors that shape gender inequality in R&D.

- Parental leave policies

- Education and care (early childhood, long-term care)

- Labour market measures / legislation (Equality legislation, policies in R&D)

- Taxation

- Gendered norms and beliefs (for R&D specifically regarding "brilliance")

- Power & size of private R&D sector

- Gender-biased violence including sexual harassment in R&D

Furthermore, other important contextual factors concern the historical trajectories at different levels, including the national trajectory and the historical trajectory of the organisation. On the organisational level this includes past gender equality actions and their outcomes which might contribute to momentum for sustaining change or to backlash and resistance. This also includes other external stakeholders and alliances that might support and drive organisational change.

However, instead of using a strict separation between context factors (remote) versus organisational facilitating (proximate) factors[8], we propose to use a relational approach where

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[8] See also the distinction between "remote" context factors and "proximate" conditions in the two-step QCA approach by Schneider and Wagemann (2006).

the meaning, significance and ultimately impact of each element within the organisational change process can only be determined in relation to other elements. We define as "context" all relevant conditions that make a difference and shape the overall course of action within an organisation (see right column of Illustration below). To the degree that national legal requirements are discussed, commented upon, and affecting the organisational change process within the organisation there is not substantial difference to other more proximate factors, such as past GEP initiatives, which are also only relevant to the change process as long as they are recognized, referenced or otherwise acted upon. Such an approach is different from conceiving context as an environment, implying a substantial difference between organisational (proximate) factors and more remote ones, such as national policies (see left column of the Illustration).
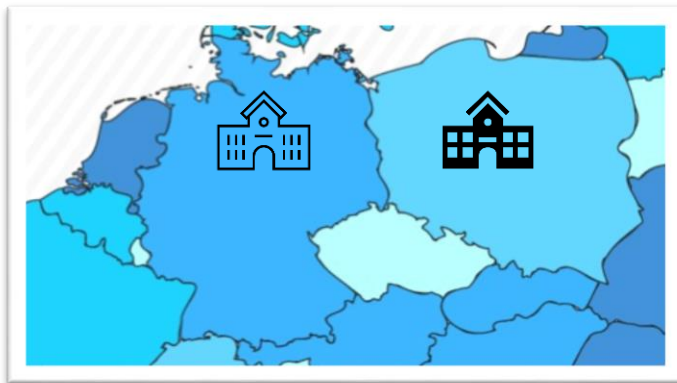
Figure 1, Context-as-environment
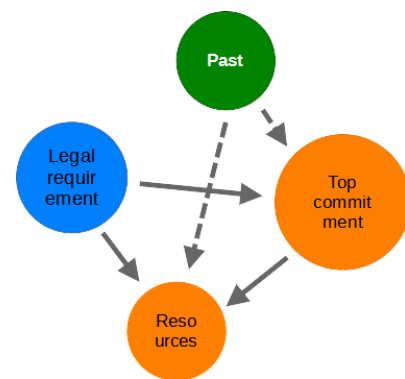
Figure 2 Context as relevant conditions

What is important to note is the fact that any organisational change initiative happens at a specific organisational "site" (Schatzki 2005). It can only advance to the degree that it draws upon and thereby reproduces and actualises existing (cultural, organisational) practices. Failed previous initiatives or synergies with related initiatives form part of the organisational site and thus provide the "context" that conditions ongoing initiatives. A requirement of a national policy or a (failed) previous gender equality initiative within the organisation constitute the specific context in which a given change process takes place, independent if its effects are initially triggered at the national level or specific actors from within the organisation.

Overall, this relational approach to facilitating-factors-in-context leads to the configurational approach of complexity espoused by QCA. Social phenomena are understood as complex because the significance of individual conditions depends upon their configuration with other conditions, ever changing according to the case (or site) under investigation. For our research this implies to derive the meaning and significance of each action by tracing how it refers to- and reproduces other actors, measures, practices (see also Dilley 1999; Johns 2006).[9]

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[9] This follows also an STS approach of tracing actor-networks, potentially an infinite process. "Context stinks" as Latour maintains in citing Rem Koolhaas. It stinks, because it's "simply a way of stopping the description when you are tired or too lazy to go on" (Latour 2005:148). It is a fuzzy, "explain-all" concept that gets deployed to arrest the potentially infinite regress in search of explanatory factors.

2.4 Research Questions

Based upon the review of the literature and the identification of current knowledge needs, we can identify a set of research questions that will be addressed during the first and second wave case studies.

The first wave of in-depth 15 case studies will be abbreviated as CS15.

The second wave of 20 light-weight case studies will be abbreviated as CS20.

2.4.1 Specific questions CS15

Q1: How do stakeholders within each organisation define and understand GEP success, failure, and impact?

Q2: Which interventions have been implemented and are deemed successful or deemed less successful / a failure?

This research question should further contribute to our knowledge of the effectiveness of individual interventions, such as mentoring, (implicit) bias training, leadership training, or gender-based violence protocols among others, while also providing a more nuanced understanding of how change agents negotiate the lack or achievement of intervention outcomes and impact.

Q3: Which formal and/or informal factors can be identified that facilitate the success of organisational interventions towards greater gender equality and which factors hinder the success?

Existing lists of impact drivers vary in emphasis of individual factors and how to measure these. Q3 should provide new empirical evidence on the conceptualisation, relative importance, and best measurement indicators for each impact driver. For each case study carried out during CS15, this includes to capture the overall conceptual approach used mainly during the GEP design phase as well as the role of specific, individual impact drivers during the implementation phase.

2.4.2 Specific questions CS20

The 2nd wave of case studies is geared towards understanding the complex interplay of multiple impact drivers for achieving impact. Complex means that the contribution of a certain factor is dependent upon the presence (or absence) - the interplay - with other (context) factors, both formal and informal.

Q1: What are the necessary and sufficient conditions at the organisational level for GEP impact?

Q2: How do wider national policies / legal requirements interact and condition the success of GEP implementation at the organisational level?

3 Methodological approach

The methodological framework for T3.3. uses a case study research design to capture differences and similarities between Gender Equality Plans and their impact on gender equality in research performing organisations. The research approach builds explicitly on the fact that similar GEP interventions can produce quite diverging outcomes and impact, depending on the specific site (Schatzki 2005) they are implemented. Organisational change driven by GEP interventions is here conceived as a complex social phenomenon that cannot be reduced to certain causal, deterministic recipe. Rather, GEP impact is seen as a product of multiple programme-specific, organisational and wider contextual (e.g., national legislation) factors interacting in a non-linear way. Case study research specifically aims to explore such complex social phenomena in their real-life settings. As Yin writes, "[…] you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study" (Yin 1994:13). Similar, Ragin contends that "[…] the parts of a case constitute a coherent whole and that the effects of variables should be assessed in the context of the case and not detached from it" (Ragin 2014:XXI). Case study research design therefore enables us to understand better how interventions work, and how and why impacts vary across contexts (Harrison et al. 2017; Paparini et al. 2020). It answers explicitly to the existing challenge to understand better not only the key GEP impact drivers but also which mix of policy interventions works best in different national settings and under different contextual factors across the EU.

Importantly, the case study design for T3.3 is composed of two complementary approaches, separated in time by the 1st wave of 15 in-depth case studies (CS15) and the 2nd wave of 20 light-weight case studies (CS20). These two waves are not only carried out one after the other but also follow a methodological distinction: while the 1st wave of case studies is geared towards in-depth exploration of implemented measures and existing/emerging GEP impact drivers, the 2nd wave of light-weight cases studies will use Qualitative Comparative Analysis for systematic comparison across cases. We therefore build our evidence base on key GEP impact drivers as we advance from *within-case* analysis towards comparative *cross-case analysis* during the second wave. CS15 will yield insights into the nuts and bolts of GEP implementation, outcomes and impact within organisations and thus contributes to a more solid understanding of key interventions, and key facilitating and hindering factors. CS20 then adopts an explicitly comparative, cross-case perspective which will yield insights into the varying GEP recipes for success and failure. The role of QCA during the 2nd wave is precisely to analyse in a systematic manner the complex interplay between sets of impact drivers and their contextual embedding that can lead to specific outcomes.

To understand the facilitating and hindering factors for achieving GEP impact during the CS15 programme evaluation is used for methodological guidance. In fact, programme evaluation of complex interventions combines well with a case study approach – especially when following the realist evaluation paradigm (Blamey and Mackenzie 2007; Pawson and Tilley 1997): "Case study methodology is advocated due to the focus on phenomena (e.g. interventions) in context, linking closely with the emphasis in realist evaluations on *'how causal mechanisms are shaped and constrained by social, political, economic (and so on) contexts'*" (Paparini et al. 2021:225). An explicit evaluation approach will be implemented during CS15 by selecting 2-3 individual interventions from the pool of all policy measures defined in each GEP; the individual action is then assessed by understanding its design, implementation, and outcomes/impact. The focus

on 2-3 selected measures within each GEP offers a compromise between understanding detailed impact pathways within the framework of a comprehensive GEP whose overall evaluation would overstretch the resources available for this research task[10]. The focus on individual interventions will enable the interviewer to make questions more concrete and ask the different stakeholders about detailed, first-hand experiences regarding the design, implementation and outcomes of a given intervention.
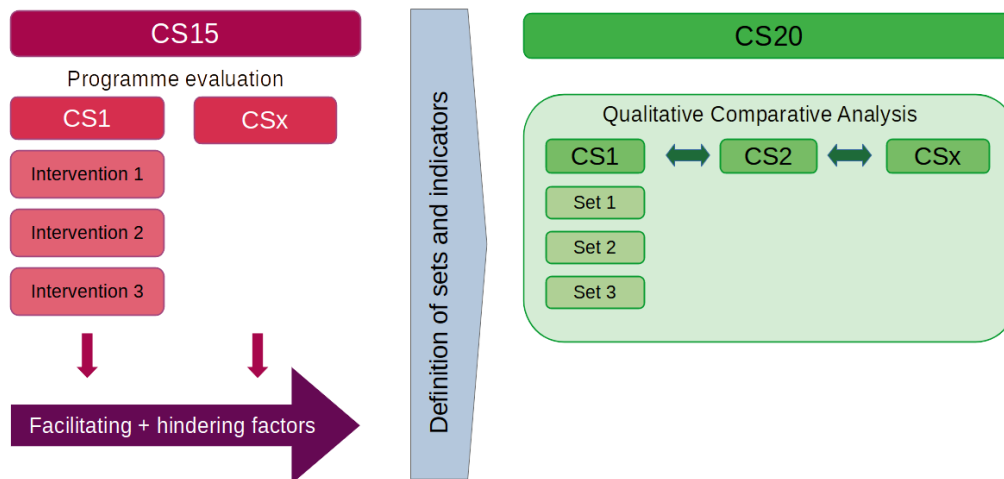
Figure 3, Methodological flux

While selection criteria for interventions are less strict for CS15 due to its bottom-up nature of impact factors, the selection criteria will have to be strict during CS20 in order to guarantee comparability for QCA among cases.

Regarding the **thematic selection criteria**, we suggest selecting from each GEP the following two interventions:

- one intervention targeting the issue of **career progression**

- one intervention targeting the issue of **gender-based violence**

Both type of interventions are relatively widespread, addressing key dimensions of gender inequality in R&D. Vertical segregation pertains to the most persistent gender inequalities in R&D making interventions addressing career progression a crucial element of most GEPs. Similar, interventions that target gender-based violence frequently form part of GEPs or have been in place even well-before the design of a formal GEP. Interventions regarding GBV are especially interesting as they provide a lens to study the power relations and their effectiveness or in-effectiveness through concrete examples, such as incidences of sexual harassment.

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[10] A similar approach has been used by Anicha et al. (2017) when writing about three initiatives in the context of a ADVANCE institutional transformation project, first and foremost the *Advocates & Allies* initiative to engage men in powerful positions.

By focusing on these two types of interventions in each case study, comparability for cross-case analysis will be assured, especially in terms of the QCA requirement to have at least 35 cases for testing 5-6 conditions. An optional third intervention to be assessed should either address gender equality in **decision making** or the **integration of sex- and gender-based** analysis in teaching and research content.

Although impact drivers work independently from the actual content of a given intervention and hence should be comparable across all measures examined, it makes sense to make the comparison more specific in terms of selecting interventions with similar objectives and similar outcomes. By evaluating two interventions within each case, we construct two thematic subsets – one for career progression and one for GBV – and compare the corresponding interventions across the cases with each other. Comparing interventions within the same thematic group also affords a better picture of how national policies might affect the impact of organisational change processes. For instance, parental leave policies are fixed in the majority of European countries at the national level. However, their real impact upon career progression then might depend upon other interventions put in place at the organisational level, to bridge for example the gap between the end of parental leave and the start of public early childhood education.

The thematic selection criteria are combined with a **second selection criteria** to guarantee variation on the **outcome variables** (see also section 3.3.2). QCA needs variation on the outcome variable and hence, especially the selection of CS20 interventions will need to cover both, interventions deemed a "success" as well as interventions that are deemed less successful. An outcome variable will need to be defined for each type of intervention studied. For example, the outcome variable for interventions addressing career advancement might be "fair career progression". The outcome variable for interventions on GBV might be "violence free work environment". During CS15 the "outcome variable" selection criteria can be applied in a less strict fashion, as long as some less successful interventions can be examined across the 15 cases. Rather than providing the basis for a systematic comparison, CS15 should provide enough insights into definitions of "impact", "success" and "failure" that serves as a basis to make informed decisions for CS20 selection.

Overall, we use a two-step research design, starting with a more generic case-study methodology towards the specific use of QCA for cross-case comparison. These elements will be described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

3.1 Programme evaluation perspective

In-depth case studies will use methodological elements from a programme evaluation approach, bearing in mind the existing knowledge on impact drivers and gaps in the literature. Programme evaluation is well suited to respond to our research question regarding the key facilitating and hindering factors of certain interventions and their outcomes and impact as it aims to assess "what works or does not work, how, for whom, and why" (Kingsley 2020). Although we propose to use the organisation as our primary unit of analysis, resource constraints oblige us to focus on specific equality interventions and how these work or do not work, for whom and why.

Evaluation frameworks - such as developed by the Efforti project[11] - structure the data gathering process in helpful ways according to the design-, implementation- and outcomes/impact phase.

(a) **Design**. An evaluation should assess if an intervention was well conceived. An intervention is well designed if uses a participatory process for its initial needs assessment which then leads to the design of realistic actions to achieve the desired outcomes and impact. The analysis of the design provides insights if the right "tools" have been chosen for the "right" goal.

(b) **Implementation**. An analysis of implementation process will assess if a given intervention has been implemented according to plan. The most well-designed intervention might break down if it is only poorly executed, such as for example without sufficient resources or failing to involve decision makers.

(c) **Outcomes & Impact.** An evaluation should provide answers regarding the effects of an intervention. What changes – both desired and unintended, positive or negative – can be attributed to a given intervention? Identifying outcomes (short-term or medium-term) and impact (long-term) is challenging as the observed change might be the result of many factors besides the actual intervention; it might also be challenging because an effect is not immediately visible.

Each of these three evaluation objectives comes with a set of instruments and tasks to be carried out. However, these will need to be adapted to some extent given the scope of T3.3 which does not aim to evaluate in-depth specific GEPs but rather understand better the facilitating and hinder factors for GEP impact and what we know so far about these impact factors. Overall, we propose to combine a more general assessment of the GEP from the design perspective while scrutinizing in-depth the implementation and outcomes of 2-3 selected, individual GEP actions.

3.1.1 GEP design

As part of the 1st wave of in-depth case studies, we need to gather for each case information on the overall quality of the GEP along two dimensions: its conceptual approach and the use of state-of-the-art, innovative actions. This does not entail going into the details of the individual actions and its target audiences but rather to understand the overall ambition of the GEP in relation to the existing literature. To which degree does the GEP have the potential not only to support women or improve numerical representation but drive a more profound change of cultural values? Does it aim to fix the numbers, fix the organisation and/or fix the knowledge? Does it argue from the vantage point of social justice or the business case? To which degree is it more open to within-group variety? Does it entail a "reflexive approach" (Wroblewski and Palmén 2022) or not? The impact driver model covers these more overarching aspects only partially by mapping the thematic areas for which policy measures are planned (e.g., work-life balance, career progression, etc.) or inquiring about the dedicated resources. However, this needs to be completed with questions derived from an evaluation framework regarding the

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[11] See Efforti - Evaluation Framework for Gender Equality Interventions in R&I https://www.efforti.eu

overall design, complementarity, and quality (coherence between goals and target audience, needs, activities, resources) of the GEP actions.

The data to be gathered for the GEP design analysis consists primarily of the GEP document(s) and interviews with key stakeholders that have been involved during the design process. This is most likely the equality coordinator or central officer.

3.1.2 GEP implementation

Inquiring about the implementation of individual GEP measures in each organisation will provide key information on potential hindering and facilitating factors of GEP impact. It is during implementation that each intervention faces the test of reality consisting of competing agendas, stakeholders and their support or resistances and how these play out over time.

The choice of analysing the implementation of 2-3 single interventions rather than the GEP as such follows several reasons: first, it should make the interviews more concrete and thus improve the quality of the evidence gathered. By inquiring about the implementation process of a specific action, participants can narrate a concrete process, including evidence on specific events, challenges, or solutions. We thus favour accounts that contribute as much detail as possible rather than opinion-based general views and insights regarding the GEP as such. Second, the choice of individual actions has to do with resource constraints for the case studies. Examining 2-3 actions is more feasible than evaluating a complete GEP. Third, by examining individual actions a more fine-grained understanding between the type of actions and their potential (strong/weak) impacts becomes possible. As GEPs comprise usually many different interventions of varying complexity, some actions might fail while others succeed within the same overall GEP. Understanding these minute details will provide valuable insights regarding impact drivers that might be overlooked when examining GEPs from a global perspective. Fourth, by focusing on actions according to the broad goal they try to achieve (e.g., career progression, decision making, organisational culture, etc) the effects of remote (national) policies on achieving a certain outcome can be argued more convincingly. For example, national policies such as parental leave or early childcare policies should affect career progression / prevent women from dropping out, while the effect of these policies on the incorporation of the gender dimension will be rather indirect, if at all.

As Annex VI shows, many elements to be covered from the perspective of an evaluation approach overlap with the main elements identified in the impact driver model. While an evaluation approach of the implementation phase provides a general directive to inquire about key actions, actors and processes, the impact drivers model is much more specific in this aspect: it provides additional guidance especially on the typology of involved actors (e.g., internal, external stakeholders) or the typology of organisational aspects to bear in mind (e.g., transparency and accountability, organisational governance, etc.). In addition, as the literature review has shown, other factors to bear in mind are issues related to the "institutional memory / staff turn-over" or the timing and momentum of the organisational change process.

Relevant data regarding the implementation will be gathered primarily through semi-structured interviews, using secondary document analysis as input and question generating devices.

3.1.3 GEP results / outcomes / impact

Finally, each case study of the first wave aims to gather information on the GEP outcomes and impact. We follow the definition of these terms as set out in the EU Evidence Framework on monitoring and evaluation of Horizon Europe.

- **Outputs**: short-term, tangible outputs such as training materials, mentoring sessions, intervention protocols, etc. that occur directly because of an intervention

- **Outcomes**: mid-term outcomes that occur among beneficiaries / actors that are directly affected by an intervention, e.g., new skills, improved peer-review or decision making, more balance allocation of resources, etc.

- **Impact**: long-term impacts that might occur beyond the direct beneficiaries, for example change in organisational working climate for all staff and students, measured via specific working climate questionnaire.

This concerns on the one hand impressions regarding the overall impact of the GEP, both positive (e.g., terms of balanced representation, cultural change) and negative (e.g., backlash, resistances). The analysis of outcomes and impact focuses to which degree the anticipated outcomes for each of the 2-3 individual actions where produced. Evaluating the outcomes and impact is thereby not a straightforward process as impact can be delayed in time and potential change be caused by many other (contextual) factors. The examination of outcomes and impact provides the opportunity to re-integrate the assessment of the implementation process for each of the studied individual interventions (career and GBV) within the overall framework of the GEP they pertain to. How does the overall design of the GEP as such affect the implementation, the outcome and impact of these interventions? Achieved outcomes and impact can then be understood as an encompassing change process that is conditioned by the GEP design, GEP implementation and wider organisational and extra-organisational factors.

Relevant data regarding the outcomes and impact will be gathered as part of the interview process. Although not obligatory, a focus group can also be used to discuss outcomes and impact with specific target user groups. Importantly, internal evaluation reports will be an important source of information as well as certification schemes (e.g., Athena SWAN) or received awards.

3.2 Qualitative Comparative Analysis

QCA has been chosen to analyse in a systematic and formally rigorous way the interplay between different impact drivers and their contextual embedding that can lead to specific outcomes of interest. The cross-case comparison carried out primarily during the 2nd wave of case studies thereby starts from the relatively straight forward assumption that comparing GEPs and their implementation across organisations will provide new insights for more effective policy design and implementation. As Charles Ragin writes:

> "Case oriented researchers see cases as meaningful but complex configurations
> of events and structures. They treat cases as singular, whole entities purposefully
> selected, not as homogeneous observations drawn at random from a pool of

equally plausible selections. Most case-oriented studies start with the *seemingly simple idea that social phenomena in such settings ... may parallel each other sufficiently to permit comparing and contrasting them*" (Ragin 2004:125)

Comparing and contrasting cases is at the core of QCA, formalised in terms of assigning set membership to cases. Much social science comparative research uses implicitly a set-membership approach when the features of different cases are analysed in relation to their outcomes. For example, the importance of "leadership commitment" for GEP impact can easily be rephrased in set-membership terms: the set of all universities where GEPs did achieve impact are also members of the set of all universities whose leadership has a strong commitment towards gender equality. These relations of dependency between input and output are thus expressed in terms of overlapping or fully contained sets indicating necessary and/or sufficient conditions.

Starting with the transition from CS15 to CS20 we therefore need to translate the emerging research results into sets of conditions to be analysed in their interplay for producing our outcome of interest. Although the actual QCA procedures will be applied relatively late into the research process, the required steps will be described briefly to anticipate our data needs. In this sense it is also important to note that QCA *does not tolerate missing data*: comparing cases with QCA implies to populate each condition, which means, to assign each case to the established sets.

3.2.1 Defining and calibrating sets

Assigning cases to sets consists of 4 separate steps (Oana et al. 2021:29):

1. **Concept definition.** Sets basically represent concepts. A clear definition of the concept will be necessary to establish the boundaries of the set. For example, "leadership commitment" for gender equality could be defined in various ways: it could simply involve the public signature of a GEP by management, providing some symbolic or verbal support without substantial (political, structural) engagement. Commitment to gender equality also could involve facilitating GEP implementation by providing sufficient human resources and budget. It could also mean for top management staff to have a track record of gender equality achievements or having participated in an implicit bias training or a structural change project (see the impact of leaders who participated in ADVANCE projects (Mcquillan and Hernandez 2021)). How "top management commitment", as a relevant example in the context of T3.3 is ultimately defined needs to be based upon the existing literature (Benschop and Van Den Brink 2018; Cortis, Foley, and Williamson 2022; Humbert, Kelan, and van den Brink 2018; de Vries 2015; Wynn 2020) and upon the results of CS15. Concept definition involves not only potential key impact drivers but also broader concepts such as what we mean by GEP impact, success, or failure.

2. **Measurement.** Once "leadership commitment" has been defined, we need to think about how this commitment is recognized. How do we measure commitment by top management? Depending on the definition, alternative measurement options emerge. For example, if commitment is defined through individual gender equality expertise of top managers it could be measured by training workshop participation, a test-score on

basic equality concepts, or their track record of past equality actions and participation in structural change projects. A further option is to combine these single indicators into a new, composite indicator that aggregates test-scores and track record into a new ordinal scale. If commitment is defined mainly in relation to dedicated resources for equality work, options for measurement could include dedicated human resources in full-time-equivalent or monetary budget for organisation of GE activities. The agreement on measurement indicators will be key at the transition from CS15 to CS20 case studies as it defines very precisely our information needs for the 2nd wave.

3. **Calibration anchors.** The third step involves establishing decision criteria for assigning cases to sets. For example, at what point do we consider top management to be really committed to gender equality? When they provide the resources to hire an equality officer? Is a part-time equality officer position enough? When they pass a hypothetical implicit bias test? When decision-making positions are gender-balanced? A key point to note is, that decision anchors and set-membership in general designate a *qualitative difference* in terms of when top-level commitment really makes a difference. Consulting the existing evidence is paramount in this respect, as such a decision can only be made by carefully anchoring it in the literature and existing theories.

4. **Diagnostics**. Finally, in a fourth step we need to assess the empirical properties of the resulting calibrated sets. Is membership skewed? Do our cases hold low or high membership in certain sets? This will be important primarily for the analytical procedure and will be discussed in more detail in the analysis section.

What emerges from this sketch of set membership / calibration is the fact that it is deeply grounded in a conceptual discussion. Set membership definition is already building the argument of why certain outcomes are achieved or not as they trace and incorporate our best knowledge for why things work as they do (or not).

Importantly, the QCA approach shifts the discussion away from unfruitful quarrels between quantitative and qualitative indicators and outcomes. The definition, measurement, and calibration steps of QCA allows for the *equal use of qualitative-, quantitative- or a combination of both types of indicators*. This is especially relevant for defining what constitutes our "outcome of interest": GEP impact, "success" or "failure" are not necessarily limited to one specific indicator. For example, one possible definition of GEP success could be as follows[12]:

(a) having brought about a more balanced representation of women, men and other minorities at all career stages at least 6 years after the implementation of the corresponding GEP actions

(b) having created a more welcoming and inclusive work environment

(c) being sustainably integrated into institutional processes and procedures

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[12] The actual definition will be part of the research process based upon results from the interviews, embedded in the scientific literature.

(d) having "fixed" the knowledge

Building upon this definition, measurement - both qualitative and quantitative - indicators are defined which then are used to decide on the set-membership of each case. We could combine a numeric indicator for (a) "balanced representation" with interview results on (b) "inclusive work environment" and the (c) existence of sub-committees / experts on gender in main decision-making units.

During the 1st wave case studies, it will be important to keep in mind these definitional approach to concepts as well as the most suitable measurement indicators to be used for our impact drivers (conditions) as we move towards the 2nd wave of case studies.

3.2.2 Selecting conditions

The basic limiting factor for QCA is the number of conditions that can be used in the analysis simultaneously. Since the analytical procedure of QCA creates a solution space for a given outcome by finding all logically possible combinations of conditions, the solution space (or rows in the truth table) doubles for each additional condition. For an analysis using 2 conditions, 4 combinations are possible; 3 conditions yield 8 combinations; 4 yield 16 combinations and so on. As the solution space grows exponentially, the total number of empirically observed cases is an important limiting factor - also called "limited diversity" in the literature (Schneider and Wagemann 2012:151). A QCA analysis with 3 conditions (for example: "top management commitment" yes/no, "centralised equality office" yes/no, "reflexive approach" yes/no) requires a minimum of 8 cases to potentially observe each of the 8 possible combinations of conditions empirically. Ideally, more cases are available to see which combination of solutions occur more consistently in the empirical field than others. As a general guideline, Mello (2022:27) suggests at least 4 cases per condition should be included. This implies that for the total of 35 case studies to be carried out in T3.3, we can maximally explore 5 conditions simultaneously (with a solution space slightly smaller than the overall number of cases studies, namely 32).

The QCA methodology foresees different ways to select these limited number of conditions. Importantly, it is an informed decision-making process which will build upon the results and insights generated during the 1st wave of in-depth case studies. Conditions can be aggregated into macro-conditions (see Mello 2022:30). For GEPs, many process and content-related aspects could be covered by using equality or diversity certification schemes as proxy condition. For example, the Athena SWAN award assesses both content as well as process elements of GEPs and thus aggregate many of the individual impact drivers into a single condition: Athena SWAN Gold/Silver/Platinum "awarded" or "not awarded". It illustrates how composite indicators could work in the context of our QCA approach, even though Athena SWAN is not directly useful due to its limited geographic reach in Europe.

The preferred solution for covering more than 5 conditions under T3.3. consists of using a **two-step approach** which differentiates between "remote" and "proximate" conditions (Schneider 2019; Schneider and Wagemann 2006). This allows to split the QCA analysis into two steps, examining for example the wider (national) policy factors in a first step and then combine these relevant remote conditions with proximate (organisational) success factors in a second QCA analysis step.

Schneider & Wagemann (2006) define *remote conditions* as those that are relatively stable in time, being structural and hence "further away" in space/time to the outcome to be explained. Consequently, remote factors are also not easily changed by involved actors and treated as contexts or historical legacies that are "exogenously given to the actors" (ibid., p.10). In the case of T3.3. such remote, contextual factors would include broader national (care) policies or culture beliefs and values that do not directly produce the outcome of interest but condition the effects of proximate factors such as a specific organisational intervention. *Proximate factors*, in contrast, can be modified and changed more directly by involved actors. These are factors that are temporarily and spatially closer to the outcome to be explained. In the case of T3.3. these could consist of organisational interventions that form part of a GEP or certain impact drivers such as a "small wins" approach used during the implementation of a GEP.

A two-step QCA approach therefore selects and analyses in a first step the impact of relevant remote (national) level factors for each of the three groups of interventions to be examined. For example, for measures targeting career progression, the first step would consist of identifying relevant national policies that might contribute to career progression (or prevent women from dropping out of R&D) such as parental leave regulations, the provision of early childhood care. The QCA analysis of the first step then identifies solutions paths among these national context factors that then are fed into the QCA analysis at the organisational level in a second step.

Defining the conditions will happen as the results from the 1ˢᵗ wave of case studies become available. Assembling remote conditions, e.g. national policy factors will happen as part of the case studies compilation of wider contextual factors.

3.3 Defining cases and unit of analysis

We use the organisation (or organisational sub-units such as a faculty or department) as the basic unit of our case studies rather than an individual GEP out of several reasons: first, organisations can have several GEPs all of which have contribute to the overall impact at the organisational level, a perspective that would be absent when taking single GEPs as cases. As our research is outcome oriented, we are interested which factors improve the overall gender equality situation within an organisation. To which degree the policy measures are bundled or modified throughout subsequent GEP lifecycles is a question to be addressed during research rather than to be decided a priori. The GEP in effect is seen as the tool for enacting or enabling organizational change. Second, our focus on conjunctural causation aims to understand how gender equality interventions coexist with other, broader organisational agendas and policies. Examples of wider contextual factors that might facilitate or hinder the implementation and hence impact of organisational GEP policies are well known and studied, including regional or national (equality) policies and legal requirements, wider labour market trends, collaborations and networks among organisations, or broader cultural values and beliefs. A too narrow focus that defines a GEP as our main case study unit is likely to underestimate the role of broader context factors – intra-organizational and wider policy factors – that condition GEP impact. Third, resource constraints oblige us to pick at least two individual interventions (career progression and GBV). Analysing an entire GEP is not feasible within the constraints of the T3.3. Thus, our main unit for the case study is the organisation while we focus on individual interventions as our main unit of analysis.

Using individual interventions as our main unit of analysis implies to situate their analysis within the context of the GEP and the context of the organisation, both in terms of their outputs, outcomes, and impact. Defining the individual intervention as the basic unit of analysis means first and foremost to approach each intervention using a wide-angle perspective to detect and understand the multiple levels, internal and external stakeholders and processes that are involved or resisting gender equality work in R&I organisations.

Ragin and Becker (1992) draw the basic distinction between cases that are either defined in an empirical way or a conceptual way. Along these lines we conceive cases as "found." A case is defined by the legally anchored organisational boundaries of a given research performing organisations. Naturally, the organisation needs to have a GEP, which furthermore needs to fulfil a set of minimal requirements:

- Given the logic of studying GEP impact, we need organisations that have been implementing GEP measures for at least 4 years (completed at least **1 GEP lifecycle**). Tracking impact of GEPs will be easier if interventions have not been running for too many years (2nd or 3rd GEP lifecycle). Preferrable (but not an exclusionary criterion) are therefore organisations with GEPs between 1-2 lifecycle.

- **Type of organisation:** we target a higher education institution (university) or research centre, generally research performing organisations. Given that T3.6 targets the private sector, RPOs for T3.3 are restricted to the public sector.

- The organisation needs to have a Gender Equality Plan that satisfies the **4 mandatory process-related requirements** (be a public document, have dedicated resources, include arrangements for data collection, be supported by capacity building and training) and that addresses at least our 2 selected thematic areas: career progression and gender-based violence.

  Priority should also be given to organisations that use a gender+ approach, addressing gender and at least one other dimension of discrimination such as for example race, ethnicity, disability/health, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class among others.

Within the overall pool of cases thus defined, different logics for the selection of actual cases might come into play. As Ragin (1999:1139) comments, researchers might select cases out of the overall population because:

- they are extreme examples and thus present a process in relatively pure form
- they are typical examples and thus enable researchers to learn more about conventional arrangements and practices
- they are historical or cultural pioneers, establishing standards or routines copied by others
- they challenge or confirm theoretical assumptions regarding the phenomenon studied

Another justification for case study selection is "Theoretical Sampling" (Straus and Corbin, 1998). The aim of which is "to maximise the opportunities to compare events, incidents or happenings, to determine how a category varies in terms of its properties and dimensions." Either criteria might be applied once an overall pool of cases has been established observing

wider and general factors such as the distribution across geographical regions in Europe, type of organisations, or their status in terms of having participated (or not) in EC structural change projects.

The case study selection process will be closely coordinated in a centralized manner by UOC.

3.3.1 Selecting cases 1st wave – in-depth

The first wave of case studies has the aim to test the identified success factors for their completeness and simultaneously to get a first grip on their relative importance. Hence the typology of cases to be included should be diverse to cover a wide range of possible factors (conditions).

- Cases should be selected to cover a certain range of different **geographical settings** out of several reasons:
    - in order to capture differences in the provision of relevant **national legal/policy settings** that might affect GEP implementation and thus impact. For example, differences in parental leave policies, labour market participation of women or general beliefs about gender are likely to affect the role and effectiveness of GEPs within R&I. Similar, differences in the national legal provision and requirements for gender equality might affect the impact of GEPs. National trajectories and overall approaches towards gender equality need to be considered. Diversity in terms of geographic coverage therefore is important to understand better the role of wider context factors for GEP impact.
    - geographic diversity is also important in terms of the **size of private R&D sector** between countries. As the Benchmarking report by the EC in (REF) has shown, the size of the R&D sector in terms of value/investment is directly related to the participation of women in R&I: the bigger and more valuable the sector, the less women.
    - Access and feasibility of case study work to be carried out in a distributed manner between Consortium partners. If **native language** speaker can carry out a case study it will be more efficient and easier, also in terms of field access.

- The **size of organisation** is an important factor to bear in mind. A large university with many faculties and a large student body - especially with a decentralized governance framework - poses a different challenge for the effective implementation of a GEP than a relatively small, centralized research centre. GEPs in large universities are often broken down to sub-units such as Faculties or Departments.
- Bearing in mind cross-case analysis within an QCA framework during the 2nd wave, it will be important to study not only success factors for GEP impact but also **"negative" cases** where GEP implementation has been less successful, has stalled or reversed.

A basic selection matrix for the first wave of case studies:

	High GEP Impact	Lack of GEP impact
Northern Europe	3	1

Central Europe	3	1
Southern Europe	3	1
Eastern Europe	2	1

Country cluster distribution corresponds to the differences in terms of private R&D sector with Northern and Central European countries having larger and stronger R&D sectors and Southern and Eastern European countries having smaller sectors.

Country cluster distribution also corresponds with Consortium level responsibilities.

Potential organisations are listed in Annex VI.

3.3.2 Selecting cases for the 2nd wave – QCA

The aim of the second wave case studies is to gather further empirical evidence for carrying out the systematic cross-case analysis using QCA. The features of the method thereby impose important conditions for the scoping of the remaining cases and the overall QCA analysis of the final 35 cases. Overall, the case selection for the 2nd wave is much more theory driven than during the first wave as key impact drivers have now been defined in terms of the selected sets. As sets are defined with their corresponding measurement indicators, case selection will have to pre-screen potential participants according to the data needs to carry out the cross-case comparison with QCA. At the same time, the empirical cases for the 2nd wave should be sufficiently rich to explore these key impact drivers in their interplay, i.e. in their sufficiency and necessity for the given outcome.

Importantly, QCA needs variation on the **outcome variable.** Mello (2022:25) calls this "negative case", i.e. the need to include cases where an outcome is not present. This follows the central insight from QCA that the reasons for the absence of an outcome is not "symmetric" to its presence. Spelled out in the context of GEPs, this means that the factors responsible for the "failure" of interventions might be different and more complex than the simple absence of certain success factors. There might be very specific and distinct factors that cause GEPs to founder which need to be incorporated into the QCA analysis.

The selection of cases for the 2nd wave of case studies are not necessarily based upon the same empirical criteria (e.g. geographic distribution, etc.) of the 1st wave. Nevertheless, the selection of cases for the 2nd wave is conditioned by the compilation of the national legal and policy context information. 2nd wave case studies should be selected from the same countries in order to avoid the need to gather additional background information.

As the conditions will be defined based upon the result of the 1st wave of case studies, the concrete distribution and selection of cases (organisations) will happen towards the end of the first wave.

4 Fieldwork: timing, data collection, methods

Overall fieldwork for T3.3. consists of carrying out two waves of case studies in a distributed manner, involving 5 Consortium partners. The first wave of in-depth case studies comprises 15 cases which will be distributed between each of the 4 Knowledge and Support Hubs and UOC. The second wave comprises 20 light-weight case studies, again distributed between KSHs and UOC. Table *1* provides an overview regarding number of case studies to be carried out per partner:

Table 1: Cases per Consortium partner by 1st and 2nd wave

	KSH1 (RU)	KSH2 (UJ/ZRC-SAZU)	KSH3 (Notus)	KSH4 (FhG)	- UOC	
1st wave CS15 (M12-M24)	3	3	3	3	3	15
2nd wave CS20 (M24-M36)	4	4	4	4	4	20
	7	7	7	7	7	35

The overall timing of the field work, reporting and QCA for T3.3 (see also attached Gantt Chart in Annex VII).

Table 2: Timing of sub-tasks for T3.3

Task	Start date	End date	End month	Partners involved	Outcome
Draft D3.6 Methodological framework	01.01.2023	31.05.2023	M8	UOC / all	
Final D3.6		30.09.2023	M12	UOC	D3.6
CS15 selection + recruitment	01.07.2023	30.09.2023	M12	All	15 case study RPOs
CS15 fieldwork + reporting	01.10.2023	31.05.2024	M20	All	15 case study reports
CS15 compile shared report	01.06.2024	30.09.2024	M24	UOC	D3.7
CS20 selection +	01.06.2024	30.09.2024	M24	All	20 case study

Task	Start date	End date	End month	Partners involved	Outcome
recruitment					RPO
CS20 fieldwork + reporting	01.10.2024	31.01.2025	M28	All	20 case study reports
CS35 QCA	01.02.2025	30.09.2025	M36	UOC / all	D3.8
Publications / book		30.03.2026	M42	UOC / all	Edited book
Other relevant dates of related task					
Co-creation for OTU3		Nov 2024	M26		
OTU3		Jan 2025	M28	UOC / all	

Informed consent sheets are available in D1.2 Data Management Plan Annex 5.

4.1 First wave CS15: in-depth case studies (M12-M24)

The goal during the initial 15 case studies is to confirm and expand the evidence base on institutional change for greater (inclusive) gender equality in R&I organisations. During this first phase we are thus primarily interested in understanding the nuts-and-bolts of individual interventions in their context, i.e., how each intervention is designed, implemented and which outcomes and impact it has been able to achieve. Towards this goal, in-depth case studies apply a programme evaluation approach to at least two selected GEP interventions – career progression and GBV - while keeping an eye on the overall GEP design and outcomes/impact. We need to gather information on the GEP design, while the focus should be on understanding the "mangle of practice" of implementing specific interventions within the overall GEP and the organisation. By studying what happens when equality policies hit the organisational reality of diverse stakeholders, agendas, established procedures and processes we hopefully gain new insights on the key facilitating and hindering factors.

Starting a specific case study involves **several preparatory steps** before the actual data collection can start. Individual cases should satisfy the agreed upon case selection criteria (see section 3.3.1).

Pre-selection involves access to the current GEP and a preliminary analysis to determine the specific measures to be analysed in more detail – with varying degrees of impact. The analysis and the suitability of the case can be discussed with the primary contact person.

The first interview should be conducted with the main person responsible for the equality strategy, including the GEP design. Interviews with other stakeholders will need to reference the GEP actions identified by the Equality Officer (or similar) to be analysed in more detail. The

Equality Officer (or similar) can also serve as contact point for other interview partners to be invited.

Data will be collected with the following methods:

4.1.1 Document / desktop research

Desktop research using existing documents will be large part of the case studies. The actual Gender Equality Plan will be a primary source of information mainly to understand its conceptual approach and the overall quality of the design. The GEP can be complemented with other EDI relevant reports, whitepapers, or strategy papers, including previous versions of GEPs.

A second batch of documents concern the strategic plan(s) of the organisation. These might contain relevant sections on EDI; it will allow an assessment how well the specific EDI measures are integrated and aligned with the broader goals and orientation of the organisation.

The organisation website is a valid source of information not only in terms of official documents but also in terms of assessing usage of inclusive communication (e.g., choice of images and language used) which might be at odds with declared intentions in the GEP.

The organigram on the internal organisation regarding the governance structure and internal decision-making procedures needs to be collected, including oversight and steering committees, vicerector offices, etc. This also includes basic data on the size and age of the organisation. This should also capture special divisions such as equality or diversity offices when then provides an overview of the involved stakeholders in GEP design, implementation and evaluation.

Any evaluation and monitoring reports of the GEPs should be collected either directly via online channels or be requested at a later state during the interviews. This might also include documents produced during the initial GEP audit, i.e., documents used for the planning of GEP actions. Of special interest are documents or series of reports that allow to track change – and hence impact – of the GEP plans over several lifecycles. Evaluation reports provide empirical evidence on impact. Existing EDI certification schemes (e.g. Athena SWAN) will provide valuable assets as they condense a lot of relevant equality information.

Finally, the desktop research should also collect relevant documents at the national or regional policy level. Often this can involve comments or secondary documents on those legal texts, discussing their implications in general or the organisational level.

4.1.2 Site visits

Case studies involve site visits to the participating organisation. Site visits can help to

- gather relevant hardcopy reports and information not available in digital format
- do several interviews in a short amount of time
- learn about on-site actions, for example in terms of accessibility, architectural features, etc.
- organise focus groups

Focus groups are not obligatory but could be helpful to gather information on:

a) outcomes and impacts of an intervention for certain target audiences and beneficiaries.

b) Contrast research findings on key facilitating and hindering factors with the involved stakeholders before being used in our model for the QCA analysis.

4.1.3 Semi-structured interviews

Each case study involves at least 10 semi-structured interviews of 1 hour duration approximately. The interviews target key stakeholders across the organisation, will be recorded and transcribed and will provide key insights regarding GEP design, the implementation of specific actions, and process and outcomes. Interviews will be conducted by using interview guidelines provided in Annex II.

Interviews will be first-hand, experience based. It means that we are primarily interested in the activities and experiences of the interviewed person and not so much about opinions what others might have done. We are not aiming for a birds-eye perspective during the interviews, but rather individual stories regarding their roles, experiences, and activities in which they were directly involved. The broader perspective will emerge during the analytical phase, when we contrast the first-person stories of different stakeholders (management, academic staff, etc.) that were involved in the same (implementation) process.

Selection of interview partners

Overall, 10 semi-structured interviews are foreseen per case study. Depending on the type of organisation, the distribution across job categories can slightly vary. For example, in a research institute which does not carry out teaching activities, the foreseen interviews with students can be replaced with interviews with lab assistants.

Stakeholder	Interviews	Additional selection criteria	Guidelines
Equality, diversity staff	2-3	HR or EDI staff with long or longest trajectory with the organisation (institutional memory)	Annex II.a
Management	2	Preferably vicerector level with EDI remit	Annex II.b
Beneficiaries: students, research support, technical/lab assistants	2	Specific target audiences according to GEP: disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.	Annex II.c
Beneficiaries: academic staff	2-3	Specific target audiences according to GEP: disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.	Annex II.c

Since partners are involved in several case studies, there is also a certain flexibility of how interviews are distributed between cases. Maybe not 10 interviews are necessary for a small

organisation whereas in another case 12 interviews are needed. Since resources have been budgeted for partners, there is leeway to re-distributed interviews if it makes sense.

Ideally, the order of the interviews starts with staff that has been central to the development of the GEP, such as the Equality Officer. Since the interviews should focus on the experience of 2-3 specific interventions (career progression, gender balance in decision making, gender dimension or cultural change) that have been more and less successful, the first interviews should try to identify these more interesting interventions. The selection of subsequent interview partners should then consider inviting staff that has been part of the design and implementation of these specific interventions or are members of the specific target group of a given equality intervention. In addition, interview questions then should reference and ask interview partners about their experiences with these specific interventions.

Preparing for the interview

Interview partners should be contacted via email and possibly a follow-up call if necessary. An email template is provided in Annex I. It states the purpose of the research, why participants have been invited to participate, and describes the overarching question themes to be discussed during the interview. Attached to the initial invitation also is the informed consent form available in D1.2 Data Management Plan D1.2 - Annex 5.

Participants should be asked for a 60-90 minute slot either in-person (during the on-site visit) or online.

Interview will be conducted by using interview guidelines provided in Annex II for each of the broad stakeholder categories we wish to cover. Before the interview, these need to be revised and adapted regarding the actual interview partner and the analysed interventions.

Conducting the interview

Ensure that the informed consent form has been signed and is available to the researcher.

Explain overall purpose of research, ask, if there are any questions regarding the consent, as stated in the interview guidelines provided in Annex III.

Interviews should be conducted in the local language.

Interviews need to be recorded for later transcription.

Interview guidelines provide overarching questions and follow-up questions to explore certain topics in depth.

Transcription

The transcription does not need to pseudo-anonymize organisational or other persons names. Anonymization will be applied in case literal quotes are used in reports and other publicly available material. Transcription files need to be stored with a password.

4.2 Second wave: light-weight case studies (M24-36)

The aim of the 2nd wave case studies is to gather sufficient information for carrying out the systematic cross-case comparison with QCA. In contrast to the 1st wave, it is a much more top-down approach. Data gathering will follow a much more standardised design, being guided by a closely defined set of "success factors". Although individual interviews with key staff will be conducted, these are less exploratory and follow a more standardised set of closed questions. The aim is to gather sufficient data for deciding on the set-memberships of each case for each of the 5-6 selected impact conditions.

The exact information needs for the 2nd wave of case studies will be defined towards the end of the 1st wave, once the results of the critical success and hindering factors of GEP implementation are available.

	KSH1 (RU)	KSH2 (UJ/ZRC-SAZU)	KSH3 (Notus)	KSH4 (FhG)	- UOC	
1st wave (M12-M24)	3	3	3	3	3	15
2nd wave (M24-M36)	4	4	4	4	4	20
	7	7	7	7	7	35

4.2.1 Document / desktop research

Like CS15, desktop research using existing documents will be large part of the CS20 case studies. This includes to retrieve and analyse the GEP(s) and other relevant EDI reports, whitepapers, or strategy papers.

Any evaluation and monitoring reports of the GEPs should be collected either directly via online channels or be requested at a later state during the interviews. This might also include documents produced during the initial GEP audit, i.e., documents used for the planning of GEP actions. Evaluation reports provide empirical evidence on impact. Existing EDI certification schemes (e.g., Athena SWAN) will provide valuable assets as they condense a lot of relevant equality information.

Depending on the selected QCA sets, any other relevant document that will be required to decide on set-membership of the given cases.

4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

Each case study during the 2nd wave will carry out a maximum of 4-5 interviews. These can be conducted online as no site visits are foreseen.

Selection of interview partners

Stakeholder	Number of interviews	Additional selection criteria
Management	1	Preferably vicerector level with EDI remit
HR or EDI staff	1	HR or EDI staff with long or longest trajectory with the organisation (institutional memory)
Students, research support, technical/lab assistants	1	Specific target audiences according to GEP: disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.
Academic staff	1	Specific target audiences according to GEP: disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.

Preparing for the interview

Interview guidelines will be prepared and made available once the sets and their indicators have been defined for CS20.

Conducting the interview

Interviews will be conducted online only. Interviews are to be recorded but not transcribed.

A short summary will be produced, highlighting the relevant information regarding the set-membership indicators. The data gathered during the interview should enable the researcher to make an informed decision on the set-membership of the case for each of the selected conditions (5-6). The summary should make the decision process transparent.

4.3 Safe storage, confidentiality, naming conventions

Case studies will be carried out in a distributed manner between Consortium partners and generate a wealth of documents and files. In order to manage this process in a secure, privacy protecting and consistent way, the following conventions are suggested:

File storage

Files (interview audio, transcriptions) are stored in a safe environment that minimizes the risk of loss, theft or hacking – which might be different between Consortium partner organisations.

The following file naming conventions are strongly suggested to easily associate each file with their respective case and research tasks in the framework of all research carried out during INSPIRE.

Case study reports are stored on INSPIRE Nextcloud

Naming cases

The reference of each case is codified according to the following template and should be used when creating folders to store relevant files or when referencing the case in reports.

T3.3-[Consortium partner acronym]-C[1|2|.n]-[2digit Country Code]

For example: a case study carried out by Fraunhofer in Austria during the *first wave* would have the code:

T3.3-FhG-C1.1-AT

A case study carried out during the *second wave* would have the following code

T3.3-FhG-C2.1-AT

The task specification allows to differentiate between case studies carried out for T3.4 or T3.6.

Naming interviews

Individual interviews / interviewees carried out in the context of a case study are codified according to the following template:

[Case-study-code]-I[n]

For example: the fifth interview carried in the aforementioned case study should be named:

T3.3-FhG-C1.1-AT-**I5**

The name is then used to store the recording of the interview as well as the transcription.

Naming Focus Groups

Focus groups carried out in the context of the case study are codified according to the following template:

[Case-study-code]-FG[n]

For example: the first focus group in the aforementioned case study should be named:

T3.3-FhG-C1.1-AT-**FG1**

Naming Reports

The case study reports should be named according to the following convention:

[Case-study-code]-**Report-[DDMMYYYY].docx**

Codification keys

Codes of cases and interviews need to be matched to their real names and persons. A single excel file should be created towards this purpose where this information is stored for each case. Importantly, the excel file needs to be password protected and stored on the computer of the researcher (ideally on a separate hard/flash drive).

The main contact for each case study (the principal contact to negotiate participation) is stored in the central stakeholder database. Interview and focus group participants contact within each case study are stored in separate files on the researcher's computer, password protected.

5 Analytical Framework & Process

The aim of the analysis differs between the 1st and 2nd wave of case studies. While the 15 in-depth case studies build the bottom-up evidence base on GEP facilitating and hindering impact factors, the 2nd wave case studies follow the QCA approach of finding the necessary and sufficient conditions of GEP impact. The focus during the in-depth case studies lies on understanding individual cases of GEP implementation while the 2nd wave case studies are clearly oriented towards cross-case comparison using light-weight data collection.

The *analytical* process is divided in three main phases: during the first phase (section 5.1) the individual case study reports are written by consortium partners. In a subsequent phase (section 5.2), the 15 case study reports are cross-read by UOC in order to identify the main facilitating and hindering factors of GEP impact that shape the light-weight data gathering process during the 2nd wave case studies. The actual QCA analysis is then carried out during the third phase (described in section 5.3).

5.1 In-depth case studies CS15

The analysis of each case study will produce an individual report, summarising its main characteristics and analytical results. The report should paint an exhaustive picture of the case in all its complexity and be structured according to the analytical template provided in Annex IV. The report provides the basis for discussing the cases between all partners and ultimately defining the GEP impact drivers across all 15 cases.

We recommend using a qualitative analysis software such as NVivo or similar to analyse all interviews and other documents in a coherent way. A minimal codebook in English is provided in Annex III, to codify the interviews and other documents across all cases for each partner. It contains the main topics identified in the conceptual framework regarding organisational impact drivers, contextual elements, and outcomes. Where needed, those codes should be complemented with new and emerging topics. Regular meetings between case study researchers will allow to put these new codes/topics in common across all partners and cases.

5.1.1 Individual case study reports

Individual case study reports consist of 5 main sections, which are briefly described in what follows. The drafted case study report will be sent back to the main contact of the participating institution for feedback and possible corrections. The case study reports are sent to T3.3. leader UOC once they are available as draft.

1. Introducing the case

Organisational characteristics. Briefly describe the type of organisation, its age, main academic units (in case of a higher education institution), and size (in terms of academic staff, administrative staff and students). If it is composed of sub-units (e.g., faculties) which are these?

Empirical base. Provide an overview of the empirical work carried out, i.e., number of interviews conducted (with stakeholder roles, duration, dates), focus groups (number of participants, stakeholder roles, duration), site visits. Brief overview of documents used for the analysis (e.g., evaluation reports, statistics, white papers, strategic documents, etc.).

National/regional policy context. Provide an overview of the main national or regional policy factors that potentially affect the design and implementation of the GEP. Highlight to which degree these policies have had an impact in the organisation. This information is mostly available via D2.2 country cluster reports.

2. Overall EDI approach. GEP design and scope

Describe the main concepts or rationale used for the GEP and to which degree it can be considered an "inclusive" process and/or "intersectional" approach. Identify eventual double agendas (business case vs. social justice). Have there been any changes over the years and across successive GEP versions? To which degree is the implementation of the GEP based upon a "reflexive" approach?

GEP design, scope, and interventions. Describe the scope of the GEP (does it address the whole organisation or sub-units such as a faculty or department?) and its main lines of intervention (e.g., thematic recommended areas). Summarize the main challenges that the current GEP should address. To which degree do the identified challenges reflect upon the specific organisational context? What are identified target groups? Have the needs of target groups been assessed? If yes, by which means? Which evidence was used to detect needs + design corresponding actions. Does the GEP specify any targets?

Describe to which degree interviewees opinions converge or diverge on those points.

3. Implementation of interventions

Create a sub-section for each analysed intervention: one on career advancement, one on gender-based violence and an optional intervention on gender equality in decision making or the integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching content. For each, describe the content of the intervention as a *theory of change* (how interviewees explain this intervention is supposed to achieve any change) as emerging across the interviews. Does it consider the wider (organisational) context and/or reference any existing evidence in the literature? Assemble the main milestones of the implementation process across the interviewed cases. This should include the role of resources, data monitoring, the overall organisation of the work process. Describe the role of wider policy/legal factors during the implementation. Characterise the action in terms of being ambitious and to which degree it targets and reaches different organisational layers: a) structural level, b) Human Resources, c) symbolic and d) political?[13] How and in what way does the given measure affect organisational culture?

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[13] See Bolman & Deal (2017) and Laursen & Austin (2020, p.208): the structural level (a) refers to organisational policies and procedures, for example regarding recruitment or promotion. Human resource level (b) refers to concrete support measures, training, and capacity building for example in terms of leadership- or faculty development programmes. Other measures might affect more directly the (c) symbolic level, such as the raising the visibility of women academics or target the d) political level, for example by winning men as allies.

Engagement and working climate. Describe the diversity of internal and external stakeholders that are formally and informally involved during the design and implementation of the action. Describe the quality of the working relations involved. What were their roles and main activities? Has there been a sense of community been built? Critical mass of active participants, bottom-up buy in? What's the relationship between internal and external alliances? How is the work climate in the team? Turn-over? What are the key (soft) skills involved? Which skills/knowledge were identified as needed but missing? Do those involved in implementation come from a wide range of different roles, hierarchies and disciplines/faculties from within the organisation?

Sustaining change. Describe how change momentum is maintained (small wins) or has been lost. Are there issues of "critical mass" involved?

Power struggle. Describe to which degree the implementation of each intervention is conceived as- and affected by power-struggles. Which type of resistance can be identified? What external actors support have been involved? To which degree is political activism part of the change process?

4. GEP outcomes and impact

Provide a summary of how GEP success, failure and impact is understood by interviewees and how this converges or not with the researchers understanding of these concepts.

Impact drivers. Describe the main hindering and facilitating factors for achieving the foreseen outcomes and impact of the analysed interventions. Start with the most important factors first. Explain the role of these factors in making the action a "success" or a "failure". For each of the factors, identify possible monitoring indicators (either theoretical or used by the organisation). Describe to which degree these factors concur or expand upon the impact drivers identified in the literature.

Name of facilitating / hindering factor	Definition of factor	Indicator	Related impact driver

Describe how the different impact drivers contribute to the outcomes and impact for each of the analysed interventions (career progression, GBV, + optional intervention). This should include intended and unintended outcomes and impact. Reflect on the role of the wider context (organisational, national) for achieving or not achieving the outcomes / impact. Use evaluation report(s) for the analysis of outcomes and impact – if available.

5. Concluding reflections

Significance. Highlight the unique features of this case, what makes it distinct in comparison to the other cases studies you have carried out.

Assess which role an intersectional- or inclusive perspective plays in this GEP. Is it an element/approach that has helped to make the GEP more impactful? If so, how? if not, explain why not?

Reflect on the role and capacity for organisational learning, i.e. the link from individuals, individual actions and the knowledge generated towards the integration into organisational structures and practices.

5.1.2 Uploading GEPs to GenPORT

As part of our effort to build the knowledge base with and about Gender Equality Plans, WP5 will setup the technical means to assign a DOI to GEPs and share GEPs as resources via GenPORT. For each analysed case, the corresponding GEP(s) need to be uploaded to GenPORT. There is no need to indicate that a given GEP forms part of our internal case study reports. The GEP database on GenPORT extends the "best practice" examples to be currently available as part of the GEAR tool.

5.2 Towards QCA: preparing CS20

The individual case studies of the first wave provide the basis for advancing towards the QCA cross-case analysis. Once the individual case studies are available, we identify the main conditions across the cases. This serves not only to prepare for the data collection during the 2nd wave but also to carry out a first round of cross-case comparison with QCA. By applying the QCA procedure to the available evidence, important insights will be generated regarding the empirical quality (skew) of the conditions and the potential outcomes.

5.2.1 Identify main impact drivers and outcomes

Case study reports include the analysis of main facilitating and hindering factors for GEP impact. UOC will analyse these factors across the 15 case studies and suggest the main factors to be included in the 2nd wave case studies data collection. The identified impact drivers and their indicators will be discussed during PM3 in M24.

Based upon the indicators for each impact driver, UOC will provide structured interview guides as a basis for the 2nd wave of case studies.

5.2.2 Apply QCA analysis based on CS15

Part of the preparation for D3.7 – which summarises the main results of the 15 individual case study reports – consist in carrying out a first QCA based upon the available cases. This involves assigning cases to the identified sets and diagnosing the empirical properties of the set. Are the available sets skewed?

As part of this analytical step, necessary and sufficient conditions will be analysed.

5.2.3 National level context factors

As part of each case study, national level context factors need to be considered that might impact the design and implementation of organisational level factors. Primarily, these national context factors are directly incorporated into the analysis of the organisational efforts (as described in section 2.3) and thus form part of each case study report. National level context factors are available as part of D2.2. country cluster reports.

In preparation of the two-step QCA analysis for the CS20, remote context factors need to be analysed systematically. Since relevant policies for the two thematic interventions (career progression and gender-based violence) are different, two separate QCA comparisons need to be generated. The methodological guidance on how to carry out a two-step QCA is available in Schneider and Wagemann (2006) and its revision in Schneider (2019). An overview of the method with references to further examples in the literature can be consulted in Mello (2022). For an exemplary case study of a two-step QCA that operates with national level and organisational level conditions, see Edelenbos et al. (2021).

5.3 QCA – CS20

5.3.1 Individual case study reports

Individual case study reports for each of the 2nd wave cases will be overall much shorter than the in-depth cases. It should be structured as follows:

1. Introducing the case

Organisational characteristics. Briefly describe the type of organisation, its age, main academic units (in case of a higher education institution), and size (in terms of academic staff, administrative staff and students). If it is composed of sub-units (e.g., faculties) which are these?

Empirical base. Provide an overview of the empirical work carried out, i.e., number of interviews conducted (with stakeholder roles, duration, dates), focus groups (number of participants, stakeholder roles, duration), site visits. Brief overview of documents used for the analysis (e.g., evaluation reports, statistics, white papers, strategic documents, etc.).

2. Overall EDI approach. GEP design and scope

Describe the main concepts or rationale used for the GEP. Describe the scope of the GEP and its main lines of intervention (e.g., thematic recommended areas). Summarize the main challenges that the current GEP should address. Have the needs of target groups been assessed? If yes, by which means?

3. Assigning set-membership

Summarise the rationale for assigning this case and its corresponding interventions to each of the selected conditions. This is likely to include 5-6 conditions. For each, the rationale – based upon the available interviews and document analysis – to assign set-membership scores need to be described. Set-membership assignment must be carried out for each analysed intervention separately. As described, we create two thematic-subsets, one for comparing 35

interventions targeting career progression and one for comparing 35 interventions targeting gender-based violence.

4. Concluding reflections

Significance. Highlight the unique features of this case, what makes it distinct in comparison to all other cases studies you have carried out.

Assess which role an intersectional- or inclusive perspective plays in this GEP. Is it an element/approach that has helped to make the GEP more impactful? If so, how? if not, explain why not?

Reflect on the role and capacity for organisational learning, i.e. the link from individuals, individual actions and the knowledge generated towards the integration into organisational structures and practices.

5.3.2 Truth-table analysis

Individual case study reports will be used to feed the QCA procedure in R by UOC, including the identification of solution paths, as well as the assessment of the different quality criteria such as "coverage", "consistency", etc.

The results of the QCA will be described in "D3.8 Configurations & conditions for achieving GEP impact".

5.3.3 Upload GEPs to GenPORT

Analysed GEPs during CS20 are to be uploaded to GenPORT.

5.4 Publishing

Research carried out as part of T3.3. will provide ample opportunities for publishing. Overall, we will conduct 35 case studies collecting quite detailed information on institutional transformation. Only the first 15 case studies will gather 150 interviews which should provide enough raw material not only for the book to be edited by INSPIRE but also for further individual articles.

The overall approach to publishing is specified in the Consortium Agreement. Ownership of raw material and a shared approach to publishing from case study research is specified in D2.4 Strategic Guidance and Quality Assurance and the Consortium Agreement.

5.5 Feeding into INSPIRE downstream tasks

The results for the case study research in T3.3 feed into subsequent tasks to be carried out in INSPIRE. This includes:

- Co-creation workshop 2 on GEP impact. Insights regarding GEP impact will inform this workshop with equality practitioners to co-design potential tools and guidance to improve GEP design and implementation. Dates foreseen are in November 2024

- Based upon the co-creation, an Open Training Unit on GEP impact will be developed and deployed. Deadline for this OTU is end of January 2025.

These co-creation and OTU task will also reflect on the potential of QCA as a tool for change. QCA could be used at the organisational level to further build the evidence base on GEP impact in a collaborative manner in the future. Overall, there is a need among researchers to become more versed in tools and methods that can deal with the complex interactions between several impact factors. A further incentive to use QCA and build the knowledge base is related to the GEP database on GenPORT. It will provide a persistent identification for GEPs and allow for commentary, learning, including but not limited to QCA.

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Annex I - Case study invitation template

Annex I.i – First contact / recruitment of organisation

Email template for establishing first contact with a potential organisation participation in our case studies.

Dear XXX,

my name is [name and role of contacting person] and I'm contacting you in my role as a Consortium member of the INSPIRE project, Europe's Centre of Excellence on inclusive gender equality in research and innovation. As part of INSPIRE's research efforts, we are currently looking for organisations willing to participate in our case studies on the facilitating and hindering factors for implementation of Gender Equality Plans (GEP). We have read about your organisation and its GEP and would be very interested in carrying out a case study to capture your experience and trajectory in this field. Although much is already known about the key success factors of GEP impact, we are especially interested in understanding better how different context factors drive or hinder structural change efforts across the national and institutional settings in Europe. We think you and your organisations participation could provide new, valuable insights on how to make GEPs more successful in research and innovation organisations in Europe.

At the end of this email I have attached further background information about the INSPIRE project and the actual case study research task. I hope this will give you a first idea of our proposal and raise enough interest to setup a brief online meeting where we could explore our request further.

Many thanks for considering this request and we look forward to hearing from you.

With very best wishes,

XXX

Project overview

INSPIRE is Europe's Centre of Excellence on inclusive gender equality in research and innovation, funded under the Horizon Europe framework programme (2022-2026). It brings together cutting-edge knowledge, ambitious policy approaches, and innovative practices to provide a gateway for scholars, equality experts, practitioners and trainers to connect and share resources, as well as co-create new ones. INSPIRE's ambitious research programme develops new, relevant indicators for inclusive GEP development, conducts a GEP monitoring survey throughout Europe whilst identifies the conditions necessary for GEP impact. It fills key knowledge gaps on intersectionality and builds up the evidence base on promising practices

in gendered regional innovation policy. INSPIRE counts on 4 Knowledge & Support Hubs (KSHs) led by academics and practitioners throughout Europe to develop new knowledge on sustaining change, widening participation, intersectionality and fostering innovation and change in the private sector. These KSHs will provide support to 12 communities of practice to facilitate GEP implementation and foster mutual support for the co-development of innovative practices, customised training and pan-European data collection.

Research overview: GEP impact

INSPIRE has an extensive research agenda including 6 different research tasks. We are contacting you in the context of one of these tasks on the hindering and facilitating factors for achieving GEP impact. We are looking for research organisations that have implemented a Gender Equality Plan for a minimum of at least 4 years and thus have had the chance to observe some outcomes in this respect. Although the literature paints a fairly uniform picture of the main GEP impact drivers, for example including the importance of top management commitment, availability of resources, stakeholder buy-in, our intention is to corroborate these impact factors and understand through a series of interviews the main hindering and facilitating factors that were crucial for achieving real change. We want to explore these questions through approximately 10 interviews with key staff that has been involved in the GEP design and implementation. Based on this material, we will write an individual case study report about your organisation that will be available to you. This work would ideally be carried out during autumn and winter 2023/2024. Overall, towards the end of spring 2024 we plan to implement 15 in-depth case studies across Europe and 20 additional light-weight case studies during 2025. The individual case studies will then be part of a comparative perspective, using Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to understand better the interplay of different contextual elements with GEP impact drivers. Naturally, our research has passed the ethical screen of the European Commission as well as the ethical commissions of our respective organisations.

Annex I.ii – Recruitment of interview participants

Email template for contacting interview partners within an organisation after first contact has been established and overall participation has been secured.

Dear XXX,

my name is [name and role of contacting person] and I'm contacting you in my role as a Consortium member of the INSPIRE project, Europe's Centre of Excellence on inclusive gender equality in research and innovation. As you may be aware, we are conducting a case study on the hindering and facilitating factors for GEP implementation at your organisation, [name of organisation]. We have been in touch with [names of EQ officers, management staff] with whom we have reached an overall agree to include [name of organisation] among our cases. Currently we are in the process of scheduling individual interviews with key personnel who has been involved in the design and implementation of the GEP. We would be delighted

if you would be available for an interview to answer some questions – based upon your experience – with regards to the Gender Equality Plan and its outcomes. The interviews usually last between 45-60 minutes, covering some general issues regarding the design and objectives of the GEP while also exploring the implementation and outcomes of individual interventions in more detail. Also attached, you'll find the Informed Consent Agreement that describes the broader context of the project, our research as well as the mutual rights and responsibilities concerning your data.

Many thanks for considering this request and we look forward to hearing from you.

With very best wishes,

XXX

[Attach corresponding informed consent sheet from D1.2 Data Management Plan Annex 5]

Annex II - Interview Guidelines CS15

Annex II.a - Equality / Diversity staff

Introductory information for the interviewer	
Instructions for the interviewer: The interview targets the **equality or diversity officer** or other key staff responsible for the design and implementation of GEPs, including in many cases administrative staff in Human Resources. Often, where those formal roles are absent, women academics who have taken on the role of equality officers will be the main interview partners. The guidelines target all key staff involved in GEP design/implementation - except management level (which are covered in Annex II.b). The interview should be among the first to be carried out in order to identify the specific interventions (career progression, decision making, gender dimension) to be analysed in more detail and identify further relevant interview partners. The **main thrust** of the interview is to get an overview of the scope, design, implementation and impact of the (gender) equality work carried out in this organisation.	
Note the structure of each question, which consists of a main question (numbered) and its follow-up questions (with letters) in case the interviewee needs additional prompts. There is no need to ask each follow-up question if the interviewee covers these issues sufficiently by her/himself.	
Please explain to the interviewee the purpose of the interview in the context of the INSPIRE project: the aim of this research is to understand better the main facilitating and hindering factors for GEP impact. 15 cases studies are carried out over several European countries. Through these interviews with different stakeholders inside the [organisation] we try to understand better the nuts and bolts of GEP implementation and how the different aspects – organisational processes, the people involved, the resources available, or the national policies – facilitate or hinder GEP implementation and impact.	
Please explain to the interviewee why and how they have been contacted.	
Check that the interviewee has received and signed the **consent form** and ask if there are any additional questions.	

1. Role & Relationship of Interviewee to [Organisation]	
1.1. Could you quickly introduce yourself and explain your role in the [Organisation]? What are your main responsibilities?	
1.2. How long have you been working in your current role in [Organisation]? (a) are the frequent changes among staff that work with you on equality issues?	

1.3. Do you remember any major changes or turning points that affected equality work in your organisation?
 	
    (a) change of rector / agenda
 	
    (b) dissolution or creation of new organisational units?	

2. Overall approach to EDI & GEP	

Through a first set of questions, we try to understand the broader picture of your [organisation] engagement with gender equality. Different concepts are used in different national contexts and organisations such as "diversity", "inclusion", "anti-discrimination", "gender+" among others and we want to understand the concepts you use and what they mean in your organisation.
 	
2.1. What is the **main concept you use** in your organisation when you discuss social justice concerns? [reference this further as main EDI-concept].
 	
    (a) Do you focus on "equality", "equity", "diversity", or "inclusion"? All three to an equal degree?
 	
    (b) Can you explain the reasons for choosing one compared to the other?
 	
    (c) Who are your main target groups in this respect? For example, do your policies target mainly women or also other minorities?
 	
    (d) If "intersectionality" is mentioned: Can you explain what you mean by an intersectional approach and how it is different from EDI if at all?
 	
    (e) If you have been involved in subsequent GEPs in this organisation, do you notice any evolution regarding the main rational of your equality policies?	

2.2. How would you describe **the importance of [main EDI-concept] in relation to other strategic values** and goals of your organisation? Is [main EDI-concept] a priority on its agenda? Why? Why not? Does your organisation have any key performance indicators with regards to [main EDI-concept]?	
2.3. Can you describe the overall governance framework for your [main EDI-concept] policies in your [organisation]? (a) what are the main organisational units involved? Vicerector, dedicated	

equality offices, HR or other administrative units? Student associations or other types of unions? (b) is gender equality mainstreamed in each of the decision-making committees? If not, is it centralised in an equality officer or team?	
2.4. What are the formal resources that you have available for carrying out your equality work in the organisation? Resources could include: (a) Dedicated staff (b) Time dedicated by academic, management or administrative staff (c) Monetary resources (d) Would you be able to quantify those resources? Example Full-time Equivalent, etc. (e) External funding, e.g. (past) EC structural change projects? (f) Safe spaces and facilities for attending GBV cases	
2.5. Please briefly describe the **main challenges** that you try to address through your GEP. What are its main challenges in your [Organisation | organisational unit] that the GEP should improve? a) Did you follow any specific process for identifying the main challenges, such as a needs assessment with your staff? What did your needs assessment involve? Interviews? A survey?	

3. GEP implementation	
Instructions for interviewer: The next block of questions asks about the practicalities of implementing specific interventions. Remember that the case study needs to cover at **least two interventions, one on career progression and one on gender-based violence**. An additional intervention targeting decision making or the gender dimension could be added. For each intervention to be covered, the interview should first gather information about the implementation of the intervention and then probe to which degree the intervention was considered successful or lacking. Specific interview questions are then available to dive deeper into the factors that contribute to its success or failure. The interview with the equality officer is crucial for identifying the specific measures to be analysed in this case. The named measures should then be consistent across all interviews.	
3.1. Looking back to the last edition of your GEP we are especially interested in interventions that target [1] **career progression** and that target [2] **gender-based violence**. Let's start with either. Could you briefly sketch the main aim of this intervention,	

i.e. what it tries/tried to achieve?

(a) What is the **goal** of the intervention. What does it try to achieve and how? Any previous evidence this is based on?

(b) What were the mayor **milestones** during the implementation?

- If this action has been part of several GEPs, how long has the overall implementation process been so far?

- Thinking about milestones: Any **decisive events** such as a positive break-through? How were these made possible?

- Identify **resistances** (passive and/or active) and set-backs and how these were overcome. Any forms of sanctions available or applied?

- which **compromises** or changes were introduced during the implementation? Why? Did any of these compromises fail to materialize? Agreements not reached? Why?

- reflect about the role of **data collection** and analysis for the implementation. How was this helpful (or not)?

(c) can you describe in more detail **your role, tasks, activities** during the implementation process?

- with **whom and how did you collaborate**? how would you describe the working climate among the key peopled involved in the equality work in your organisation?

- Who are the other **key people** we should interview for this intervention?

- did you witness any occasions where discussions got heated or people felt threatened? **Tensions** during collaboration?

- how did you achieve - if at all - stakeholder buy-in?

- did you have the feeling at any point that you are lacking skills or **training** to carry out this job? what were your most important skills for success?

(d) Can you point to any specific **legal requirement** or wider (national) policy that was especially helpful (or hindering) during the implementation?

(e) Can you point to any **other initiative(s)** in your organisation that was helpful for its implementation (or hindering)? Establishing **synergies**, alignment of agendas, or competition?

(f) how did you **monitor** the implementation? How was the monitoring data used then to steer the implementation process?

(g) Do you consider you had enough **resources** for its implementation?

4. Outcomes and impact

4.1. Let's talk about the outcomes and impact of this intervention. Can you briefly describe the main outcomes (short-term and immediate) and impact (long-term) of this intervention?
 	
    a) What **type of evidence** do you use for making these assessments? Surveys? HR statistics? Other?
 	
    b) Can you give any examples of the things that have **improved in your organisation** thanks to this intervention? In terms of representation, cultural values, working conditions, quality of science?	

4.2. Do you think the intervention has been successful? If yes, why? If not, why not?
 	
    a) How would you **define success (or failure)** in this context?
 	
    b) If you would start all-over with the design, implementation of this measure, what would you **do differently**?
 	
    c) What do you think were the main **factors** that contributed to make this intervention a **success**?
 	
    d) What do you consider to be the main factors that **prevented** this intervention from having any impact?	

4.3. Do you have evaluation reports that we could use?	

4.4. Based upon the relation between the success (or failure) of this intervention, what would you define as the main challenges for achieving impact in your organisation?
 	
    (a) lack of resources
 	
    (b) overall interest / lack of interest / backlash
 	
    (c) legal requirements & policies?
 	
    (d) wider cultural values and beliefs
 	
    (e) other, competing priorities	

5. Closing remarks	
We have come to the end of the interview. We will transcribe the interview and send you the verbatim copy for approval. You are free to make changes to the verbatim copy in any way you want. We will also anonymise the interviews before some of its quotes might be used in the overall case study report, together with the insights from other interviewees.	

5.1 Do you have any **additional comments** you want to make that we have not explicitly raised? Anything that we did not touch upon but you feel is important for gender equality and achieving real change in academia?	
5.2. Can we upload your latest GEP to our database on GenPORT. It will then become available as an inspirational resource for other organisations. If your GEP is public, we will just reference it on your website.	
5.2 Are there any other **key people** that we need to interview, especially in relation to the specific interventions we have been discussing? You mentioned some of these already during the interview, but is there anybody else that comes to mind?	
Thanks again for participating in this study, your time and all the generous insights provided.	

Annex II.b - Management Staff

Introductory information for the interviewer	
The interview guidelines with **managers** (e.g. vicerectors, deans, heads of administrative units such Human Resources, Funding Office, etc.) should happen after the first interview with the equality or diversity unit officer. Before carrying out the interview, there should be a clear sense of the scope of the GEP and which interventions were selected for in-depth study. Questions about the design, implementation and outcomes of interventions **should refer to these 2-3 concrete interventions (career progression, gender-based violence,+ one other)** - in which the interviewee has been actively participating. Where possible, insights gained from previous interview(s) should be used to ask specific questions about challenges or issues during the design/ implementation or outcomes of interventions relevant from a management perspective. A **main topic** to be discussed with managers is the role to (top) management/ leadership commitment for GEP implementation.	
Note the structure of each question, which consists of a main question (numbered) and its follow-up questions (with letters) in case the interviewee needs additional prompts. There is no need to ask each follow-up question if the interviewee covers these issues sufficiently by her/himself.	
Please explain to the interviewee the purpose of the interview in the context of the INSPIRE project: the aim of this research is to understand better the main facilitating and hindering factors for GEP impact. 15 cases studies are carried out over several European countries. Through these interviews with different stakeholders inside the [organisation] we try to understand better the nuts and bolts of GEP implementation and how the different aspects – organisational processes, the people involved, the resources available, or the national policies – facilitate or hinder GEP implementation and impact.	
Please explain to the interviewee why and how they have been contacted.	
Check that the interviewee has received and signed the **consent form** and ask if there are any additional questions.	

1. Role & Relationship of Interviewee to [Organisation]	
1.1. Could you quickly introduce yourself and explain your role in the	

[Organisation]? What are your main responsibilities?	
1.2. How long have you been working in your current role in [Organisation]? (a) are the frequent changes among staff that work with you on equality issues?	

1.3. Regarding your role in equality work in this organisation, has there been any major changes introduced either by yourself or others that affected equality work in [name of organisation]?
 	
    (a) what are the mayor changes that you have introduced when starting in your current (management) position with regards to gender equality?
 	
    (b) did you dissolve or create any new, specific organisational units dedicated to gender equality?	

2. Overall approach to EDI & GEP	

Through a first set of questions, we try to understand the broader picture of your [organisation] engagement with gender equality. Different concepts are used in different national contexts and organisations such as "diversity", "inclusion", "anti-discrimination", "gender+" among others and we want to understand the concepts you use and what they mean in your organisation.
 	
 2.1. What is the **main concept you use** in your organisation when you discuss social justice concerns? [reference this further as main EDI-concept].
 	
    (a) Do you focus on "equality", "equity", "diversity", or "inclusion"? All three to an equal degree?
 	
    (b) Can you explain the reasons for choosing one compared to the other?
 	
    (c) Who are your main target groups in this respect? For example, do your policies target mainly women or also other minorities?
 	
    (d) If "intersectionality" is mentioned: Can you explain what you mean by an intersectional approach and how it is different from EDI if at all?
 	
 If you have been involved in subsequent GEPs in this organisation, do you notice any evolution regarding the main rational of your equality policies?	

2.2. How would you describe **the importance of [main EDI-concept] in relation to other strategic values** and goals of your organisation? Is [main EDI-concept] a priority on its agenda? Why? Why not? Does your organisation have any key performance indicators with regards to [main EDI-concept]?	
2.3. Can you describe the overall governance framework for your [main EDI-concept] policies in your [organisation]?	

(a) what are the main organisational units involved? Vicerector, dedicated equality offices, HR or other administrative units? Student associations or other types of unions? (b) is gender equality mainstreamed in each of the decision-making committees? If not, is it centralised in an equality officer or team?	
2.4. How much **resources** do you make available for carrying out your equality work in the organisation? Resources could include: (a) Dedicated staff (b) Time dedicated by academic, management or administrative staff (c) Monetary resources (d) Would you be able to quantify those resources? Example Full-time Equivalent, etc. (e) External funding, e.g. (past) EC structural change projects? (f) Safe spaces and facilities for attending GBV cases	
2.5. Please briefly describe the **main challenges** that you try to address through your GEP. What are its main challenges in your [Organisation | organisational unit] that the GEP should improve? a) Did you follow any specific process for identifying the main challenges, such as a needs assessment with your staff? What did your needs assessment involve? Interviews? A survey?	

3. GEP implementation	
Instructions for interviewer: Bring to the table the two previously identified interventions that have been discussed for example with the Equality Officer. Explain to the interviewee that you want to discuss action A and B or C in more detail. Repeat the questions for the two identified measures – career progression and gender-based violence. In some cases, a comparison can be used as a heuristic device, for example: how were you as a manager involved in measure A and how did this differ - if at all - to your involvement in measure B?	
3.1. Let's focus on the first intervention concerned with career progression [or gender-based violence]. Can you describe how you and other (top) management staff in general in your organisation have supported the design and implementation of this intervention? a) Can you describe in more detail your **role, tasks and activities** during the implementation process?	

b) Can you give examples of any stall-mates, difficult situations, **dead-points** where management was able to unblock and decisively contribute to the success of the measure?

c) Can you identify any **decisive events** at the level of management/decision making where you had to defend (or where not able to defend) equality objectives face-to-face with other competing agendas and organisational goals?

d) Are there any examples of **demands** and petitions from HR or Equality Officers that you could **not meet**? Why was this not possible? What were the hindering factors?

e) To which degree is your decision making based upon organisational (equality) **data collection**? Can you describe the established channels for your to receive equality monitoring data?

3.2. As a manager you have an overview of the competing and multiple demands on many levels in your organisation. From a birds-eye perspective, can you identify any **key collaborations or synergies** as well as **competing agendas** that either have facilitated or hindered the implementation of this intervention?

(a) How are these competing demands usually resolved?

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4. Outcomes and impact

4.1. Let's talk about the outcomes and impact of this intervention. Can you briefly describe the main outcomes (short-term and immediate) and impact (long-term) of this intervention?

a) What **type of evidence** do you use for making these assessments? Surveys? HR statistics? Other?

b) Can you give any examples of the things that have **improved in your organisation** thanks to this intervention? In terms of representation, cultural values, working conditions, quality of science?

4.2. Do you think the intervention has been successful? If yes, why? If not, why not?

a) How would you **define success (or failure)** in this context?

b) If you would start all-over with the design, implementation of this measure, what would you **do differently**?

c) What do you think were the main **factors** that contributed to make this intervention a **success**?

What do you consider to be the main factors that **prevented** this intervention from having any impact?

4.3. Thinking about your organisation, what would you identify as the main

hindering as well as facilitating factors for achieving GEP impact in general and for this specific intervention in particular? Can you give examples of hindering and facilitating factors at the level of:

    a) overall organisational structure and sub-division of organisational units
    b) (lean) administrative processes
    c) decision making structure, transparency and accountability
    d) stakeholder involvement and sense of community
    e) availability of resources
    f) legal requirements & policies
    g) wider cultural values and beliefs
    h) other, competing priorities

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5. Closing remarks

We have come to the end of the interview. We will transcribe the interview and send you the verbatim copy for approval. You are free to make changes to the verbatim copy in any way you want. We will also anonymise the interviews before some of its quotes might be used in the overall case study report, together with the insights from other interviewees.

5.1 Do you have any **additional comments** you want to make that we have not explicitly raised? Anything that we did not touch upon but you feel is important for gender equality and achieving real change in academia?

5.2 Are there any other **key people** that we need to interview, especially in relation to the specific interventions we have been discussing? You mentioned some of these already during the interview, but is there anybody else that comes to mind?

Thanks again for participating in this study, your time and all the generous insights provided.

Annex II.c - Beneficiaries of GEP interventions

Introductory information for the interviewer	
The interview targets the **beneficiaries of GEP interventions**. Depending on the specific actions, beneficiaries can include women academics, disabled staff, ethnic minority students, LGBTQ students or staff, etc. It can include any target population that the GEP actively identifies and tries to reach with specific interventions. The **main focus** of the interview should be on the outcome and impact of the intervention, including any improvement achieved. The interview should be held after management and equality officers have been interviewed to contrast the won insights regarding GEP design, implementation and especially outcomes with affected beneficiaries. If specific interventions are scrutinized, beneficiaries should be members of the corresponding target group.	
Note the structure of each question, which consists of a main question (numbered) and its follow-up questions (with letters) in case the interviewee needs additional prompts. There is no need to ask each follow-up question if the interviewee covers these issues sufficiently by her/himself.	
Please explain to the interviewee the purpose of the interview in the context of the INSPIRE project: the aim of this research is to understand better the main facilitating and hindering factors for GEP impact. 15 cases studies are carried out over several European countries. Through these interviews with different stakeholders inside the [organisation] we try to understand better the nuts and bolts of GEP implementation and how the different aspects – organisational processes, the people involved, the resources available, or the national policies – facilitate or hinder GEP implementation and impact.	
Please explain to the interviewee why and how they have been contacted.	
Check that the interviewee has received and signed the **consent form** and ask if there are any additional questions.	

1. Role & Relationship of Interviewee to [Organisation]	
1.1. Could you quickly introduce yourself and explain your association with the [Organisation]?	
1.2. How long have you been part of [name of the organisation]?	
1.3. Do you have any awareness of any major changes or turning points that	

affected equality work in this organisation? This could include

    a) change of rector / agenda

    b) dissolution or creation of new organisational units?

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2. Overall awareness of GEP and identifying main challenges

2.1. Considering your experience, what are the **main challenges in this organisation for gender equality and/or for other forms of discrimination in particular?**

    a) With which challenges or needs do you personally identify with have you personally experience with?

    b) Have there been any decisive events for your personally or for others where these equality needs surfaced and became important?

    c) Other interview partners have identified [name of main EDI-concept]. Do you agree with this or is the meaning of this term unclear to you?

    d) If you have been part of this organisation for several years, have you observed a change in the main target groups addressed?

2.2. How would you describe **the importance of [main EDI-concept] in relation to other strategic values** and goals in this organisation? Is [main EDI-concept] a priority on its agenda? Why? Why not?

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3. GEP design

3.1. Have you been part of any type of **needs assessment** during the design phase of the [name of the intervention]?

Needs assessment can take different forms, involving for example:

    a) focus groups

    b) interviews

    c) web-based surveys

    d) feedback to drafts of the potential measures

    e) being invited to panel or working groups

4. GEP Implementation	

4.1. Let's think about how [name of the intervention] has been implemented. Can you describe in more detail **your experiences** during the implementation process?
 	
    a) thinking about the process, did you witness any occasions where discussions got heated or people felt threatened? **Any tensions**?
 	
    b) any occasions or decisive events that you would describe as **break-through** or **endpoints** during the implementation?
 	
    c) Can you point to any **other initiative(s)** in the organisation that were helpful for its implementation? Establishing **synergies**, alignment of agendas? Or on the contrary: competing agendas?
 	
    d) Was there any **monitoring** of the implementation that could be used to steer its implementation?
 	
    e) Do you consider that the equality unit (or organisers in general) had enough **resources** for its implementation?
 	
    f) did you witness any type of **resistance** that hindered the implementation of the intervention?	

4.2 What do you think were the **main hindering and facilitating factors** that contributed to the implementation of this action? What do you consider where the main obstacles that made the implementation difficult or impossible?	

5. Outcomes and impact	

5.1. Let's talk about the outcomes and impact of this intervention. Can you briefly describe the main outcomes (short-term and immediate) and impact (long-term) of this intervention?
 	
    a) Can you give any examples of how this intervention has **improved things in the organisation** for you? In terms of representation, cultural values, working conditions, quality of science?
 	
    b) Do you use any other **type of evidence** for making these assessments? Other, such as surveys or official HR statistics?
 	
    c) Have you participated in evaluations of the GEP or this intervention, for example through surveys, interviews, focus groups?	

5.2. Do you think the intervention has been successful? If yes, why? If not, why not? a) How would you **define success (or failure)** in this context?	

b) What do you think were the main **factors** that contributed to make this intervention a **success**? c) What do you consider to be the main factors that **prevented** this intervention from having any impact?	
5.3. Based upon the relation between the success (or failure) of this intervention actions, what would you define as the main challenges for achieving impact in this organisation? (f) lack of resources (g) overall interest / lack of interest / backlash (h) legal requirements & policies? (i) wider cultural values and beliefs (j) other, competing priorities	

6. Closing remarks	
We have come to the end of the interview. We will transcribe the interview and send you the verbatim copy for approval. You are free to make changes to the verbatim copy in any way you want. We will also anonymise the interviews before some of its quotes might be used in the overall case study report, together with the insights from other interviewees.	
6.1 Do you have any **additional comments** you want to make that we have not explicitly raised? Anything that we did not touch upon but you feel is important for gender equality and achieving real change in academia?	
6.2 Are there any other **key people** that we need to interview, especially in relation to the specific interventions we have been discussing?	
Thanks again for participating in this study, your time and all the generous insights provided.	

Annex III - Minimal Codebook

A minimal codebook based upon the key topics identified in the conceptual framework.

1. Biography, professional situation, and career
	Description of current professional activities and responsibilities This provides a descriptive account of the current role and tasks carried out of the interviewee. For example, their work as an Equality Officer, Researcher, student, or other. What are their common tasks?
	Previous work experiences & career stages Comparison with work carried out in other similar positions and organizations before their current position. Also includes their professional education (mentioning of university degrees, disciplines).

2. Overall approach to EDI and GEP, key concepts
	Equality Definitions and understandings of equality in relation to any dimension of social discrimination, including gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
	Equity Definitions and understandings of equality in relation to any dimension of social discrimination, including gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
	Inclusion Definitions and understandings of equality in relation to any dimension of social discrimination, including gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
	Diversity Definitions and understandings of equality in relation to any dimension of social discrimination, including gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
	Equality-Diversity-Inclusion Definitions and understandings of EDI to the degree that this is described as a unity of these three concepts explicitly.
	Intersectionality Definitions and understandings of intersectionality by the interviewee, including those where intersectionality is reduced to diversity.

Business case Rationales or conceptions of equality/diversity that improve the quality of science or innovation	
Social justice case Rational or conceptions of equality/diversity that are grounded in an ethical argument. Justification of equality is based on an argument because it is the "right thing to do"	
Reflexive approach to organisational change Descriptions of tasks and activities that refer to an reflexive approach to gender equality, where equality interventions are planned ahead by explicitly looking (monitoring) back to previous or other actions.	
Theory of change Explanations of how certain interventions/actions are about to effect organisational change. Arguments why certain actions are implemented compared to others	
Scientific excellence Definitions and analysis about the role of scientific excellence for hindering or facilitating equality	
Care, self-care References to the role (or lack of) and value of care and self-care in the academic, organisational context	

3. Dimensions of social discrimination Different dimensions and target groups that are addressed by a given GEP and its interventions	
	Gender
	Race
	Ethnicity
	Social class
	Religion
	Sexual orientation
	Trans-history
	Disability / chronic health issues
	Age

4. GEP design and implementation	
	Facilitating factor
	Hindering factor
	Data monitoring Difficulties or solutions of data monitoring for initial GEP audit or monitoring during implementation process. Use of the data for decision making. Mentions of different means including surveys, interviews, focus groups. Descriptions of specific indicators used.
	Leadership commitment Descriptions of the role of middle and senior management and decision makers for equality work. Descriptions of different forms of commitment and their impact.
	Resistance Different types of resistance including individual, organisational, implicit, explicit. This can also include descriptions of any type of conflict between stakeholders.
	Backlash Role and references to direct backlash to equality work within the organisation
	Power References to the role of power, powerful stakeholders/actors, power struggles during GEP design/implementation
	Resources Descriptions of dedicated resources for equality work, or lack thereof.
	Participation and buy-in References to bottom-up approach to GEP design and implementation to achieve stakeholder participation and buy-in. Covers also consequences of bottom-up approach. Needs assessment carried out during initial GEP audit.
	Involvement of men References to the role, recruitment and value of active involvement of men for equality work
	Allies and alliances Any type of external or internal alliances that has helped or made the implementation of the GEP easier / harder.
	Critical mass Descriptions of interviewees of feeling isolated and alone; how achievement of like-minded within the organisation has facilitated change

	Targets
	References to explicit numerical targets that have been set or have been (not) achieved for the GEP or individual interventions
	National policy
	Role of regional or national policy as incentive or driving / hindering GEP implementation and impact
	Decisive events
	References to key turning points or other decisive events during the implementation
	Accountability
	Role of accountability and potential sanctions (or lack therefore) and how it has affected implementation of GEP/interventions
	Emotion
	Role of emotions
	Turn-over
	Descriptions of frequent changes of equality workers, sustainability of Equality efforts, institutional memory, re-inventing the wheel.
	Community of practice
	Direct references to the role of creating or working in a Community of practice

5. Type of GEP challenges and interventions	
	Recruitment
	Descriptions of the problem/issue or interventions designed to address the issue of lack of X during recruitment for faculty or other positions. Strategies to deal with this, such as pro-active search for job candidates, careful revising job advertisement texts, etc.
	Career progression
	Description of the problem or interventions designed to address vertical segregation, scissors diagram, lack of highest grade women professors.
	Work-life balance
	Descriptions of problems or interventions and policies addressing early-childhood or adult care responsibilities
	Awareness raising
	Dissemination and awareness raising activities carried out for a general public, e.g. conferences, events days such as Women, Girls in Science days.

	Equality competence training
	Courses and training seminars related to EDI work, including implicit bias training, by-stander training, etc. Refers to any dimension of social discrimination.
	Gender-based violence
	Including sexual harassment
	Sex- and gender-based analysis
	Descriptions of the challenges or interventions to integrate sex- and gender-based analysis in research, innovation or teaching.
	Decision making
	More equal representation of women and other under-represented groups in decision making positions
	Wage gap
	References or interventions to address the wage gap
	Horizontal segregation
	Descriptions of under-representation of women or men or other groups in certain scientific disciplines or professional areas. Interventions to address this issue.

6. Organisational factors	
	Organisational governance framework
	Descriptions of organisational units and sub-units, how organisational decision making happens, how power is distributed. Rather flat or hierarchical organisation, references to levels of autonomy of departments
	Organisational characteristics
	Descriptions of the overall characteristics of the organisation, such as size, location, disciplinary coverage, units and sub-units, any awards or linkage with industry, mergers, etc.
	Organisation of EDI
	References to how EDI work is organised, including descriptions of centralized Equality or Diversity Offices, the role of gender mainstreaming, the role of decentralisation of equality efforts.
	Organisational strategy
	Role of EDI vis-a-vis other organisational strategic goals. Descriptions of competing organisational agendas and conflicts.
	Organisational culture and climate

	Descriptions of overall organisational cultural values
	Context
	References to important organisational characteristics, wider context factors (e.g. population), or events that condition current EDI work

7. Outcomes and impact	
	Impact
	Descriptions of long-term impact of GEP or GEP interventions.
	Outcome
	Descriptions of outcomes of GEP or GEP interventions. Outcomes are short-term, direct tangible results of a GEP action, e.g. number of participants reached for training workshop.
	Success
	Definitions of what is deemed a successful GEP intervention, including the analysis of why this is the case
	Failed
	Definitions of what is deemed a failed GEP intervention, or an intervention that is less successful, including the analysis of why this is the case.
	Sustainability
	References to the sustainability of achieved change

Annex IV - Analytic Report In-depth Case Studies

For a more detailed description of each section, see section 5.1.

1. Introducing the case

   1.1.   Organisational characteristics
   1.2.   Methods
2. Overall EDI approach and GEP scope

   2.1.   Main approach to social justice
   2.2.   GEP scope and main interventions
3. GEP Implementation

   3.1. Analysis of intervention 1

   3.2. Analysis of intervention 2

   3.3. Analysis of intervention 3
4. GEP outcomes & impact

   4.1. Analysis of outcomes and impact intervention 1

   4.2. Analysis of outcomes and impact intervention 2

   4.3. Analysis of outcomes and impact intervention 3
5. Concluding reflections

6. References

Annex V - List of potential cases

**Examples of GEPs addressing multiple categories
of social exclusion from Ecorys study**
(see page 87 of policy brief (PB5):

The **Linnaeus University (SE)** Gender Equality Plan focuses on intersectionality, within which gender lays the foundation for equality policies, but not without consideration of the other identity structures it intersects with to shape individuals' experiences of discrimination and inclusion. This approach acknowledges the complexity of the human condition, where different factors interact with each other (class, gender identity or gender expression, ethnicity, religion or other fundamental belief, functionality, sexual orientation, and age).

The **University of Bergen (NO)** Diversity and inclusion action plan 2017–2022 commits to promoting equality and diversity at all levels of management, eliminating discrimination and addressing exclusion on the basis of gender, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion and beliefs, functional abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity or age. The strategy aims to review of scientific careers of employees with impaired functional abilities; targeted measures for refugees – Scholars at Risk and Students at Risk; and the use of trainee schemes for people with impaired functional abilities, people with immigrant backgrounds and refugees.

The **University of Helsinki (FI)** Equality and Diversity Plan 2021-2024 focuses on promoting cultural sensitivity, anti-racism, equality of religion and belief, accessibility, special arrangements and equal assessment practices, and the equality of gender and sexual minorities, in addition to multiculturalism, linguistic diversity, and equality of age, within the university community. The Equality and Diversity Committee oversees this strategy and monitors and evaluates the progress achieved across three key areas: the promotion of inclusion and a thriving study and work culture; the promotion of equal leadership work; and the promotion of social equality efforts.

The **Bocconi University (IT)** Inclusive Gender Equality Plan's supports the university's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and the Honor Code for the Bocconi community. The GEP focuses on implementing an integrated approach to increasing the diversity and inclusion of students, staff and faculty, considering gender, gender identity, disability and mental health, sexual orientation, geographical diversity (national/ ethnic background), and religion as key diversity markers.

The **Radboud University (NL)** Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan 2021-2025 includes gender equality and reducing inequalities among its key priorities, allocating targeted financial and human resources to ensure its implementation and the monitoring of its different areas of action. The plan considers diversity, equality and inclusion enablers of education, research and impact. Disability, migrant background and refugee status, LGBTQI+ and gender identity are specifically addressed in the plan. The 2020 diversity, equity and inclusion progress

brief highlights that the plan implementation should be informed by intersectionality considerations to help address power imbalances in education and research.

The **Utrecht University (NL)** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025 aims to increase equality, diversity and inclusiveness in the university by focusing on several diversity markers. The Action Plan's key objectives, implemented through a variety of activities and operationalised through several related key performance indicators, include enabling a more inclusive curriculum, and facilitating integrated reporting of diversity data to gather information about student and staff population by gender, migration background, socio-economic background, LGBTQ+ and disability characteristics.

The **Vilnius University (LT)** 2021 Gender Equality Plan 2021-2025 was developed in the "Supporting and Implementing Plans for Gender Equality in Academia and Research 2019-2022" (SPEAR) project funded by Horizon 2020. The GEP is implementing gender equality objectives in the Vilnius University's Diversity and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2020-2025, which considers characteristics such as gender, disability and nationality.

Examples from the European Commission. (2022). *Approaches to inclusive gender equality in research and innovation (R&I)*. Publications Office of the European Union. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/004694

Birmingham University's (UK) Annual EDI Action Plan, as part of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Scheme 2021-2024, clearly outlines targeted actions undertaken each year to create an inclusive environment, dismantle structural barriers, and integrate EDI across the University's activities. The specific actions are underpinned by the University's Fairness and Diversity Policy and are co-coordinated by the College EDI Officers and Committees and the Equality Change Programme (EPC) Workstreams, in alignment with the Athena Swan Charter. The approach comprises of complex strategies and initiatives targeting specific groups, including the LGBTQ+ community, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, and people with disabilities.

Bocconi University's (Italy) Inclusive Gender Equality Plan, Bocconi University commits to offering all members of its community equality of opportunity and treatment, irrespective of personal characteristics and background, embedding this commitment across all activities of the University through dedicated metrics and indicators. The implementation of the plan is overseen by the Dean of Diversity and Inclusion, diversity delegates in each department, and three university committees on which both staff and students are represented. The plan's key objectives include increasing the visibility of diverse role models, embedding diversity in the selection, hiring and retention of students, staff and faculty, and developing inclusive teaching programmes.

Heidelberg University (Germany) published a Diversity Strategy (2012-2017) which includes guiding principles and targets with related actions and key performance indicators, encompassing several dimensions of diversity: age, gender, family, cultural background and

worldview, social background, health and disability. Action targeting single characteristics also exist within the realm of the approach, specifically in relation to refugees, women and carers.

Maynooth University (Ireland) has an Office of the Vice President for Equality & Diversity, which oversees the University's EDI strategy – outlined in the Strategic Plan 2018-22 – and is responsible for realising "the University's core values of equality, inclusiveness, social justice, dignity and respect, and to fulfil its obligations in these area". This broad commitment is also underpinned by a series of specific actions and plans in relation to different characteristics, including projects relating to sexual harassment, disability, intersectionality, LGBTQIA+, parents and carers and race equality, as well as developing cross-cutting tools to support actions, and internal EDI project funding opportunities.

Radboud University's (Netherlands) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan 2021-2025 aims to promote a safe and inclusive campus society that embraces diversity and social justice. The approach considers diversity, equality and inclusion as starting points for education, research and impact. Gender, disability, migrant background and refugee status, LGBTQI+ and gender identity are specifically addressed by the strategy. The DEI Steering Committee coordinates the work of the decentralised DEI committees present in each faculty.

Trinity College Dublin's (Ireland) Strategy for Diversity and Inclusion (SDI) 2014-2019 is framed around several key pieces of legislation: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the Equality Acts 1998-2011; the Equal Status Acts 2000-2012; the Universities Act 1997; and the Disability Act 2005. In connection to the overarching College Strategy 2014-2019, the approach sets out specific EDI goals with the aim of creating an inclusive, diverse and pluralist college community, accompanied by a detailed framework outlining performance indicators, targeted actions, and deliverables required.

University of Ottawa's (Canada) EDI Action Plan for Research plan identifies strategies and actions that strengthen institutional commitment to EDI in research and create an inclusive climate for the university's researchers, graduates students, trainees and research personnel. The strategy is overseen by the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation and addresses five key under-represented groups: women, indigenous peoples, visible minorities/racialised persons, LGBTQI2S+ community [2S refers to people who fall under a traditional third gender or variant in some Indigenous North American cultures], and persons with disabilities.

Utrecht University (Netherlands), through its EDI Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025, outlines the plans, objectives and actions taken by the organisation to "make a visible contribution to an inclusive university community, to a just society, and to equal rights and equal opportunities for all" through EDI, which is viewed as a central starting point for the policy domains of education, research and impact. The Action Plan sets out five key objectives, with several related key performance indicators and examples of actions in relation to different dimensions of inequality: age, LGBTQ+, cultural, ethnic or religious background, gender and disability – with more emphasis being placed in recent years on ethnic and cultural background.

Vilnius University's (Lithuania) Diversity and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2020-2025 aims to create a study and work environment at the University that promotes individual, social and cultural diversity and ensures equal opportunities for members of the University's community. It notes a connection to international human and civil rights law, laws of the Republic of

Lithuania, the University's governing framework and strategy for 2018-2024. The overarching strategy is then supported by an implementation plan for the period of 2020-2022. This plan outlines clearly defined objectives for the implementation of the strategy in relation to the key target groups, gender, disability and foreign students and staff.

Examples cite in LERU EDI paper:

University of Amsterdam (UvA)

- Responsibilities and engagement of the university leadership

- Academic Diversity Programme (ADP) – Student-to-student mentoring

- EduHub – Reaching out to pre-university pupils

- Recruitment and selection of female scientist in the Faculty of Science

University of Cambridge

- "Breaking the Silence" - a case study on sexual misconduct, written by Miriam Lynn and Sarah d'Ambrumenil, University of Cambridge

Trinity College Dublin

- Responsibilities and engagement of the university leadership

- Monitoring and communicating

- "Don't Cross the Line" campaign on bullying and harassment

University of Freiburg

- Responsibilities and engagement of the university leadership

- The importance of speaking up

- Changing structures, processes and culture: raising awareness and organising trainings

University of Geneva

- Equal opportunities matter

- Equal recruitment matters

- Gender matters

- Diversity matters

- Inclusive language matters

- Sexism and harassment matter

University of Heidelberg

- Online tutorial "Against Gender Bias"

University of Helsinki

- Responsibilities and engagement of the university leadership

- Changing structures, processes and culture: raising awareness and organising trainings

Leiden University

- Policy and engagement of the university leadership

- The POPcorner: student support and community building

- Toward an inclusive working and learning environment

KU Leuven

Imperial College London

Lund University

LMU Munich

University of Oxford

Sorbonne University

- The gender equality initiative

- The diversity and inclusion initiative

- The disability initiative

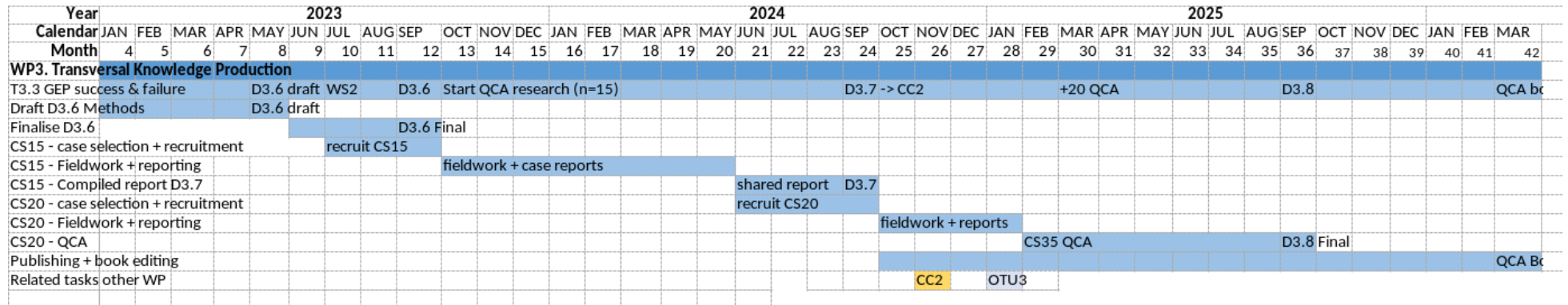- Synergies and intersectionality

Utrecht University

- Leadership

University of Zurich

EU Gender Equality Champion winners

- Sustainability: Trinity and Karolinska

- Newcomer: Mynooth

- Inclusive GEPs: South East Technological University (Ireland)

Year	2023												2024												2025														
Calendar	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Month	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42

WP3. Transversal Knowledge Production

Task	Milestones / Annotations (by calendar month)
T3.3 GEP success & failure	D3.6 draft (MAY 2023), WS2 (JUN 2023), D3.6 (AUG 2023), Start QCA research (n=15) (SEP 2023), D3.7 -> CC2 (SEP 2024), +20 QCA (MAR 2025), D3.8 (AUG 2025), QCA bo… (MAR)
Draft D3.6 Methods	D3.6 draft (MAY 2023)
Finalise D3.6	D3.6 Final (SEP 2023)
CS15 - case selection + recruitment	recruit CS15 (JUN–AUG 2023)
CS15 - Fieldwork + reporting	fieldwork + case reports (SEP 2023 – MAY 2024)
CS15 - Compiled report D3.7	shared report (JUN 2024), D3.7 (AUG 2024)
CS20 - case selection + recruitment	recruit CS20 (JUN–JUL 2024)
CS20 - Fieldwork + reporting	fieldwork + reports (SEP–NOV 2024)
CS20 - QCA	CS35 QCA (MAR 2025), D3.8 Final (AUG 2025)
Publishing + book editing	(DEC 2024 onward), QCA Bo… (MAR)
Related tasks other WP	CC2 (NOV 2024), OTU3 (JAN 2025)

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