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Deliverable 7.4

Report on Policy Workshop

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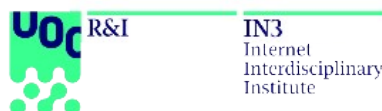| Version	Date	Author/Editor/ Contributor/Reviewer	Summary of changes
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List of acronyms / abbreviations used in this document

ASC	Athena SWAN Charters
CAS	Certification and award scheme
D	Deliverable
EC	European Commission
EDI	Equality, diversity and inclusion
EU	European Union
FUOC	Fundacio per la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
GE	Gender Equality
GECAS	Gender Equality Certification or Award Scheme
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
MS	Member State(s)
R&I	Research and innovation
RFO(s)	Research Funding Organization(s)
RPO(s)	Research Performing Organization(s)
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UK	United Kingdom

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Executive Summary

The CASPER project has examined the feasibility of establishing a European award/certification system for gender equality for Research Performing Organizations. Based upon an extensive assessment of available certification schemes and needs across Europe and beyond, the project has developed and evaluated three possible scenarios.

This deliverable summarizes the presentations and discussions of the CASPER final conference organised as two online sessions. On day 1 (14th of March 2022), the main project results concerning the development and validation of three gender equality award/certification schemes were presented. In addition, the associated policy recommendations were introduced. Anne Pépin, Senior Policy Officer at DG Research & Innovation introduced the overall EU policy context. Day 1 also featured a panel discussion with the contributions of Gary Loke, Chris Grieve, Pat O'Conner and Marcela Linková on the possible contribution of a Europe wide certification scheme to gender equality in R&I.

Presentations during day 2 (21st of March 2022) introduced the "Impact Drivers" model for assessing institutional change and the benchmarking tool developed by the CASPER project for assessing the equivalency between existing national equality certification schemes and the Horizon Europe Gender Equality Plan eligibility criterion. The participants of the second panel discussion were Andrea Petö, Marissa Herder, Zulema Altamirano, and Gemma Irvine.

The report furthermore contains the links to the given presentations as well as to the corresponding video recordings.

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1.   Introduction

1.1. Background / Deliverable Description

The CASPER project has examined the feasibility of establishing a European award/certification system for gender equality for Research Performing Organizations. Based upon an extensive assessment of available certification schemes and needs across Europe and beyond, we have developed and evaluated three possible scenarios. A two-day online final conference was organised during March 2022 to present the project results and bring together gender equality practitioners, researchers, policy makers and other stakeholders of the European research and innovation system to discuss the results and reflect upon their further implications in a shifting policy landscape.

This deliverable summarizes the discussion and main insights of the event. In addition, the video recordings of each session are available under the following address:

Day 1 - March 14th 2022: https://vimeo.com/691717641
Day 2 - March 21st 2022: https://vimeo.com/691834397

1.2. Relation to other deliverables

Project results were presented on the final conference related to the following deliverables:

- Nason, Giulia, and Maria Sangiuliano. 2020a. "Policy Framing Report." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.3833836
- Nason, Giulia, and Maria Sangiuliano. 2020b. "State of the Art Analysis: Mapping the Awarding Certification Landscape in Higher Education and Research." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4121872
- Tzanakou, Charikleia, Shireen Chilcott, Kate Clayton-Hathway, and Anne Laure Humbert. 2020. "Key Prerequisites for a Europe-Wide Gender Equality Scheme." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4428167
- Denis, Alain, and Vasia Madesi. 2022. "Validated Version of the 4 Scenarios." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.6325078
- Cacace, Marina, Federico Marta, Francesca Pugliese, and Gabriele Quinti. 2022. "Policy Recommendations on the Certification/Award System." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.6393146

1.3. Organisation and agenda of the final conference

The event was organised in two 3-hour sessions, taking advantage of the online only format. Day 1 was dedicated to the presentation of the development and validation of a European-wide Certification Scheme for Gender Equality while Day 2 introduced additional operational tools to support institutional change.

Day 1 - 14.03.2022 - 14:00-17:00 CET

The first online seminar focused on the main results of CASPER and the related policy recommendations. The results of the mapping of existing certificates in Europe and beyond were

presented, together with the work carried out to develop and validate three different gender equality certification scenarios. A panel discussion on the potential impact of a Europe-wide certification system on gender equality in R&I closed the first day.

Moderator: Anne Laure Humbert

Welcome and brief presentation of CASPER project, 'project journey'	Anne Laure Humbert	OBU	2:00 – 2:10
Gender Equality Plans and EU Policy for Gender Equality in Research and Innovation	Anne Pépin	EC	2:10 – 2:20
Development of Certification Scenarios for Gender Equality			2:20 – 3:15
Underpinning the development of scenarios (mapping, needs assessment, co-creation)	Charoula Tzanakou	OBU	
Scenario presentation and validation	Marina Cacace	K&I	
Presentation of the final scenarios	Alain Denis	YW	
Q&A			
Coffee Break			3:15 – 3:30
Policy recommendations	Marina Cacace	K&I	3:30 – 4:00
Panel Discussion: "What can a Europe-wide GECAS contribute to gender equality in R&I?"	Gary Loke Chris Grieve Pat O'Connor Marcela Linková	AB AB UL ISAS	4:00 – 4:50
Q&A			
Conclusions	Anne Laure Humbert	OBU	4:50 – 5:00

Day 2 - 21.03.2022 - 14:00-17:00 CET

The second online seminar was dedicated to discussing the operational tools developed by CASPER to support Gender Equality mainstreaming and institutional changes. The first part of the session focused on the assessment of institutional change for gender equality through the "Impact Drivers" model. The second part of the webinar introduced the benchmarking tool developed by the CASPER project to establish the equivalency between the different existing gender equality certificates in Europe and the requirements as defined by the GEP eligibility criterion to access Horizon Europe funding. A panel discussion on the added-value of a new European gender equality certificate in conjunction to the GEP eligibility criterion closed the event.

Moderator: Jörg Müller

Welcome and brief presentation of CASPER project	Jörg Müller	FUOC	2:00 – 2:10
Assessing institutional changes through Impact Drivers model *Q&A*	Lut Mergaert Ana Belén Amil	YW CEU	2:10 – 2:50
Focused benchmarking and stakeholders' consultation on the alignment of existing GECAS with the new Horizon Europe eligibility	Maria Sangiuliano	SV	2:50 – 3:30

criterion			
Q&A			
Coffee Break			3:30 – 3:45
Panel discussion: What would be the added value of a European scheme to the existing GEP EC-requirement / How can a Europe-wide GECAS support institutional gender change and the GEP requirement	Gemma Irvine Zulema Altamirano Marissa Herder Andrea Petö	MU MICINN LU CEU	3:45 – 4:40
Q&A			
Closing of the CASPER conference	Jörg Müller	FUOC	4:40 – 4:50

A registration page was setup on the projects website and disseminated through the social media channels of CASPER (mainly Twitter) and via Consortium members profiles including LinkedIn. Invitations were also send out to all involved stakeholders throughout the various phases of the project, including the co-creation workshops and validation exercises.

A total of 114 person external to the Consortium registered to the event. As Figure 1 shows, participation registered for both days roughly equally (Day 1 = 91 and Day 2 = 105) and came from 33 countries in Europe and beyond (USA, Brazil, Georgia, India, Ukraine, Turkey).
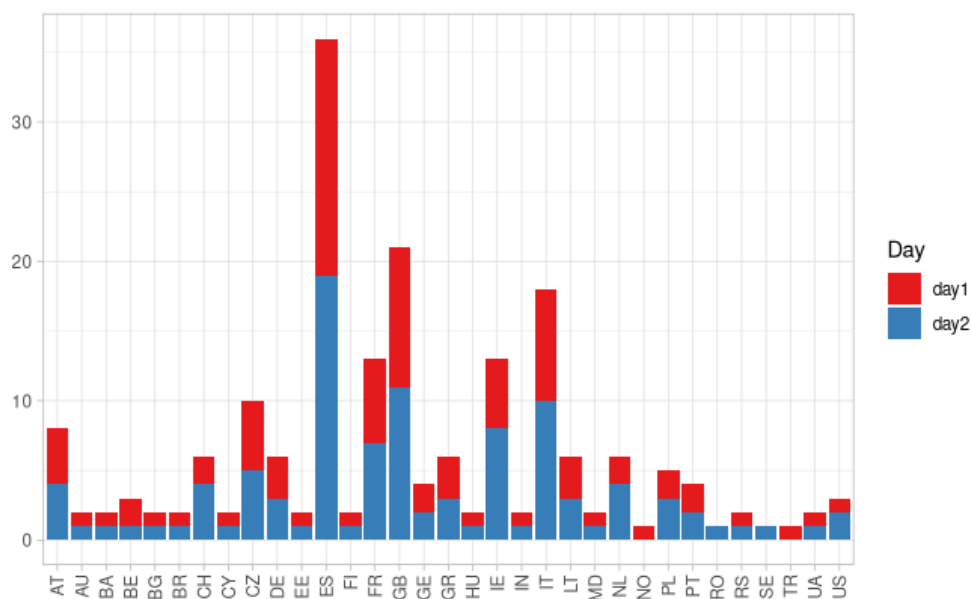

Figure 1: Participants of final conference by day and country

The actual peak attendance for day 1 was 65 while peak attendance for day 2 was 55 people.

2.   Day 1 - CASPER co-creation journey to develop scenarios for a European-wide Certification Scheme for Gender Equality

Day 1 was moderated by Anne Laure Humbert from Oxford Brookes University, UK. A brief presentation provided information on the CASPER project itself and its relation to the wider EU gender equality policy developments.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-anne-laure-humbert-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=1m15s

Anne Pépin, Senior Policy Officer at DG Research & Innovation introduced in a detailed manner the current gender equality policy developments at the European Level.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-anne-Pépin-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=7m9s

In her presentation on "*Gender Equality Plans and EU Policy for Gender Equality in Research and Innovation*" she discussed the new European Research Area (ERA) Policy Framework, including the Council Recommendation for a Pact for R&I in Europe (Council of the European Union 2021a), the Council Conclusions on the future governance of the ERA (Council of the European Union 2021b) and the ERA Policy Agenda (2022-2024) (European Commission 2021). The Ljubljana Declaration on Gender Equality in Research and Innovation (Council of the European Union 2021c) is a further important milestone as it signals the Member State compromise for these gender equality actions in the ERA.

Anne Pépin further addressed Action 5 (Promote gender equality and foster inclusiveness) and Action 4 (promote attractive and sustainable research careers, balanced talent circulation and international, transdisciplinary and inter-sectoral mobility) of the ERA in more detail, as well as how gender equality has been strengthened as a cross-cutting priority in Horizon Europe. This includes three levels:

- Make Gender Equality Plans an eligibility criterion for accessing Horizon Europe funding
- Mandatory integration of the gender dimension in R&I content
- Using gender balance in research teams as a ranking criterion

Her presentation closed with a summary of the existing tools to support GEP practice and knowledge, including the GEAR tool, as well as the forthcoming projects and further funding opportunities within Horizon Europe.

2.1. Project results: mapping, validation of final scenarios, policy recommendations

The first presentation regarding the CASPER project results was given by **Charoula Tzanakou** (Oxford Brookes University) on the **mapping and assessment of the existing award and certification schemes** for gender equality in order to identify existing needs for such a system at the European level.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-charoula-tzanakou-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=22m1s
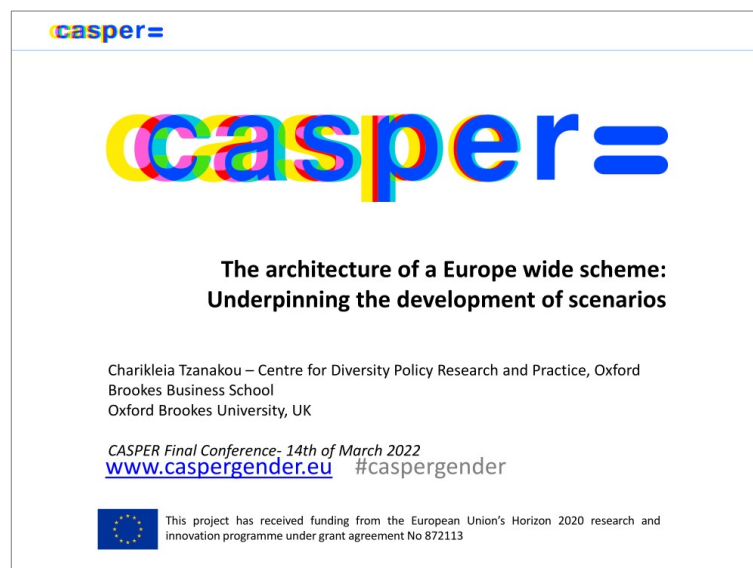
A detailed deliverable for the mapping and assessment of existing schemes is available:

- Tzanakou, Charikleia, Shireen Chilcott, Kate Clayton-Hathway, and Anne Laure Humbert. 2020. "Key Prerequisites for a Europe-Wide Gender Equality Scheme." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4428167.

A summary of the work has been posted also on the Blog of the CASPER project: *What should be considered for the architecture of a Europe-wide gender equality scheme?*. Post published by Charoula Tzanakou, Kate Clayton-Hathway and Anne-Laure Humbert on the 12th of April 2021.

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The second presentation regarding CASPER results was given by **Alain Denis** (Yellow Window) introducing the **final, validated three award/certification schemes** for gender equality.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-alain-denis-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=35m15s

Deliverable 6.1 introduces the details of each of the presented scenarios, including the creation of a new EU-wide certificate "EUQUAL", the adaptation of the Human Resource Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) for gender equality "GES4R", and the "Europeanisation of the Athena SWAN Charter".

- Denis, Alain, and Vasia Madesi. 2022. "Validated Version of the 4 Scenarios." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.6325078.

The presentation also included an analysis of the main advantages and challenges of a no direct action scenario, where gender equality certification would be managed primarily by national policy makers, while the EC would take on a coordinating and steering role across Member States.

The third presentation was given by **Marina Cacace** from Knowledge and Innovation on the **validation process and results** for the certification scenarios.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-marina-cacace-validation-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=54m40s

In her presentation Marina Cacace explained the methodology for validating each of the three scenarios, the no direction action scenario with a questionnaire, follow-up interviews and a walk-through exercise. Among the main insights generated by the validation is the fact that, the country cluster differences across Europe are extremely relevant in terms of the potential usefulness and impact of a chosen gender equality scheme. In this respect it was highlighted, that the validated scenarios offer a clear, evidence-based view of the policy options available and their possible reception and further development.

Question & Answer regarding all three previous presentations

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=1h8m58s

Question 1

Pat O'Connor via Zoom Chat: I would like to hear Alain's evaluation of the three models in terms of their ability to deal with institutional resistance at RPO level. Thank you.

Alain Denis: Simple answer: Scenario 1 is best placed due to the participatory techniques build into its design which help to overcome resistances. Complex answer: it depends on the regional context. Scenario 1 might not be the best one in each country cluster context.

Marina Cacace: GES4R was perceived as generating less resistance because it implies less change for RPOs. Scenario 1 and 3 would be best placed to address organizational resistances taking into account the potential of a more participatory approach.

Anne Laure Humbert: Scenario 1 could be the most pertinent to dealing with resistance because it is the most flexible, can be tailored to a number of contexts, has the greatest amount of foreseen support and has the lowest threshold to entry. Having a progressive approach might get some buy in from organisations.

After the coffee break, the previous presentations on the validation process and final certification scenarios were complemented by the **policy recommendations**, presented by **Marina Cacace**.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-marina-cacace-policy-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=1h14m21s

The policy recommendations are based upon Strength-Weakness-Opportunities-Threats analysis for each scenario and resulted in 25 recommendations. Deliverable 6.2 summarizes the analysis as well as the recommendations:

- Cacace, Marina, Federico Marta, Francesca Pugliese, and Gabriele Quinti. 2022. "Policy Recommendations on the Certification/Award System." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.6393146

Question & Answer regarding the policy recommendations

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=1h29m06s

Question 1

Pat O'Connor: Question regarding the recommendation to ensure that work for applications to such a scheme would not be done by women. It has happened with Athena SWAN and it reflects the political environment of having to do undesired work by the institution in order to improve the image of the institution, so "get the women to do it", with little involvement by those in power. Key question: why recommending that this work should not be done by women will make any difference?

Maria Cacace: This is a problem with all recommendations. Advantage of GES4R is that it is less bureaucratic and thus involving less staff effort. If you want more participation, you will have the problem that this is disproportionally carried out by women - who are over represented in gender equality work and at the entry level of career stage. We need at least to mention this problem.

Marcela Linková: This is an extremely important issue because the over-representation of women is often raised and criticized in the evaluation of gender equality projects. It will be important to have this discussion at the policy level and incorporate the corresponding criteria in the evaluation process for example of national certification schemes: to make visible and address the over-representation of women in gender equality work. It is important to keep reflecting on power issues in this work.

Dani Glazzard: An independent review of Athena SWAN has come to similar conclusion/recommendation: a lot of the administrative burden of the application process is placed on early career women. Following the review, a new evaluation criterion has been incorporated, suggesting that the assessment team needs to be representative in terms of the gender make up and the grades of the organisation in order to avoid overloading a specific group of employees such as early career women. The application also needs to discuss how the application work is internally recognized and not simply taken for granted .

Anne Laure Humbert: The the first GEP eligibility criterion "resources" is important for it could provide some scope for providing financial resources but also for making sure that these are equally distributed and that the equality work is equally recognized inside the organisation.

Question 2

Ruth Babington (zoom chat): Will these accreditation systems be able to deal with the emergence of many types of "gender"? How will this be dealt with in countries that actively go against people who don't identify as male or female?

Marina Cacace: In part this is addressed by the certification schemes through the need to integrate an intersectional perspective. This is a shared feature of all scenarios which is basically dependent upon solid support measures.

Anne Laure Humbert: It is important to examine gender in terms of power relations. Unfortunately, gender is often simplified to a binary construct. However, if you look at gender from a power-perspective, then it will necessarily incorporate other, related dimensions of social injustice. Intersectional perspective is very prominent throughout the scenarios.

2.2. Panel discussion

Main discussion point: **"What can a Europe-wide Gender Equality Certification/Award Scheme contribute to gender equality in R&I"?**

Gary Loke (Independent Equality Consultant, CASPER Advisory Board)

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=1h47m13s

- GECAS has to be seen as one of the many tools that you can employ on a long journey towards gender equality. It should not be conceived as an end in itself.
- There are internal (for the applicant organisation) benefits: GECAS is a way to reflect, to learn, to celebrate, to motivate and think about progress.
- There are also external benefits (for those external to the organisation): it shows achievement and good practice; it can attract talents.
- It is important to consider how an EU wide scheme is constructed. A scheme that is constructed around competition, and a "race to the top" will not be helpful and motivating. It should be constructed around quality, conceiving gender equality as essential for the quality of research and innovation and build upon the fact that Europe is a very diverse continent. It should be about learning from diversity, about mutual benefits and learning from the different approaches that exist in Europe.

- It is a great tool to support reflection on how things have gone well and might go better. As such it provides a structure to learn and identify better what works and learn from that.
- Based upon experience of Athena SWAN, a scheme can be successful:
  ○ if it is bottom-up and has the support of the academic community;
  ○ if it considers intersectionality from the outset and what this means in practice; also reflects upon the unintended consequences of an existing equality scheme for minorities not directly addressed, for example;
  ○ if the academic/research community comes together collectively around a well-designed tool
- Importance to celebrate the small steps and achievements, of many often-unseen practitioners.

Chris Grieve (Edge Certification, CASPER Advisory Board)

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=1h55m33s

- Robust standards and outcomes: key is the establishment of robust standards, indicators or thresholds of what gender equality and intersectional equity really means. What does success look like in terms of indicators? As long as the success indicators are robust and measurable, these could be applied universally across national contexts.
- Levelling playing field: such a universal, Europe wide system would have a harmonising effect and create a more level playing field to the degree that it focuses on robust *outcomes* indicators. The way to achieve those outcomes will need to be crafted by each institution, given their specific context and needs.
- Enhanced reputational value: a natural consequence and benefit is the reputational value (gain or lose reputation) that such a certification scheme represents. A certification system can be both in this sense, "carrot" and "stick".
- Accelerating transformation: Achieving gender equality and intersectional equity. Having a Europe wide approach gives the potential to accelerate transformation.
- System should not be burdened with minimum/minimal standards or become a "race to the bottom".

Pat O'Connor (Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Social Policy at Limerick University, Ireland).

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=2h2m31s

What have we learned from Athena SWAN and what can be done for a Europe wide scheme to do any better?

- A participatory approach is not necessarily superior as participatory activities do not necessarily disrupt existing power relations.

What has been learned from Athena SWAN? Four central points:

- That the importance of linking any such scheme to funding cannot be overestimated.
- It is important who effectively owns the scheme. In the UK it is owned by Advanced HE, which has a weak structural position. In Ireland, the scheme is owned by the Higher Education Authority - the major distributor of core State funding resources. Would the EU owned scheme have also direct financial linkage?

- In terms of efficacy of the promotion of gender equality Athena SWAN Charters (ASW) has raised awareness and is strongly endorsed by those involved. However, according to Graves, Rowell, and Hunsicker (2019) there are several shortcomings in terms of the impact of ASC for example on women representation in senior leadership positions or the gender pay gap (Amery et al. 2019). Even for Gold Award holders, there is little change and the focus seems to be on "low-hanging fruit". Graves et al. (2019) suggest that ASC has little impact on informal micro-political processes and there is a danger to become a box-ticking exercise (Ovseiko et al. 2017). The question this raises is basically, how a new EU scheme could address these issues and do better than Athena SWAN?
- Institutional resistance / "foot dragging" needs to be recognized as an important issue and any scheme needs to forestall these different forms of resistances to gender equality.

For a EU scheme, there is a need to:

- be linked to research funding - as directly as possible
- be owned by those allocating state funding at national level
- to recognize the reality institutional resistance
- focus on specific outcomes
- include specific procedures, e.g., "cascade model" for promotion
- include specific targets and quotas and link those to the evaluation of senior managers
- include evidence of efficacy in promoting gender equality for all managers
- see the application phase as a window of opportunity
- tackle micro-political processes
- implemented by committee chaired by rector or vice-rector
- focus on implementation

Any scheme, ultimately needs to tackle power relations. Otherwise it is not really worth the energy and time to engage with it: "...what else would be the point to present institutions with the opportunity to get an award which means nothing?"

Marcela Linková (Head of the Center for Gender and Science at the Institute of Sociology at the Czech Academy of Sciences)

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=2h16m50s

- GECAS is potentially a tool on a very long journey; in itself it is not a solution.
- Regional differences across Europe to which CASPER has attended are important. Two things stand out from a Central and Eastern European perspective:

  ○ Intersectionality is not addressed at all the institutional setting in Central and Eastern Europe, despite existing scholarship on this topic.
  ○ In many Central and Eastern European countries, the EU has been crucial player to move the equality agenda further. The country differences and what a potential scheme can do is vital in the sense such a scheme will be a contribution to build a common discourse which is still lacking.

The contributions of a Europe wide scheme along those lines could be the following:

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- There are many countries which have strong "anti-gender" rhetoric. But precisely for this reason we need a EU wide scheme. It creates opportunities and backing for people working towards changing this discourse.
- Crucial is the support at institutional level, to support change agents. EU wide scheme will contribute to building this European network of change agents, a community of practitioners.
- EU wide scheme will provide excellent instrument for looking at processes that happen in different settings. Understanding further and doing research on what measures are effective and what does not will be necessary.

In a closing remark, Marcela Linková mentioned that the National Czech Science Foundation has recently introduced a GEP requirement for their funding applicants. It shows how the EC's decision to introduce the GEP eligibility criterion can stimulate similar actions in Europe. The Czech example demonstrates the importance of reputational aspects, the importance of linking it to funding, and the "leadership" role of prestigious institutions that get emulated by others.

Comments and questions from the audience

https://vimeo.com/691717641#t=2h25m45s

Claartje Vinkenburg, to the panelists: Do you see potential risks in running a GE+ scheme (self-regulation) while also having to meet a formal GEP requirement? Does formal structure destroy internal effort?

Gary Loke: Self-regulation and formal (top-down) requirement do not need to be necessarily mutually exclusive. Ideally these two should align in actual equality work. The "Ownership" of a scheme as raised by Pat O'Conner and the link to funding is important, but we also need to make sure that it is owned by those who receive the funding. The danger is - if it is owned by a political actor (and funders follow political will) - and there is a shift, the scheme might cease to exist. There is a danger that a scheme could be lost because political will has changed.

Pat O'Conner: A scheme should give actual leverage to the people working in institutions on gender equality first and foremost. The underlying problem is not the formal system but turning the formal system in a box-ticking exercise.

Question via zoom chat: "I would like to know Pat O'Connor's opinion on Ireland's women-only professorships."

Pat O'Conner: Women only professors only represent 10% of the overall professorship. It is not enough. What needs further reform is the higher education and research system as such.

Chris Grieve: Edge certification is an example of how specific outcomes and thresholds can be established and that could build a link between self-regulation and formal requirements (in the form of outcomes). This can include percentage of women managers in core positions (including budget responsibility and other important institutional roles), pay equity, cascading career advancement models. There are universal outcomes that can be applied and where one should then be able to observe change.

3.   Day 2 - Operational tools to support institutional change

After a welcome introduction and brief presentation[1] of the CASPER project objectives and work plan by Jörg Müller (FUOC), the first part of Day 2 was dedicated to introducing the tool developed by CASPER to assess institutional changes through the "Impact Drivers" model. The tool was presented from the developers' perspective by Lut Mergaert (Yellow Window) on the one hand, and from the user's perspective by Ana Belén Amil (Central European University) on the other hand. The second part of the online seminar was dedicated to the benchmarking tool to assess the equivalence between different national certification schemes and the Horizon Europe GEP eligibility criterion.

3.1. Project results: "Impact Drivers" model and benchmarking tool

The first presentation introduced the "Impact Drivers" model for assessing institutional change which was given by **Lut Mergaert** from Yellow Window.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-mergaert-belen-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=10m50s

The "Impact Drivers" tool was built upon previous evaluation models used for assessing institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming and was adapted to the specific context of R&I and higher education institutions. It is an assessment model for institutional gender mainstreaming capacity and not a tool for assessing a Gender Equality Plan itself. Its underlying premise is that for institutional change to happen, several prerequisites - the "Impact Drivers" for change - need to be in place. Thus, this tool integrates two analytical models: the "Impact Drivers" model, which refers to the prerequisites for institutional change, and the actor mobilisation model, which refers to the idea that for institutional change to be effective there is a gradual increase required in the mobilisation of actors.

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1   See https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-muller-ppt

The tool can be used either for self-assessment or for evaluation by external assessors. It has been translated into an Excel tool and includes accompanying guidelines. The model consists of 11 impact drivers, where each impact driver has 2-5 indicators. These operate over 6 stages of institutionalization: Starting point, Project, Inception, Growth, Integration, Institutionalisation. The 11 impact drivers are:

1. CORE TEAM OF CHANGE AGENTS
2. CAPACITY/SKILLS FOR DRIVING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE FOR GE
3. LEADERSHIP ACTIVELY COMMITTED TO GE/GM
4. INVOLVEMENT OF INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
5. INVOLVEMENT OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS AND EXPERTS
6. AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES
7. COVERAGE OF THE DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS / AREAS OF GE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE
8. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
9. INSTITUTIONAL POLICY-MAKING BASED ON A ROBUST UNDERSTANDING OF GE
10. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE
11. ORGANISATIONAL GOVERNANCE

Institutions can rate their achievement of individual indicators either through self-assessment or with the help of a external consultant. The results will be displayed in Excel in the form of a radar chart.

Ana Belén Amil, the Equality Officer at the Central European University, discussed in the second part of the presentation her university experience with the "Impact Drivers" tool.
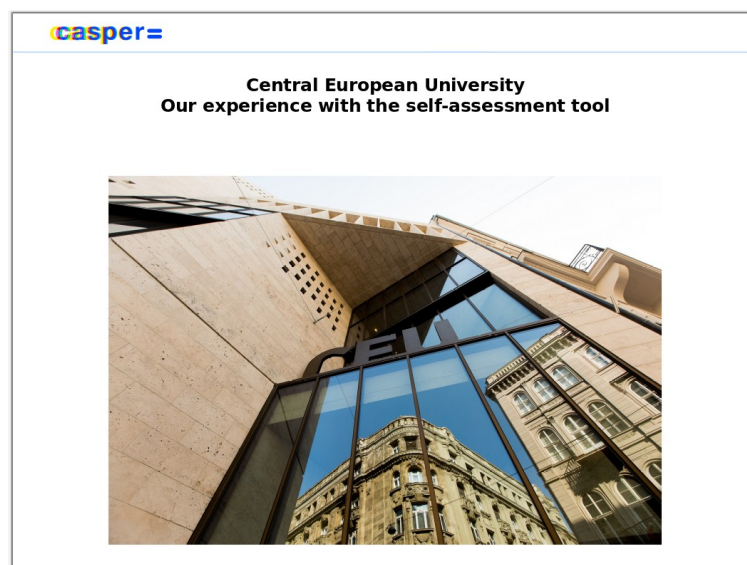
She highlighted that it is an easy-to-use instrument with clear guidelines and requires an estimated time of one hour and a half for completion. Nevertheless, it requires expert gender knowledge and institutional knowledge to ensure evaluators' objectivity and consistency across evaluations. In that regard, Ana Belén Amil pointed out that the lower the evaluator knowledge, the higher the overrating of the institution.

Regarding the potential and strengths of the tool, she highlighted that:

-   it is useful for both assessment by an external auditor and for self-assessment;

- it is a good monitoring tool, sensitive to progress and to backlash;
- it is useful for measuring sustainability;
- it has a strong awareness-raising and educational component;
- it is holistic and adaptable to different institutional contexts, such as RFOs, with probably minor edits; and
- it includes relevant, non-redundant impact drivers.

The tool can be used for institutional self-assessment, in order to:

- foster self-reflection
- raise internal awareness of strengths and weaknesses
- serve monitoring purposes
- build capacity
- identify training needs
- benchmark one's own institution with others

The tool can gauge the capacity of an organisation to effectively implement institutional change for gender equality and/or identify its strengths as well as its weaknesses. Using the tool repeatedly over time allows to measure progress (or regress) made in terms of the institutionalisation of the impact drivers.

Question and comments by the audience

View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=40m25s

Question 1

Pat O'Connor: Could the indicators for organizational culture be spelled out? Are there references to the "foot dragging" of institutional resistances contemplated in the tool?

Ana Belén: One indicator is dedicated to institutional resistances. The indicator addresses the capacity of change agents in institutions to effectively address resistance.

Lut Mergaert: There are three indicators under "organizational culture": 1) gender equality is expressed as formal and informal organizational value; 2) existence of gender inequality is acknowledged; 3) obstacles to gender inequality are addressed. In these dimensions resistances can be identified and recognized.

Marina Cacace: An additional indicator is available under impact driver 2 "CAPACITY/SKILLS FOR DRIVING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE FOR GE", namely "capacity to reduce resistances".

Question 2

Rosemary Deem: What is actual blocking the impact/achievement? Is it a single factor or is it rather a combination of factor. How might the "Impact Drivers" be related with each other?

Lut Mergaert: There is acknowledgement that impact drivers are complex and interrelated.

Question 3

Esther Garcés: If an institution has already a GEP, how could this tool be included in the assessment phase or how it is articulated with the institutional GEPs? How can this tool be used in conjunction with other tools out there, e.g. the GEAR tool.

Lut Mergaert: Impact drivers tool is an assessment tool. The tool can help to analyse the priorities, the obstacles and challenges when transitioning from one GEP to the next. The tool helps to make the transition and design the new GEP and assign resources. GEAR tool is then a tool for inspiration on *how to tackle* the identified challenges.

Question 4
Andrea Petö: Is care policy a part of this system?

Ana Belén: It is not a tool that evaluates the GEP including the key actions areas that a GEP should be incorporating. It does not evaluate content. It evaluates the status of the gender mainstreaming status.

Lut Mergaert: It does not look at pre-defined content. It does consider the breadth and depth of content areas addressed.

The final version of the Impact Drivers tool (Excel template) will be published on the CASPER project website after the project has finished. The date foreseen is April 2022.

In the second presentation of the day, **Maria Sangiuliano** from Smart Venice introduced the **benchmarking tool** developed by the CASPER project to assess the alignment of existing national GECAS with the new Horizon Europe GEP eligibility criterion.

View presentation as pdf: https://www.caspergender.eu/final-conf-maria-sangiuliano-ppt
View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=54m1s

The objective of this task was to assess the compatibility of existing GECAS to the new eligibility criterion on Gender Equality Plans in Horizon Europe, by using a participatory approach with GECAS owners. It included the development of an operational tool and recommendations allowing the EC to check the equivalence for future GECAS.

The work process included an initial phase of building and pre-validating the benchmarking tool in which both the process-related and the content-related components of the Horizon Europe GEP eligibility requirements were operationalised and assigned equal weight. Initially, 32 certification and award schemes (CAS) were pre-selected from the existing 113 CAS and invited to participate in the benchmarking. Overall, 21 CAS answered the pre-validation of the benchmarking results and, in a subsequent phase, interviews with 17 CAS owners, an online consultation and a workshop were carried out to make a final validation of the benchmarking exercise. The CASPER team conducted a thorough validation process.

Regarding the benchmarking results, Maria Sangiuliano highlighted some general trends in the process-related GEP requirements: 94% of CAS has top managers to sign and officially endorse a public document but only 47% require to collect and monitor data in an annual report. Gender expertise in dedicated resources is required by one third of the CAS, and training/capacity building is not always covered. In relation with the content-related requirements, 94% of the CAS address work-life balance structures, 82% address recruitment processes and 65% tackle gender-based violence, whereas a lower share of CAS (12%) are covering research and teaching. Regarding the GEPs inclusiveness dimensions, most of the CAS include intersectionality in their scheme for certifying applicant organisations although at very different levels and with different frameworks. There are challenges regarding intersectional data collection processes and lack of operationalisable knowledge and case studies.

The benchmarking tool could be used by RPOs that are certified to check for possible areas of improvement when renewing their GEPs. RPOs that are not certified can obtain guidance by the benchmarking tool on which GECAS is more compatible with the Horizon Europe requirements. The tool can also be integrated by the EC into their audit and monitoring processes in Horizon Europe in order to facilitate and simplify them for those applicants that already have a certification in place. The benchmarking tool can also be used by certification and award owners/representatives as a self-assessment tool to further adapt or align their certificate with the Horizon Europe requirements.

The benchmarking tool was considered confidential at the end of the CASPER project (March 2022) but is likely to be made public in some form in the near future by the EC.

Question and comments by the audience

View the video recording: https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=1h15m10s

Question 1

Pat O'Connor: Follow-up question in relation the "Impact Drivers" model: what is the relation between "Impact Drivers" model and a GECAS? The Impact Driver model assumes "brutal honesty" during the self-assessment within the institution while the application to a GECAS encourages a glossed-up version.

Marina Cacace: Impact driver model was integrated into the scenario 1 - EUQUAL. Could be used in combination of internal self-assessment and by an external consultant.

Lut Mergaert: Independently of an chosen GECAS, the "Impact Drivers" tool can be helpful for critical self-reflection and prepare the organization for living up to the expectations of any scheme.

3.2. Panel discussion

The panel discussion addressed the following issue: "What is the added value of a European gender equality certification scheme to the existing GEP eligibility criterion for accessing Horizon Europe funding?"

Andrea Petö - Professor in the Department of Gender Studies at the Central European University

https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=1h26m10s

In her contribution, Andrea Petö highlighted the current challenges for gender equality to find address the right-wing, illiberal push against "gender ideology" in Europe and beyond. She affirmed that the concept of "paradoxical recognition", coined by sociologist Eric Fassin, might describe the process of how Gender Studies, gender expertise and gender equality policy have been recognised and understood. It is paradoxical because it is mostly a top-down process, from the EU to the national level. It comes from policy makers and not academics, and because the recognition of Gender Equality expertise has been under attack globally, also in Europe.

Andrea Petö stressed that we should not take any of the gender equality values for given nowadays as they are under attack by illiberal forces that are hijacking gender equality discourses and tools. Illiberal forces use gender as a type of "symbolic glue" because the concept of gender means very different things in different contexts. It stands for a progressive EU policy agenda while also being used by right-wing populist to signify "everything that is wrong with the current state of politics." (Grzebalska, Kováts, and Petö 2017). The often neoliberal, managerial language of GE offers it as a popular target to many different political groups to fill it with their own political projections and resentments. Petö highlighted two reasons why GE policies fail:

- they are western centric and usually oriented to white women
- gender equality instruments are often technocratic and neo-colonial

At the same time, the apparent push and advancement in gender equality on a European level (e.g. in relation to the GEP eligibility requirement) also shows the other, positive side of the current developments. There is growing expertise and a growing workforce dedicated to gender equality. To keep the values of democracy and academic freedom, Andrea Petö suggested to consider this turning point moment and to interlink gender equality policies to the questions of care (care policy, emotional and physical care) and how to create a fair employment practice.

Several related references were shared via the chat:

- Amery, Fran, Stephen Holden Bates, Stephen McKay, Cherry Miller, and Zoe Pflaeger. 2019. "Why Do UK Universities Have Such Large Gender Pay Gaps?" The Political Studies Association (PSA). Retrieved March 22, 2022 (https://www.psa.ac.uk/psa/news/why-do-uk-universities-have-such-large-gender-pay-gaps).

- Grzebalska, Weronika, Eszter Kováts, and Andrea Petö. 2017. "Gender as Symbolic Glue: How 'Gender' Became an Umbrella Term for the Rejection of the (Neo)Liberal Order" Political Critique. Retrieved March 23, 2022 (http://politicalcritique.org/long-read/2017/gender-as-symbolic-glue-how-gender-became-an-umbrella-term-for-the-rejection-of-the-neoliberal-order/).

- Roth, Julia, Alexandra Scheele, and Heidemarie Winkel, eds. 2022. Global Contestations of Gender Rights. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.

Marissa Herder, Senior Policy Officer at the Dutch Ministry for Education, Culture and Science.

https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=1h42m35s

In her contribution, Marissa Herder explained the creation of the national action plan for more diversity and inclusion in higher education and research in the Netherlands. Setting an award system was one of its 5 ambitions for 2025. In that regard, a European certification approach is seen as strengthening gender equality processes in the EU member states and help to set a common direction. Marissa Herder stressed that the Horizon Europe GEP requirement is already a good step in that direction, and a national advisory committee in The Netherlands has prepared a guide to elaborate a GEP taking into account the basic requirements and also offering options if organisations want to go further.

The national plan is planned to include an intersectional and sector-wide approach to diversity and inclusion; a focus on gender equality alone is deemed insufficient. There is a clear understanding that achieving impact requires to achieve a cultural change. Cultural change implies to find alternative to a hyper competition and extremely hierarchical environment. Without addressing these aspects, GEPS will achieve little. To conclude, Marisa Herder highlighted that gender-based violence is related with the base foundations of creating good working environments, and these aspects should be considered as essential to make people feel at home in academia.

Zulema Altamirano, senior adviser and director of the Women and Science Unit and Gender Equality Unit at the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=1h49m50s

In her presentation, Zulema Altamirano presented the actions carried out in the last two years by the Spanish government to develop and design a national certification/award on gender equality in research and innovation. In her communication, she explained the lessons learnt and shared some reflections from their ongoing process at the national level that might be useful to consider for the European level certification. Several points were highlighted:

- the need to make visible the existing gaps
- to create capacity-building for institutional transformation
- to have a law enforcing and backup up gender equality
- add positive actions such as an EU-wide GECAS

Zulema Altamirano affirmed that institutional change requires that any research institution integrates gender equality as part of the excellence and social commitment. A GECAS might help to harmonise and establish a minimum standard to talk about excellence in terms of both gender equality and research.

The value of a GECAS was also seen in relation to the support measures for implementing GEPs. Certification needs to fit national contexts and be feasible for any research institution that applies for it as a whole organization, at the faculty or departmental level. The three added values of a GECAS in relation with the GEP requirement are:

- prestige and recognition for award holders
- less bureaucracy if well aligned
- additional funding and support.

To prevent the certification from being a tick-boxing exercise, the Spanish Ministry will create guidelines to help institutions to provide clear evidence what real change looks like.

Gemma Irvine, Vice-President for Equality & Diversity at Maynooth University (Ireland).

https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=1h58m21s

In her contribution, Gemma Irvine shared some key insights from the Irish experience with the Athena SWAN certification. The following issues have contributed to the success of the Athena SWAN Charter (ASC):

- crucial is the linkage of ASC with access to research funding to get the attention of senior management and those in charge
- an independent body, Athena SWAN Ireland, is responsible for coordinating the self-assessment process together with peer-review panels; this increases knowledge and awareness on gender equality across Ireland.
- Progress by institutions is also monitored by the Higher Education Authority. A multilevel approach is in place in terms of coordination, oversight, funding and resources.

The consensus is to show that "... it is everyone's responsibility. It is equality and diversity in practice, not in goals". To avoid ticking the box, the key element is self-assessment and a critical reflection by everybody involved across the institution.

To end, Gemma Irvin underlined that if a European certification helps to benchmark different institutions in different countries it will allow progress to be measured and visualized and help institutional leaders to gauche where they are and see where more efforts are needed. For the EU-wide GECAS to be a successful certification it is important to focus on data and evidence, as well as being a common framework that supports institutions to be impactful.

Question and concluding comments

https://vimeo.com/691834397#t=2h11m03s

Zulema Altamirano: The GEP eligibility criterion is a window of opportunity to reinforce what Spain is doing at the national level. To work towards common standards, to better identify gender gaps in research and innovation, to show why gender mainstreaming efforts are needed and to increase awareness as well as build and reinforce capacity and gender competence in institutions. In this process, it is important that the European certification is perceived as a complementary process which is well aligned with national requirements/certificates.

Andrea Petö: It is a fantastic opportunity to have a common language to describe the problems and gender equality. On the other hand, this might be a problem too. The framework offered by the different agencies might not fit or address the problems experienced in academia, especially in those contexts where illiberal forces are active. At the same time, it is encouraging to observe the

increasing institutionalization of gender studies expertise through GEPs and the creation of equality officers across Europe. However, there is an educational gap where the policy field of gender studies is less attractive to students - perceived as "boring" - compared to the research track.

Claartje Vinkenburg: To what extend can a GECAS help in countries where there is little tradition and experience of gender equality work? In context where national agendas for gender equality are lacking.

Marcela Linková: It creates an opportunity, also for example in the Czech Republic. EC is often the only guidance that is available. The simple "mimetic" effect to emulate EU policy will stir institutions to participate - not necessarily for the good reasons. GEP market is huge. A certificate would be an important stepping stone. How to integrate intersectional perspective is important issue for the future. Resistances are always part of social reality, and we will have to deal with them.

Andrea Petö: Still, closing down gender studies programs in some countries is a reality; we need to be aware of the conflict between institutionalization of gender expertise on the one hand and the current GE policy and instruments for graduates, which are not an attractive career option.

Mervi Heikinnen: The mphasis should be on a "care approach" as an important part of Gender Equality Plans and policies; it has revolutionary aspects that can help to address gender equality issues and other social challenges with an effective and transformative impact.

Anne Pépin: Gender Sector´s in DG Research and Innovation ambition is to come up with the most effective solution which also depends on Member States, as also highlighted in the *Ljubljana Declaration*. There have been four excellent projects selected in Horizon Cluster 2 call: "Feminisms for a new age of democracy" which will help develop knowledge and gender scholarship to address the challenges pointed out by the panellists.

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