

# How to Select Measures for Gender Equality Plans

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**Abstract:** As recently announced by the European Commission, Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) will become an eligibility criterion in the future Horizon Europe programme (2021-2027) for every legal entity (public body, research center or higher education institution). The complex process of designing a GEP in a Research Performing Organization (RPO) involves different phases. In this paper, recalling the six steps process of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) GEAR tool for developing GEPs in research institutions, we focus on the third critical step of setting up a GEP. In particular, the EIGE recommendation for an effective GEP design is to get inspiration from measures implemented by other organisations and tailor them to the specific local institutional context. However, analysing other RPO's GEP measures is a time-consuming effort requiring at least some experience and preparation to understand and evaluate the measures replicability, impact, effectiveness and sustainability. This analysis may be a very complicated task for organisations that are not experienced with GEPs. To address this issue, the paper presents a methodology that aims at supporting RPOs in the selection of measures to be included in the institutional GEP design. The proposed methodology has been defined in the context of the LeTSGEPs Horizon 2020 project and is based on a catalogue of GEPs measures that have been experimented by European RPOs so far. The LeTSGEPs methodology and related catalogue offer a classified guide of the GEP measures' gender impact through several factors, such as: the gender issues to be addressed, the target groups, the stakeholders to be involved, the different dimensions of staff organisational well being, the output and outcome indicators, the possible sustainability strategies. The proposed catalogue may represent a tool able to facilitate RPOs evaluation and selection of measures among those already experimented by other research institutions, offering useful indication on their appropriateness to solve specific issues. At a more general level, the catalogue also provides essential information on the main measures that have been experimented so far in implementing GEPs in European RPOs, the most common areas of interest, and the capabilities involved.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality Plan, Structural Change, GEAR Tool, Capabilities Approach, Sustainability

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## 1. Introduction

Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) have achieved in recent years a growing interest and attention by the European Union and the community of Research Performing Organizations (RPO) as a strategy to fight gender stereotypes in research and science. Gender discrimination, in fact, is still present today in the field of research and adversely affects its results, since it cannot adequately enhance all talents regardless of their gender.

Following the first experimentations since 2005, GEPs methodologies have progressively improved, also thanks to specific calls of the European Commission and the related European Commission funded projects supporting their adoption in RPOs. The European Union has increased its political commitment to GEPs to the point that, starting with the next Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, Horizon Europe (2021-2027), the GEPs are mandatory for all public institutions as eligible criteria to be admitted to funding having been approved as a proposal.

Within this context, this paper aims to contribute to the development of GEPs methodologies by focusing on a specific phase of the GEP process, that is the selection of measures that an RPO has to decide to implement, once that the context analysis has outlined the areas that need improvements in terms of gender equality.

For RPOs early beginners in GEP development, the measures' selection process may represent a critical point, since it requires a certain knowledge of gender equality policies and of best practices already experimented in other RPOs, as well as the capability of taking inspiration from them in order to select and tailor the measures that better fit the RPO under examination.

In this paper we shortly describe the origin of GEPs and their role in the European context. Then, we present the European Horizon 2020 Project LeTSGEPs "Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research