



***ESFR-SIMPLE***

*Research and Innovation Action (RIA)*

This project has received funding from the Euratom  
research and innovation programme 2021-2025 under  
Grant Agreement No 101059543

Start date : 2022-10-01 Duration : 48 Months

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**Gender Action Plan**

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ESFR-SIMPLE - Contract Number: 101059543

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Document title	Gender Action Plan
Author(s)	Mrs. Marianne GROS
Number of pages	15
Document type	Deliverable
Work Package	WP10
Document number	D10.3
Issued by	LGI
Date of completion	2023-04-18 10:20:28
Dissemination level	Public

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### Summary

Gender Action Plan defining concrete actions and tools to systematically integrate the gender perspective in all WPs.

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### Approval

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2023-04-18 14:31:19	Mr. Pierre SCIORA (CEA)
2023-04-18 14:32:15	Mr. Pierre SCIORA (CEA)

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## Document information

<b>Grant Agreement</b>	n°101059543
<b>Project Title</b>	European Sodium Fast Reactor – Safety by Innovative Monitoring, Power Level flexibility and Experimental research
<b>Project Acronym</b>	ESFR-SIMPLE
<b>Project Coordinator</b>	Pierre Sciora, CEA
<b>Project Duration</b>	1 October 2022 – 30 September 2026 (48 months)
<b>Related Work Package</b>	WP10
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	CEA
<b>Contributing Partner(s)</b>	CEA
<b>Due Date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023 (M6)
<b>Submission Date</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
<b>Dissemination level</b>	PU

## History

Date	Version	Submitted by	Reviewed by	Comments
31.03.2023	V1.1	CEA		Contributions from all ESFR-Simple consortium members.

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## Abbreviations

CA	Consortium Agreement
D	Deliverable
EC	European Commission
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EU	European Union
GA	Grant Agreement
HE	Horizon Europe
M	Month (of the project)
MS	Member States
PMO	Project Management Office
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
TK	Task
TKL	Task Leader
V	Version
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader

## Summary

This deliverable presents the **Gender Action Plan**. It describes the guiding principle for promoting gender equality and inclusivity within the project, accordingly to the European Commission (EC) guidelines.

The purpose of the GENDER ACTION PLAN is to raise awareness within the project consortium on gender and inclusivity. Furthermore, it provides guidance and defines actions on how gender and inclusivity will be promoted during the project life.

# 1 Executive summary

This report presents the GENDER ACTION PLAN that has been established as a part of the commitment of the **ESFR-Simple project** to promoting gender equality and inclusivity in the organisation teams, as well as in the implementation of the action with extension to interactions with citizens, stakeholders and decision makers.

The report considers how women and men contribute within the organisation of the project team. A baseline analysis of the gender distribution across research and administrative staff contributing to the action is presented. Actions are subsequently defined to promote gender equality and equal opportunities within the project consortium; including raising of awareness, continued monitoring throughout the project, and affirmative actions to help reduce imbalances found.

The purpose of the report is two-fold. It raises awareness within the project consortium on gender and inclusivity, as well as providing guidance on how gender and inclusivity is promoted in the project and in its implementation through clearly defined actions.

# 2 Introduction

Gender equality is a core value of the European Union (EU). The EU is committed to advancing gender equality in the implementation of the European Research and Innovation Initiatives (European Commission, 2021). Gender inequality in global and European academic and research communities is well documented in both the research literature and in the statistics compiled by institutions of higher education and by the EU's own macroanalyses.

The **ESFR-Simple project** shares this core value and commitment, promoting gender equality and inclusivity in the organisation and implementation of the action itself, as well as in the participatory research that is developed within project where there is extensive interaction with citizens, stakeholders and decision makers.

The 2021 “She Figures” report (European Commission, 2021), a three-yearly report that summarises statistics and indicators on gender in research and innovation, shows that while progress has been made in the gender balance in the research community in most Member States (MS), there is still significant progress to be made to overcome issues with horizontal segregation where the participation of women and men researchers is biased towards “traditional” scientific fields, as well as with vertical segregation with women underrepresented in senior academics grades and leadership decision-making positions.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly proven how gender inequality at the societal level is influencing the productivity of female researchers. In these last months in fact, when an adjustment to a new life of remote working was required, a direct effect of family management on female researchers with kids has been clearly observed. The number of female researchers who submitted their papers was in fact lower compared to their male colleagues and this is a clear and strong indicator that actions need to be taken to develop new approaches for supporting a better family-work balance.

The European Institute for Gender Equality sets out three clear objectives to achieve gender equality in research and innovation (EIGE, 2022);

- i. Fostering equality in scientific careers
- ii. Ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies
- iii. Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content.

Other EU initiatives address this challenge in additional venues, such as the EU's charter on gender equality, which targets regional and local authorities throughout Europe. This charter places an emphasis on economic and political equality, shared leadership, gender mainstreaming ("integration of gender perspective into all policies"), and a society free of discrimination and violence (European Commission 2020). Article 21 of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights (EU 2007) is likewise explicit: "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited."

These objectives equally apply to the **ESFR-Simple project** consortium and how the action is implemented. This plan is developed to ensure gender and social inclusion is consistently and appropriately addressed throughout the implementation of the project, as well as in the co-design and participatory research that is undertaken by project researchers in the context of project activities.

The main goal of the plan is to outline the actions that are established in the project to mainstream gender and provide guidance to the project and its team. This GENDER ACTION PLAN has been developed for the **ESFR-Simple project** and is presented in this report, which constitutes **deliverable D10.3** to the project.

The GENDER ACTION PLAN presented in this report outlines how we address gender within the organisation of the project team and participation in the project actions. This includes an establishing of a gender baseline for the project team at the start of the project, including available information on horizontal and vertical segregation of gender at the start of the project. We then outline actions within the project to promote gender equality and equal opportunities within the project as well as guidance on reducing horizontal and vertical segregation. Processes established to monitor gender and address issues arising throughout the project are subsequently described, including the monitoring of women researcher's contribution in project outputs and publications.

With the approval of this GENDER ACTION PLAN, **ESFR-Simple project** commits to the following objectives:

- Equality in gender representation within **ESFR-Simple project** administration at all administrative levels, and equal representation in leadership positions in all **ESFR-Simple project** framework.
- Engage in gender mainstreaming throughout **ESFR-Simple project** managerial decisions and policies.
- Using this GENDER ACTION PLAN as a springboard for increasing awareness of the unconscious gender bias, inspiring greater tolerance, inclusiveness, and respect for differences applying to all demographic diversity.

### 3 Gender within the ESFR-Simple team



### 3.1 Baseline on women and men participation in ESFR-Simple

The beneficiaries of the **ESFR-Simple project** consortium include 15 partner organisations from across the EU, including one international organisation established in Switzerland. These represent a wide range of organisational forms, including universities and research organisations, SMEs, etc. The organisations vary significantly in workforce size as well as in fields of expertise.

Table 1 below provides an overview, per beneficiary, of gender balance in the workforce contributing to the project. These data are disaggregated to those in the workforce of each beneficiary identified to be contributing as researcher and the workforce involved contributing to other tasks such as administrative and financial support.

**Table 1. Gender balance of the workforce involved in the project.**

Beneficiary	Gender policy in place	Researchers		Workforce other than researchers		Total workforce in the project	
		Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
CEA	Yes	7	43	0	0	7	43
EDF	Yes	2	5	0	0	2	5
ENEA	Yes	1	4	0	0	1	4
EPFL	Yes	0	3	0	3	0	1
FRAMATOME	Yes	1	6	2	1	3	7
HZDR	Yes	0	7	1	0	1	7
IPUL	Yes	0	4	0	0	0	4
JRC	Yes	0	10	3	0	3	10
KIT	Yes	3	4	1	2	4	6
UNIV LORRAINE	Yes	0	4	0	1	0	5
ULIEGE	Yes	1	1	0	0	1	1
POLIMI	Yes	0	3	0	3	0	6
PSI	Yes	0	3	3	1	3	4
STUBA	Yes	2	6	0	0	2	6
UCAM	Yes	2	1	0	1	2	2
<b>Total (number)</b>						<b>26</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Total (%)</b>						<b>20%</b>	<b>80%</b>

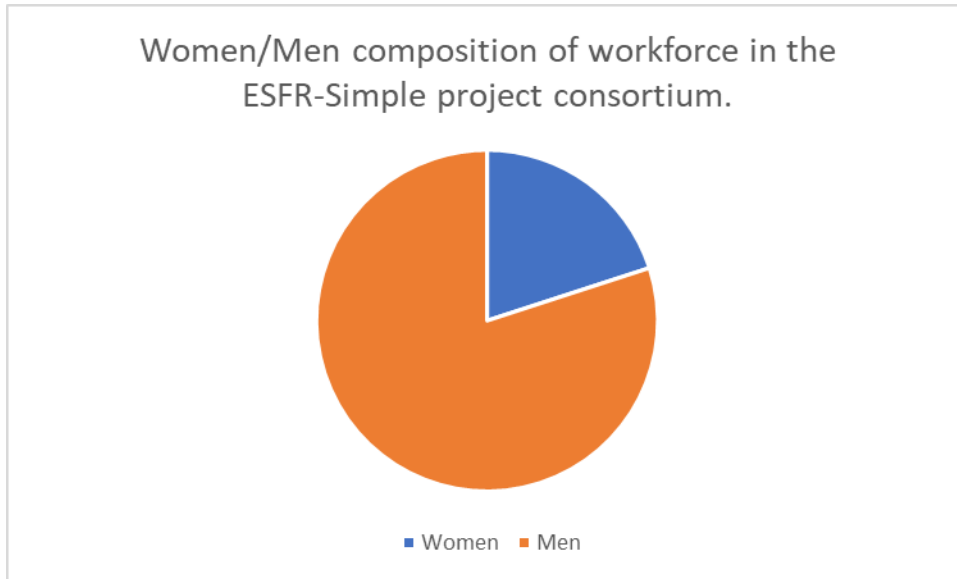


Figure 1: Women/Men composition of workforce in the ESFR-Simple project consortium.

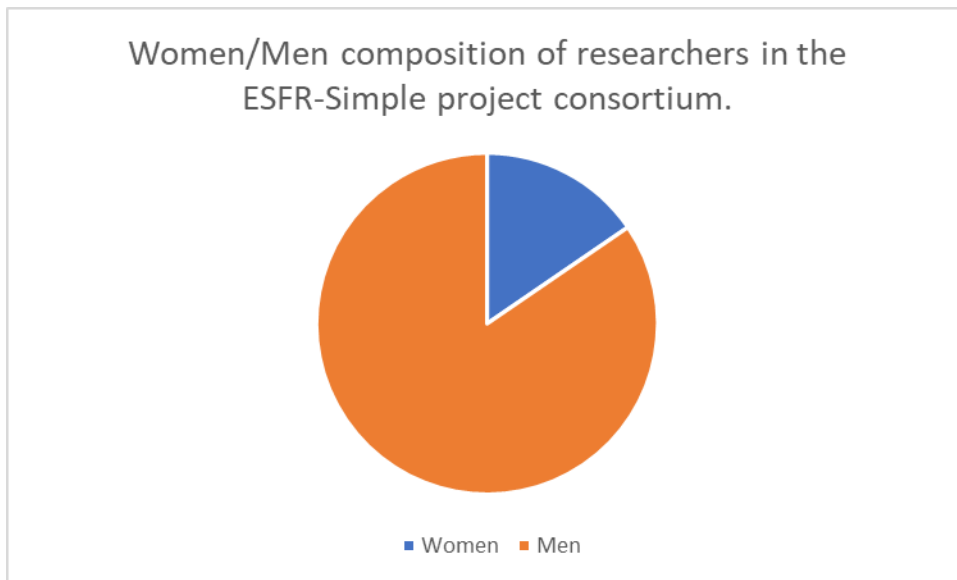


Figure 2: Women/Men composition of researchers in the ESFR-Simple project consortium.

Note that these data are also included in the continuous reporting data included in the Grant Management system (*i.e.* Sygma) of the EC. The data included in this table comprises all staff (postdocs and PhD fellows) contributing to the project and represents the status in the first six months of the project. As staff may change, including additional staff who are in the process of being hired to work on the project, these numbers may change.

The data in the table clearly show that gender across the team is not reasonably well balanced yet, tending towards a general over-representation of men.

Table 1 shows the overall gender balance in the participation in the project. In Table 2 we disaggregate these data to explore the degree of vertical segregation of the researchers involved in the workforce of the **ESFR-Simple project** consortium, exploring the balance of female and male researchers in leadership roles. This shows that women are underrepresented in the project’s leadership roles. For both Work Packages and Tasks, it is

not always fully clear which employee of a beneficiary has the lead in a particular task, so the data provided are based on the lead contact of each beneficiary. This means the numbers should be considered as indicative and established based on the information available at the time of writing. Despite that, the tendency of women being underrepresented is clear. The External Experts Advisory Board comprised a ratio of 0 women and 2 men.

**Table 2. Vertical segregation of gender involved in the project.**

Role	Women	Men	Total
Project Coordination Team	1	2	3
Project Management Board Members	1	10	11
Work Package Leader (WPL)	1	10	11
WP1	9	31	40
WP2	0	15	15
WP3	9	29	38
WP4	7	15	22
WP5	7	27	34
WP6	4	13	17
WP7	4	16	20
WP8	1	25	26
WP9	6	16	22
WP10	2	3	5
Task Leader (TKL)	6	19	25
External Experts Advisory Board	0	2	2

Exploring the horizontal segregation of the project team members themselves is difficult. The **ESFR-Simple project** team is reasonably multi-disciplinary, as is the training and expertise of many of the team members. However, an indication can be obtained through interpreting the data on TKL as provided in Table 2, on the understanding that WP9 has a focus on stakeholders and end users' engagement and participation, and communication. These are both research fields that traditionally have a higher participation of women. WP2, WP3, WP6, WP7 and WP8, on the other hand, can be considered more scientific and technical, with traditionally a higher participation of men, especially in the nuclear community. WP1, WP4 and WP5 are more multi-disciplinary so less clearly traditionally associated to specific gender (WP10 as the project management WP is not included in this analysis). The analysis shows that leadership is not equally shared between women and men researchers because women researchers are clearly underrepresented.

These data show that despite the well-balanced overall consortium in terms of participation of women and men researchers, with a higher representation of women researcher, both the horizontal and vertical segregation within the project could be improved.

### 3.2 Actions to promote gender equality and equal opportunities in ESFR-Simple

As a whole, the Coordinator and WPLs have a responsibility to ensure that consortium participants are treated with equity, regardless of their gender, sexuality, age, language,

nationality, race, religion, culture, class, socioeconomic standing, mental or physical health, or opinions.

Throughout the **ESFR-Simple project** will provide guidance to partners on equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all persons hired to work in the project, regardless of age, colour, national origin, citizenship status, physical or mental disability, race, religion, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by EU or national law.

Table 3 provides a summary of actions that have been defined to promote gender equality and equal opportunities within the project consortium.

Table 3. Actions to promote gender equality and equal opportunities within the project consortium.

Action	Description of the action
<b>Raising awareness</b>	<p>Raising awareness on inclusiveness and gender equality of women and men participating within the <b>ESFR-Simple project</b> consortium provides an important tool for mainstreaming gender in the project implementation. Within relevant project meetings, the overview of key statistics that are monitored will be updated, presented and discussed.</p> <p>For instance, POLIMI considers important that these gender statistics will be regularly presented and discussed during project meetings.</p>
<b>Monitoring participation of women and men</b>	<p>The participation of women and men in the project will be monitored throughout the project by gathering gender disaggregated data on participation and contribution to project outputs. The previous section establishes baseline indicators on participation and horizontal &amp; vertical segregation. These statistics will be regularly updated, in support of presenting these at relevant project meetings.</p> <p>Indicators monitored will include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of women and men (per beneficiary)</li> <li>• Participation of women and men as TKL</li> <li>• Participation of women and men in WP associated with fields that are traditionally biased</li> <li>• Contributions of women and men to project deliverables</li> <li>• Contributions of women and men to publications (including lead authorship)</li> <li>• Participation of women and men to conferences</li> <li>• Contributions of women and men to other project communication and dissemination efforts</li> </ul> <p>For instance, POLIMI will actively participate to project deliverables; will be interested in potential publications of the ESFR-SIMPLE results, both as lead authorship and co-authors; researchers would exploit the possibility to participate to international conferences to present results related to the ESFR-SIMPLE activities; will actively participate to communication and dissemination activities.</p> <p>Also, at STUBA female researchers are part of WP5 and WP9; female researchers will be authors of project related deliverables; female researchers will be authors of project related publications.</p>

	<p>In addition, the CEA’s policy framework is monitored annually by local and national committees. It is also the subject of an annual report that compares professional situation between women and men.</p>
<p><b>Reducing vertical and horizontal segregation</b></p>	<p>The baseline analysis reveals horizontal and vertical segregation within the project can be improved. Within the implementation of the project, partners will focus on providing opportunities for women to take leadership roles, with preferential selection made where there are multiple candidates.</p>
<p><b>Balanced contribution of women and men across disciplines</b></p>	<p>Active participation and contribution of women to project deliverables, scientific publications, and other outputs will be encouraged. WPLs will monitor participation in TKs, and where there may be under-representation of both women and men, as well as disciplinary expertise, the team will be extended by inviting contributions to the task. The contribution at a minimum is as a reviewer of the design and implementation of the research.</p>
<p>Safe and flexible working environment</p>	<p>All project activities where physical presence is required will be organised in geographic locations where consortium members can work safely, without feeling uncomfortable or threatened. This will include the location of meetings as well as logistics to attend meetings. Project meetings will be organised to allow flexible as well as remote participation to ensure family-friendly participation options for both women and men.</p> <p>For example, at the CEA, a new agreement of professional equality was signed on December 18, 2020 with the social partners, for a period of 3 years. It reaffirms in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The importance of gender diversity, free from any discrimination in CEA jobs.</li> <li>- The necessary principle of equal pay and professional development for equivalent positions.</li> <li>- CEA's commitment to reconciling professional and personal life.</li> </ul> <p>ENEA has also adopted a Gender Equality Plan in 2020 that refers to our Agency policy. ENEA has approved the Gender Equality Plan (GEP), set by the European Union's 2020-2025 Gender Equality Strategy as an eligibility criterion for public institutions to access funding under the new EU Horizon Europe research program. The GEP's objective is to boost female participation in research and ecological transition activities, taking into account gender-based violence.</p> <p>In addition, POLIMI researchers would benefit from the flexibility offered by the remote participation to hybrid meetings and workshops.</p> <p>Also, has at the heart of the concerns of the public authorities and society, the University of Lorraine (LEMTA) has set up the action plan for professional equality between women and men, which is a response to the obligation to set up a multi-year action plan dictated by the law on the transformation of the public service of 6 August 2019. Beyond the legal requirements, the University of Lorraine wishes to defend, promote and develop the values it holds dear. Thus, this plan is part of the continuity of actions that have been voluntarily undertaken for a long time on the issues of equality, diversity and inclusion within the University.</p>

	<p>It is worth noting as well, that the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has created an online monitoring portal supporting the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2020 – 2025. The Portal will support policymakers and will enhance public scrutiny on the progress made on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy.</p> <p>With regard to professional equality between women and men at the University of Liege (ULIEGE), in 2020, women are still in the minority at all levels of the academic career: 28.5% lecturers, 29% professors, 24% ordinary professors. Women are also in the minority in decision-making committees, although there has been an increase since 2019. Professional equality between women and men in universities is an issue of justice that calls for the equalisation of opportunities in a selective and meritocratic system based on evaluation. Ensuring equal opportunities is also an issue of institutional efficiency, as it increases the chances of finding the right person for the job.</p> <p>Finally, at EDF, equality at work takes the form of actions designed to facilitate the everyday working lives of our staff, to improve our recruitment processes, and encourage female recruitment in technical and scientific roles. In France and abroad, the Group is also committed to gender equality alongside voluntary sector partners and professional networks.</p>
Opportunity to raise issues	<p>The project endeavours to ensure that consortium participants are treated with equity, regardless of their gender, sexuality, age, language, nationality, race, religion, culture, class, socioeconomic standing, mental or physical health, or opinions. Any issues arise, these will be discussed and addressed by the <b>ESFR-Simple project's</b> coordination team to seek resolution.</p> <p>For example, professional equality is a current commitment at CEA. However, there are things to do and improve. As mentioned in the 2020 agreement, the adviser network is aiming to promote gender equality at CEA by testing new devices. If these experiments are successful, the projects could be integrated into future agreements.</p>
ESFR-Simple project exploitable assets	<p>The project aims to deliver few exploitable assets (e.g. training and education materials and benchmarks, exploitation strategy, social aspects from end users and stakeholders' feedback, etc.). The project will ensure that women participation is balanced in the development as well as exploitation of these assets.</p> <p>For example, women researchers, post-PhD and students at POLIMI will benefit from the training and educational material developed during ESFR-SIMPLE and will actively participate to schools or training sessions.</p> <p>Also, at STUBA female PhDs and students, as well as female associate professors are regularly involved in the STUBA activities.</p>

## 4 Concrete steps towards addressing systemic gender bias to ESFR-Simple

It is well documented that females are less represented in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines, and therefore reasonable to assume that recruiting women in the same proportions as men to **ESFR-Simple project** would be challenging.

The gender action plan will be developed in agreement with the members of the consortium and will be based on the “GEAR Tool” and the “Practical Guide to Improving Gender Equality in Research Organizations”. The European Commission highlighted in particular the importance of:

1. guiding targets in decision-making bodies, such as leading scientific and administrative boards, recruitment and promotion committees and evaluation panels, to achieve gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions;
2. guiding targets for a more even gender balance of full professors in higher education institutions;
3. monitoring, with appropriate indicators, the implementation of gender policies, and actions at institutional, national and EU level;
4. gender awareness-raising and capacity-building tools in order to achieve institutional change;
5. flexible and family-friendly working conditions and arrangements for both women and men;
6. reviewing the assessment of researchers’ performance,
7. to eliminate gender bias.

As such, **ESFR-Simple project** recognizes the need to reach these goals. The consortium GENDER ACTION PLAN will be focused on the following aspects:

- i. recruit female scientists to its ranks
  - a. with responsibility tasks (e.g. decision-making) and
  - b. at senior level positions
- ii. educate its community regarding the iniquitousness of gender bias and its impact (e.g. organisation of specific roundtables on gender equality during the meetings)
- iii. prepare female scientists for the challenges they may face in the broader community
- iv. promote the **ESFR-Simple project** GENDER ACTION PLAN and to receive useful input from experts in the field (e.g. participation in international gender-related conferences and workshops)
- v. a gender-balanced participation at internal meetings as well as at external events.

One evidence-based study (*Stewart et al. 2016*) cites four specific steps academic institutions have used to help close the gap in gender representation in STEM departments. They include recognition of the problem, strong leadership on the issue of closing gender discrepancies, “change-enabling” features (such as the synergistic impact of additional hiring of female staff), and active pursuit (i.e., recruitment) of diversity. **ESFR-Simple project** will actively integrate each of these proven strategies. Each consortium partner will implement this GENDER ACTION PLAN with specific timelines, including the development of incentives for partner sites to improve gender balance at the specific institutions.



## 5 Conclusion

The baseline analysis of the distribution of women and men in the research and administrative staff contributing to the action that is presented in the first section of this report, shows that women researchers are not enough represented in the project, with slightly more men participating than women.

A more detailed analysis explores the horizontal segregation and vertical segregation. The horizontal segregation considers the distribution of women and men among research fields traditionally associated to women or traditionally associated to men. Vertical segregation considers the distribution of women and men in leadership roles.

While the analysis presented should be considered indicative, as these numbers will no doubt change as the project evolves, the baseline analysis is very useful to raise awareness within the consortium. Raising awareness is an important action to promote gender equality and inclusivity. This is complemented by additional actions defined in the report that are to be taken in the project through which the contribution of women and men researchers is monitored, as well as promoted, including in project outputs such as publications and scientific conferences.

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