

Gender Equality in Academia and Research

European Institute for Gender Equality's terms and definitions

The definitions below provide a short overview of relevant terms in connection with gender equality plans (GEPs). If not stated otherwise, they are taken from the [glossary and thesaurus](#) of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), which is a terminology tool focusing on the area of gender equality. If you cannot find the term you are looking for in this section, please consult the EIGE glossary and thesaurus.

Note that the gender equality in academia and research (GEAR) tool follows an intersectional approach. In this approach intersectionality allows for understanding of and shapes responses to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination. Within the broad categories of 'women' and 'men', other additional sociodemographic attributes such as age, socioeconomic background, poverty, race, ethnicity, location (rural/urban), disability, sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and others) and religion need to be taken into consideration. Therefore, when referring to women and men, we refer to them always in all their diversity.

Gender

Social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learnt through socialisation processes. They are context- and time-specific, and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, and decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader sociocultural context.

Gender is also an important term to understand in the context of gender identity.

Gender equality

Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, thereby recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue, but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Gender equity

Provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men.

Gender mainstreaming

Systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men in all policies and actions.

Equal opportunities for women and men

Absence of barriers to economic, political and social participation on grounds of sex and gender.

Equal treatment of women and men

A state of no direct or indirect discrimination based on sex and gender, including less favourable treatment for reasons of pregnancy and maternity.

Diversity

Differences in the values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual in any group of people. It is important to consider the lived realities of women and men in all their diversity.

Intersectionality

Analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination. Gender analysis considers the different experiences of women and men depending on their different characteristics, such as age, socioeconomic background, poverty, race, ethnicity, location (rural/urban), disability, sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and others) or religion. This intersectional analysis of the characteristics that affect women's and men's daily lives is essential to understand inequality.

Intersectional discrimination

Discrimination that takes place on the basis of several personal grounds or characteristics/identities, which operate and interact with each other at the same time in such a way as to be inseparable.

Inclusion

The practice or policy of including and integrating all people and groups in activities, organisations, political processes, etc., especially those who are disadvantaged, have suffered discrimination or are living with disabilities. ([Inclusion definition and meaning | Dictionary.com](#) ↗)

Gender identity

Each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.

Institutional or structural change

Institutional change is a strategy aiming to remove the obstacles to gender equality that are inherent in the research and innovation (R & I) system itself and to adapt the practices of organisations. Within an institutional change approach, the focus is on the organisation. The current policy instrument to promote institutional change in R & I is [GEPs](#), which organisations that want to apply for R & I grants in Horizon Europe need to have in place.

'Institutional change' was originally known as 'structural change'. Furthermore, structural change has been complemented with the terms 'structural and cultural change' and 'organisational change'. While the concept of structural, cultural and organisational change can still be found in several documents, publications and research papers, it is now referred to as 'institutional change' in European research area communications and in EU Council conclusions. For the purpose of this tool, these concepts are used in an interchangeable manner.

Types of organisations

The GEAR tool targets all organisations in the field of R & I. Thus, by organisations or institutions, we mean the following:

public bodies, such as research funding bodies, national ministries or other public authorities, including public for-profit organisations,
higher education establishments, both public and private,
research organisations, both public and private.

These organisation types are congruent with the *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans* and the categories of [legal entities](#) established in EU Member States or associated countries.

Organisation and institution

The terms organisation and institution are used interchangeably.