



Council of the  
European Union

**Brussels, 1 December 2015  
(OR. en)**

**14846/15**

**RECH 295  
COMPET 551  
SOC 703**

### **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

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No. prev. doc.: 14414/15 RECH 282 COMPET 531 SOC 684 + COR 1

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Subject: Advancing gender equality in the European Research Area  
- Council conclusions (adopted on 01/12/2015)

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Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on advancing gender equality in the European Research Area, adopted by the Council at its 3431st meeting held on 1 December 2015.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY<sup>1</sup> IN THE  
EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

RECALLING

- Its Conclusions of 18 April 2005 on reinforcing human resources in science and technology in the European Research Area<sup>2</sup> (ERA), which invited Member States to formulate targets for the participation of women in particular by increasing significantly the number of women in leading positions, with the aim of reaching initially the goal of 25% in the public sector, as well as boosting their participation in industrial research and technology;
- Its Conclusions of 30 May 2008 on Family-Friendly Scientific Careers - towards an Integrated Model<sup>3</sup>, which invited the Commission and Member States to develop an integrated model of scientific careers based on an appropriate policy mix ensuring a family-friendly environment for researchers;
- Its Conclusions of 26 May 2010 on various issues related to the development of the ERA<sup>4</sup>, which acknowledged that institutional change requires a long term strategy and sufficient funding, stressed the need to reinforce the integration of the gender dimension in European research;

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this document "gender equality" encompasses gender balance in research teams at all levels, gender balance in decision making, and the integration of the gender dimension in the content of R&I.

<sup>2</sup> Doc. 8194/05.

<sup>3</sup> Doc. 10212/08.

<sup>4</sup> Doc. 10246/10.

- Its Conclusions of 11 December 2012<sup>5</sup>, setting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research as one of the key priorities for the European Research Area, and considering that the integration of a gender dimension into the design, evaluation and implementation of research needs to be improved to effectively foster research and innovation (R&I) excellence;
- Its Conclusions of 21 February 2014 on the progress report from the Commission on European Research Area (ERA) 2013<sup>6</sup>, which considered that stepping up the efforts to systematically mainstream gender equality and the gender dimension in R&I policies and programmes should be taken into account in developing the ERA roadmap at the European level;
- Its Conclusions of 5 December 2014 on the European Research Area Progress Report 2014<sup>7</sup>, noting the persistence of gender bias in careers, gender imbalance in decision-making roles, and the lack of a gender dimension in most of the national research programmes, and inviting Member States to support gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities;
- Its Conclusions of 29 May 2015 on the European Research Area Roadmap 2015-2020 in which it endorsed translating national equality legislation into effective action to address gender imbalances in research institutions and decision making bodies, and integrating the gender dimension better into R&I policies, programmes and projects as one of the top action priorities identified in the ERA Roadmap and called on the Member States and the Commission to start its implementation through appropriate actions in their action plans or strategies by mid-2016;
- The European Parliament resolution of 9 September 2015 on women’s careers in science and universities, and glass ceilings encountered<sup>8</sup>;

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<sup>5</sup> Doc. 17649/12.

<sup>6</sup> Doc. 6945/14.

<sup>7</sup> Doc. 16599/14.

<sup>8</sup> Doc. 2014/2251(INI).

- The Commission communication of 21 September 2010 entitled "Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015"<sup>9</sup>;
  - Its Conclusions of 26 October 2015 on the Gender Action Plan 2016-2020<sup>10</sup>;
1. UNDERLINES that gender inequalities have been persisting for too long and that future prosperity of Europe depends on scientific and technological innovation. Providing a more diverse workforce and a more equal playing field for women and men in R&I will allow Europe to fully exploit its pool of labour force and talent;
  2. ACKNOWLEDGES that gender equality in science will contribute to diversity, excellence and quality in outcomes and make research more responsive to social and societal challenges that are a shared responsibility between women and men. Making use of all talents and creating equal opportunities for men and women is not only a matter of fairness, but it is also an issue of economic efficiency. Embracing gender equality will contribute to EU competitiveness and to growth and job creation;

#### IMPLEMENTING THE ERA ROADMAP

3. REAFFIRMS its commitment to enhance gender equality in the European Research Area. RECOGNISES that the implementation of the ERA Roadmap and the priority on gender equality offers an excellent opportunity to translate national equality legislation into effective action to address gender imbalances in research institutions and decision making bodies and integrate the gender dimension better into R&I policies, programmes and projects. ENCOURAGES Member States and the Commission to set ambitious goals on gender equality and to take appropriate and concrete actions in their action plans or strategies to implement the ERA Roadmap by mid-2016;

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<sup>9</sup> Doc. COM(2010)0491.

<sup>10</sup> Doc. 13201/15.

## SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

4. RECOGNISES the need to foster sustainable cultural and institutional changes in the ERA national action plans or strategies to implement the ERA Roadmap for achieving gender equality and including the gender dimension in R&I content and programmes; and ENCOURAGES Member States to make institutional change a key element of their national policy framework on gender equality in R&I; HIGHLIGHTS the role that awareness raising, education, training and exchange of best practices in relation to advancing gender equality in R&I can play at institutional level;
5. INVITES Member States and research funding organisations to provide incentives to encourage research performing organisations, including universities, to revise or develop gender mainstreaming strategies, gender equality plans including the gender dimension in R&I content and programmes and mobilise adequate resources to ensure their implementation;
6. NOTES that only around 20% of full professors in Europe are women and that changes towards a more equal level are progressing very slowly<sup>11</sup>, and therefore INVITES Member States and institutions to strive for guiding targets for a more even gender balance for professors;
7. CONSIDERS that transparency must apply to recruitment and career progression at all levels as well as in fellowship and scholarship awarding procedures in R&I; INVITES Member States and research funding organisations to advance measures to ensure that allocation of research funding is not affected by gender bias;
8. INVITES research organisations, including universities, to support flexible and family-friendly working conditions and arrangements for both women and men in R&I, including to support equal sharing of care responsibilities, and to review the assessment of researchers' performance in order to eliminate gender bias;

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<sup>11</sup> She Figures 2012. Gender in Research and Innovation.

9. ENCOURAGES Member States in collaboration with the Commission to advance appropriate gender awareness raising and capacity building tools in order to achieve institutional change, taking into account the work of the European Institute for Gender Equality;
10. INVITES the Commission to continue to strengthen the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all gender equality objectives in Horizon 2020 relating to gender representation in research teams, decision-making as well as the gender dimension in research content, at all possible stages of the research cycle; CALLS on the Commission to explore the possibility to provide more comprehensive, transparent sex-disaggregated data and gender indicators on participation of evaluators and researchers as well as of the integration of the gender dimension as research subject in projects and programmes funded by Horizon 2020;
11. INVITES the Commission and Member States to consider inclusion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming as regular part of National Contact Points (NCP) training and events as well as in communication and dissemination materials related to Horizon 2020;
12. INVITES the Commission and Member States to consider including, among others, a gender perspective in dialogues with third countries in the area of science, technology and innovation (STI). INVITES SFIC and the Helsinki Group to consider developing joint guidelines on a gender perspective for international cooperation in STI;

#### GENDER BALANCE IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

13. NOTES that women continue to be underrepresented in top academic decision making positions, both as members of scientific and administrative boards and as heads of higher education institutions<sup>12</sup>;

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<sup>12</sup> Preliminary data for the upcoming 'She Figures 2015' publication.

14. STRESSES the need to strive for gender balance in leadership and decision making positions by appropriate measures. INVITES relevant authorities to set up guiding targets, for example quantitative objectives, for better gender balance in decision making bodies including leading scientific and administrative boards, recruitment and promotion committees as well as evaluation panels and ENCOURAGES research funding and performing organisations to reach these targets by 2020;
15. CALLS on the Commission, in close cooperation with the Helsinki Group, to provide support for Member States to address policy challenges related to gender balance, including developing guidance to facilitate the implementation of guiding targets;

#### GENDER KNOWLEDGE AND MONITORING

16. INVITES Member States in collaboration with the Commission to make full use of mutual learning exercises, including within the framework of ERAC, and the exchange of good practices in the field of gender equality in R&I; taking into account the recommendations from the Helsinki Group, and the outcomes of projects on this topic funded by the EU framework programmes, such as the GENDER-NET ERA-Net;
17. INVITES Member States to ensure regular collection of sex-disaggregated data for She Figures and where possible the preparation of gender indicators in the field of R&I and ensure public dissemination;
18. INVITES Member States in cooperation with the Commission to monitor, with appropriate indicators, the implementation of gender policies, objectives, guiding targets and actions at institutional, national and EU level and RECOGNISES that the assessment of the outcomes and impacts of the implemented measures is crucial for improvement.