



Gender training: Step-by-step approach to quality

- **What is gender training?** Gender training is a tool and a process meant to support policy makers in their effort to integrate gender considerations into all policies and programmes.
- **Why gender training?** The aim of gender training is to make the actors more gender equality aware, building their gender competence and enabling them to promote gender equality goals in their work at all levels.
- **Why do we need it?** Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the European Union (EU). Integrating this principle in all its activities represents a general aim for the EU. Gender training helps key actors to acquire the knowledge and skills that are necessary to achieve this goal.
- **What is this reference sheet about?** Based on evidence gathered during EIGE's study on Gender training in the EU: Mapping, research and stakeholders' engagement (2012-2013), this reference sheet outlines the five key steps that need to be followed when planning gender training programmes in public authorities' work.

Gender training: Five step approach to quality



STEP 1. Ensuring commitment: What is the involvement of the top-management for?



As a strategy for achieving gender equality, gender mainstreaming involves a process of fostering change in policies, strategies and activities. To achieve its continuity in national, regional/local, and sectoral policies, the public servants must possess the knowledge and technical skills to address gender issues. For this, institutional commitment to gender mainstreaming and support from high-level managers is crucial to enable staff to attend gender training sessions and to have the time and space to think about how this affects their everyday work. The success of training therefore relies on leaders' understanding that the implementation of gender mainstreaming requires specific knowledge and investment in the competence development of staff.

STEP 2. Ensuring standards: What should we look at when commissioning gender training?



Taking into account the diverse background of gender training providers, commissioning authorities need to make an informed decision of how to commission gender training. Currently, there are no common guidelines for commissioning institutions to lead them through the process of finding and selecting quality training services. However, the on-going debate on quality standards and skills based criteria for gender trainers offers some pointers on what should be considered when commissioning effective gender training. The questions to be considered before commissioning training services include:

- **Content and materials:** What topics are we most interested in? What training materials would be the most appropriate in our case?
- **Methodology:** What would be the best approach to achieve training goals? What kind of exercises would be optimal for us?
- **Trainer's profile:** What knowledge, skills and competences should a gender trainer possess? How can these be verified?

Portugal has set training standards, so called 'referential' at the national level. Entities who want to apply for public funds to deliver gender training or to train trainers have to comply with these standards.

EIGE's gender trainers' database gives access to a wide pool of gender trainers with different methodological and thematic expertise in Europe and allows authorities commissioning gender training to work with trainers that have the right experience in their policy areas. Available at: <http://www.eige.europa.eu>



STEP 3. Addressing needs: What are the needs that gender training addresses?



It is crucial for those who commission gender training to identify the problems they wish the training to address and the desired outcomes. Before the launch of gender training staff might be asked to specify their needs and expectations towards the seminars as well as their motivation to attend the training. Such an approach helps to structure teaching sessions and to develop their thematic content around the interests of potential groups of participants.

'(...) So I don't start with training, but with a lot of questions to make sure that the service we provide is for everyone and with the same quality for everyone.'

Kajsa Svalery, Municipality of Gävle, Sweden

Excerpt from EIGE's online discussion on gender training, 25-26 September 2012

STEP 4. Getting started: What is the best approach to trigger a change?



- **Content and materials:** The application of tailor-made tools and good practice examples in specific policy areas develops staff's ability to integrate a gender perspective into their respective field of work. Issues of diversity and intersectionality should not be forgotten.
- **Methodology:** Both generic and more tailored gender training are needed to accommodate the needs of training participants. It is best if generic training is followed up by workshops that provide the opportunity for trained staff to explore the relevance of gender considerations in their policy area. Innovative ways to integrate gender into policies and programmes should be considered.
- **Trainer's profile:** The efforts to establish some quality standards at national level have been identified in some EU Member States. Some examples of the key skills, knowledge and competences that gender trainers should possess can be found in EIGE's study on Gender training in the EU: Mapping, research and stakeholders' engagement (2012-2013).

Gender equality training:

- provides facts, figures and indicators on the social and economic situation of men and women;
- supports self-reflection and self-awareness, helps to define personal and social identity;
- helps to understand the origin and functioning of gender stereotypes;
- creates anti-discriminatory attitudes and behaviours;
- presents gender equality in a comprehensive legal context;
- helps to incorporate gender-linked considerations and perspectives;
- illustrates the wide and diverse context of gender equality.

Quality Standards Concerning the Content of Gender Equality Training

Acting Pro(e)quality Quality Standards for Gender Equality and Diversity Training in the EU Pro(E)quality EQUAL Transnational Cooperation, 2007

Available in EIGE's database at: <http://www.eige.europa.eu>

STEP 5. Measuring impact and evaluation: How to follow up?



Building gender competences and raising gender awareness requires time and regular action. To support this process, it is crucial to define a desired outcome and assess whether and how it has been achieved. This can be done by formulating the goals of gender training in terms of: 1) competences that will be developed, and 2) changes to be obtained in the organisation and in the services / policies delivered. Accordingly, the systematic monitoring and evaluation of gender training helps to assess the training effectiveness in addressing these goals and to reveal where and what further action is needed. It also demonstrates the long-term impact and benefits of gender training. Such evidence is of key importance when communicating the training's significance to high-level management and showing that gender mainstreaming is the responsibility of all employees.

In the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** training participants are followed up after six months to see how they are using the skills and knowledge acquired during the gender training. Participants in WHO country offices commit to specific actions to integrate gender issues into their work areas. Progress is measured in terms of the extent to which country programmes are progressing in addressing gender issues in their work.

Other examples of gender training evaluation can be found in EIGE's database of resources at: <http://www.eige.europa.eu>

About the study:

This reference sheet provides practical information on the provision of gender training. It summarises research findings from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) project on gender training in the European Union. The project collected information about gender training across the 27 EU Member States and Croatia. The project aims to facilitate dialogue between policy makers, trainers and researchers on how gender training can be used to support informed policy making in the EU and Member States. The information is based on desk research and stakeholder interviews conducted by ICF GHK in all EU Member States and Croatia between February and April 2012 as well as an online discussion that took place in September 2012. Neither EIGE nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the content of the information contained in this publication.

About EIGE:

The European Institute for Gender Equality is an EU agency that supports policy makers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality, by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable information on gender equality in Europe. More information: <http://www.eige.europa.eu>

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