

GENDER FOR HORIZON EUROPE RESEARCH & INNOVATION MISSIONS

Ensuring a fast-track to better future for all

The European Commission has launched a proposal for the next EU Research & Innovation Framework Programme (2021-2027), "Horizon Europe". The present 4th Briefing Paper is a call to action towards a proper integration of gender issues in the Horizon Europe new *mission-oriented* approach within Pillar II on *Global Challenges and Industrial Competitiveness*.

What does Horizon Europe plan for its new *mission-oriented* approach?

- A limited number of highly visible R&I upcoming missions on ambitious goals within a set timeframe, to increase impact on EU policy priorities and UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Defined from the SDGs framework and focused on areas with a transformative potential for society, science, technology or industry.
- Two mission types: those aimed at *accelerating progress* (social, technological or industrial) and those aimed at *transforming an entire system* (social or industrial).
- Each one will include a *portfolio of projects* open to benefit from other actions in the Programme and beyond, **across clusters**, improving cross-sectoral, cross-disciplinary, cross-policy and international cooperation.
- Missions will be decided and co-designed during a strategic planning process through collaborative effort including relevant stakeholders. Citizens and end-users will participate in co-design and co-creation. Citizens and stakeholders will also be involved in mission monitoring.
- *Mission Boards* and *Mission Managers* might be set up or recruited by the Commission. The former to be appointed through open calls for expression of interests, and balance criteria such as expertise, **gender**, age and geographical

distribution, but existing governance structures might be considered when appropriate.

Why gender needs to be well integrated in the Horizon Europe *mission-oriented* approach?

Gender issues need to be properly taken into account when it comes to prioritising and designing the progress we want to accelerate or the social and industrial systems we want to transform for a better future that benefits all.

Accelerating progress on gender equality directly relates to SDG5 *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*, and requires profound transformations in the existing social and industrial systems. It is **also a crucial driver for the transformations required by other SDGs**. Also, **the gender impact of these other transformations needs to be analysed to avoid gender biases**.

To accelerate progress and to transform systems towards SDGs in a responsible and efficient way, the EU R&I upcoming missions need to appropriately integrate the gender dimension and ensure gender balance in mission development.

According to the Eurobarometer on Gender Equality 2017, more than 80% of respondents say that promoting gender equality is important for: a fair and democratic society (91%), the economy and the companies (87%) or themselves personally (84%).

Both gender balance and the gender dimension need to be well integrated in the whole mission-oriented approach cycle, that is, in the ways Horizon Europe missions are going to be defined, selected, implemented, monitored and evaluated.

On the one hand, diversity in teams, including **gender diversity and gender balance**, facilitates innovative solutions. And on the other hand, the **incorporation of the gender dimension into R&I content** (which requires gender expertise), guarantees that R&I processes and outputs benefit all segments of population without gender bias. For instance, the World Economic Forum has recently estimated that many of the jobs that will be lost due to digitalization are performed by women.

Recommendations for Gender Balance and Gender Diversity in missions

- Gender balance is already one of the criteria for the recruitment of **Mission Boards**, but it also needs to be considered when an existing governance structure is to be appointed (provisions to avoid or solve unbalanced cases).
- To ensure gender balance too at mission level and across **other leadership and decision-making appointed roles** (*Mission Managers*, expert evaluators, keynote speakers, etc.). And to promote it in **other mission roles by sector**.
- **Provisions for equal work conditions at missions** should be made (to boost work-life balance, as well as to prevent and properly address any form of gender discrimination and gender-based violence).

Recommendations for the integration of the gender dimension into mission content

- **A specific mission on gender equality SDG5**, aimed at accelerating progress and to transform systems towards SDG5 targets.
- **Addressing gender in all missions**. Besides SDG5, gender equality is an organizing principle of European societies. Gender impact must be addressed in any social and industrial transformation. This requires ensuring that all missions will properly integrate **sex/gender analysis methods**. Provisions should be made, *inter alia*, on: **clear gender criteria to select missions, gender experts among evaluators, and gender indicators** in the monitoring and impact evaluation of missions.
- Therefore, it is also crucial to ensure the participation of **gender experts** and **gender equality stakeholders** (women's organizations and gender equality architecture at national and European level) **across the mission cycle**, from strategic planning to monitoring and evaluation. For a proper integration of gender when, for instance, mission boards advise on work programmes, co-design with stakeholders and the public, evaluation criteria, adjustment or termination of actions, communication, etc.

Conclusion

To better accelerate progress and transform entire systems towards SDGs in a responsible and efficient manner, the EU R&I upcoming missions need to appropriately integrate the targets of SDG5 as well as addressing the crucial gender issues in the other SDGs

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