

Shaping the Future: GENDERACTIONplus Conference Calls for Stronger Gender Equality in FP10

24. 2. 2025 | In a fitting tribute to the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, the GENDERACTIONplus final conference convened in Brussels under the patronage of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU. Bringing together a distinguished assembly of policymakers, civil servants, gender equality practitioners, researchers, and key stakeholders, the conference served as a critical forum for assessing progress on inclusive gender equality within the European Research Area (ERA). Participants engaged in discussions on the evolving landscape of gender equality policy, examined pressing challenges, and charted strategic priorities for the forthcoming Framework Programme 10 (FP10).

The conference occurred at a critical moment amid ongoing policy negotiations and increasing political challenges to gender equality. "We are now facing a real threat, a real gender backlash, which is to dilute commitment to ensure gender and mainstreaming in Research and Innovation and to reduce investment in gender research. This is just unacceptable, absolutely not acceptable," stated Lina Gálvez, Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), in her opening remarks.

Over the past four years, GENDERACTIONplus has contributed significantly to advancing gender equality policy coordination among Member States and RFOs in the vital areas of intersectionality and inclusiveness, fighting gender-based violence, integrating inclusive gender analysis in research and innovation, and monitoring of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs). However, with the rise of anti-gender movements and changing political landscape, ensuring the sustainability and expansion of these measures in FP10 remains an urgent priority.

Building on the momentum of [the open letter addressed to Commissioner Zaharieva](#)—signed by over 600 members of the research community—the conference participants underscored key priorities for FP10, including:

- Strengthening the GEPs eligibility criterion in FP10 by making the recommended thematic areas mandatory to advance actions which combat gender-based violence and ensure the integration of inclusive gender analysis in R&I,
- Supporting change agents responsible for implementing GEPs,
- Advancing GEP monitoring at the national level with further guidance from the Commission regarding the GEP eligibility criterion,
- Ensuring leadership engagement and top level support for inclusive GEPs.

Additionally, the following actions were proposed as urgent:

- Enshrining inclusive gender equality in the ERA Act,
- Ensuring a strong commitment to inclusive gender equality as a political priority by DG Research and Innovation,
- Addressing gender aspects including gender and other forms of bias in the upcoming CoARA report.



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The participants and speakers also converged on the essential requirement of protecting European democratic values and academic freedom. Academic freedom was highlighted as vital for safeguarding freedom across various fields of research and as a means to ensuring social safety and combatting gender-based violence.

The main take-aways focused on building alliances across groups of stakeholders and mandating inclusive gender analysis in research projects and ensuring gender-disaggregated data reporting.

Throughout the conference, participants repeatedly emphasized—both within panel discussions and in informal exchanges—the critical need to uphold inclusive gender equality policies and maintain GEP requirements in FP10. Given the current uncertainties surrounding gender equality policies in R&I, participants appreciated the alliances GENDERACTIONplus made possible and called for continuing stronger partnerships to advance inclusive gender equality going forward.

In her concluding remarks, project coordinator Marcela Linková underscored that this is no time for Europe to go back on its policy priorities and that inclusive gender equality provisions must be reinforced in FP10. Looking toward the negotiation period ahead, she stressed that the gender equality stakeholders will need to prepare for a negotiation marathon, while simultaneously staying organised and ready to mobilise quickly at critical moments along the way.

[GENDERACTIONplus](#) is a Horizon Europe project advancing policy coordination on gender equality and inclusiveness in the European Research Area. Bringing together national authorities and Research Funding Organisations from 22 EU Member States and 3 Associated Countries, the project develops strategic policy advice, fosters stakeholder engagement, and strengthens capacities for gender mainstreaming in research and innovation. Its key thematic areas include intersectionality, gender-based violence, the gender dimension in R&I, monitoring gender equality actions, and institutional change through Gender Equality Plans.

You can find the video of the conference on our [YouTube channel](#).

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