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Inclusive and sustainable policy implementation**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Meaning
AC	Associated Countries
CoP	Community of Practice
EC	European Commission
EGET	European Gender Equality Taskforce
ERA	European Research Area
EUIP	EU Impact Plan
FP10	Framework Programme 10
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
GBV	Gender-based violence
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
MS	EU Member States
NIP	National Impact Plan
RFO	Research Funding Organisation
R&I	Research & Innovation
RPO	Research Performing Organisation
WP	Work Package



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This deliverable presents the final report on citizen and stakeholder engagement and the implementation of the impact plan (Deliverable 8.2) within the GENDERACTIONplus project. It provides an integrated overview of activities under Work Package 8, including strategic engagement with stakeholders and citizens, the implementation of National and EU Impact Plans (NIPs and EUIP), and communication and dissemination efforts aimed at maximising the project's reach and impact across the European Research Area (ERA).

GENDERACTIONplus aimed to enhance policy coordination and implementation of inclusive gender equality in the ERA by building two Communities of Practice (CoPs) and advancing five thematic areas: intersectionality and inclusiveness, gender-based violence (GBV), the gender dimension in research and innovation (R&I), monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies, and institutional change through Gender Equality Plans (GEPs). Engagement activities were central to the project's theory of change, serving both to validate policy outputs and to foster broad-based support for their implementation.

The report documents eight structured stakeholder engagement actions involving over 300 participants from across Europe. These actions targeted a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including national authorities, research funders, civil society actors, and underrepresented groups. Their input informed the development of key policy recommendations and position papers, strengthened their relevance and applicability, and contributed to ERA-level discussions, including on the future ERA Policy Agenda and Framework Programme 10 (FP10).

The implementation of 19 National Impact Plans by project partners enabled tailored dissemination and uptake at the national level. These flexible frameworks supported coordination with national stakeholders, promoted exchange through existing networks, and helped translate project outputs into context-specific actions at the national level. The EUIP complemented these efforts at the EU level, focusing on policy alignment, visibility, and long-term sustainability, including outreach to EU institutions, members of the European Parliament, and other ERA stakeholders.

Communication and dissemination activities—anchored in a dynamic online presence and two high-level conferences—further amplified impact. The transition from X (formerly Twitter) to LinkedIn proved particularly effective in professional outreach. Newsletters, videos, flyers, and a dedicated website ensured accessible communication of project goals and achievements.

The overall assessment confirms that citizen and stakeholder engagement significantly shaped the project's policy outputs and enhanced their credibility and adoption. While challenges such as engaging underrepresented groups and ensuring attendance at online events were encountered, mitigation strategies including asynchronous feedback opportunities and targeted outreach were largely successful.

Recommendations for future initiatives include maintaining concise and inclusive online formats, ensuring flexible engagement options, and strengthening tailored outreach to marginalised groups. Taken together, the engagement strategies and impact planning approaches adopted in GENDERACTIONplus have proven effective in meeting the project's objectives, enhancing policy relevance, fostering stakeholder ownership, and strengthening the uptake of inclusive gender equality policies across the ERA.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the project

Building on the Horizon 2020 project GENDERACTION, the overall goal of GENDERACTIONplus is to contribute to the coordination of the gender equality and inclusiveness objectives of the new European Research Area (ERA) through the development of two communities of practice (CoPs), one consisting of representatives of national authorities and the second consisting of representatives of Research Funding Organisations. The network is made up of a total of 22 EU Member States (MS) and 3 Associated Countries (AC), as well as 26 project partners and 14 Associated partners.

Adding the plus sign to the title of the previous GENDERACTION project not only indicates that it is a follow-up project but also makes it explicit that this project also addresses diversity and intersectionality (the gender+ approach).

Specifically, the GENDERACTIONplus project aims to:

- Develop strategic policy advice on existing and emerging policy solutions;
- Enhance the policy-making process by engaging with stakeholders, civil society organisations, and citizens;
- Build capacities, competence, and expertise for gender equality and mainstreaming in research and innovation (R&I) among the policy and RFO community members, with special attention to countries with a less comprehensive policy;
- Create an impact through communication, dissemination, and exploitation.

Thematically, the project focuses on:

- Intersectionality and inclusiveness
- Gender-based violence
- The gender dimension in R&I
- Monitoring and evaluating gender equality actions in the European Research Area (ERA)
- Promoting institutional change through Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)

GENDERACTIONplus aims to achieve the following impacts:

- Advance policy coordination among MS and AC countries and through stakeholder and citizen engagement.
- Improve research careers and working conditions in European R&I, by developing policy dialogue and solutions on inclusion and intersectionality, combating gender-based violence, and promoting institutional changes through GEPs.
- Improve research quality and the social responsibility of knowledge by integrating the gender dimension into R&I.
- Reduce geographic inequality by targeting less experienced/engaged countries and regions.



1.2 Context of the deliverable within GENDERACTIONplus and WP8 objectives

In line with the Grant Agreement, D8.2 details:

- the implementation of communication, dissemination and exploitation activities conducted in Task 8.2 and led by the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences (ISAS CR),
- the different formats of citizen and stakeholder engagement events and their outcomes for the policy design process conducted as part of Task 8.3 and led by Vetenskap & Allmänhet (VA, Public & Science Sweden),
- activities implemented within the framework of the National Impact Plans (NIPs) in Task 8.4 and led by Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología (FECYT, the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology),
- activities implemented within the framework of the EU Impact Plan (EUIP) in Task 8.5 and led by ISAS CR.

In conclusion, it assesses their implementation and achievements.

1.3 Purpose and significance of citizen and stakeholder engagement in policy design

In GENDERACTIONplus, stakeholder and citizen engagement has primarily been employed to gather input and feedback on the strategic policy advice developed throughout the project. By consulting a diverse range of ERA stakeholders and citizens external to the project, engagement activities have served as a reality check, ensuring that the proposed policies align with practical needs and challenges. In this context, “stakeholders” refers primarily to individuals, groups, or organisations engaged in the European R&I system who are not formally part of the GENDERACTIONplus project but whose perspectives, expertise, or interests are relevant to its objectives and outcomes; “citizens” refers primarily to individuals not formally affiliated with policy institutions but still directly affected by R&I policies, such as early-career researchers and students. In many cases, this feedback has directly shaped the content of policy papers, leading to refinements, additions, or adjustments that enhance their applicability and feasibility, particularly with regard to future implementation.

This approach has not only fostered greater buy-in but also deepened stakeholders’ understanding of the policy development process while enhancing dissemination and awareness-raising efforts. Ultimately, this has ensured that the [strategic policy advice](#) developed by the project could achieve maximum impact by facilitating exchanges with ERA stakeholders and citizens, strengthening its relevance, and supporting its broader adoption.

1.4 The National Impact Plans and European Impact Plan: their role and goals

In GENDERACTIONplus, the NIPs and EUIP have been foreseen as instruments of impact creation at the national and EU levels, serving to deploy the knowledge and recommendations developed with a view to advancing gender equality policy. NIPs in the GENDERACTIONplus project have been developed by project partners to coordinate targeted activities based on national needs and



opportunities. These plans may draw on project outputs such as benchmarking reports, needs assessments, or policy briefs, and can involve collaboration with national stakeholders and the European Gender Equality Taskforce (EGET). The EUIP, coordinated through WP8 and developed in cooperation with the thematic Work Packages (WPs), has included communication, dissemination and exploitation activities to share project outputs with relevant stakeholders at the EU level. It has leveraged national-level engagement opportunities and collaboration with sister projects to ensure broad reach and alignment with EU-level priorities on gender equality in R&I. In sum, the NIPs facilitate action at the national level, while the EUIP supports broader policy uptake and sustainability at the European level.

Rather than formal strategy documents, these “plans” are flexible frameworks to plan, structure, and track efforts to generate uptake, engagement, and dissemination. At the national level, the NIPs support project partners in translating project outputs into impacts relevant to their national contexts. The EUIP serves a similar purpose at the European level, aiming to create visibility and support for project findings and recommendations across EU institutions and networks.

Together, they help ensure that the project’s results are shared and used through informing policy, strengthening coordination, and supporting long-term impact.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This section outlines the methodology applied in the GENDERACTIONplus project to ensure meaningful citizen and stakeholder engagement and to implement the project's impact planning strategies. It describes the approaches used for identifying and reaching relevant target groups, the formats and tools employed to facilitate inclusive and effective participation, and the strategic processes underlying the development and execution of both National and European Impact Plans. Additionally, it details how communication activities supported these efforts and contributed to broader outreach and engagement. The following subsections provide an overview of the design, implementation, and evaluation of these activities, highlighting the rationale and principles guiding the project's methodological choices.

2.2 Overview of methodologies for citizen and stakeholder engagement

Task 8.3 Management of the citizen and stakeholder engagement has been led by civil society partner, VA. The primary focus was to support the thematic WP leaders in developing and managing engagement activities tailored to the specific objectives of each WP and the target groups that they wished to engage.

To ensure the broadest and most inclusive participation, engagement methodologies prioritised accessibility and reach, relying predominantly on online formats. These methodologies, further detailed in the following sections, facilitated meaningful exchanges and ensured that stakeholder input was systematically gathered, analysed, and integrated into the project's strategic policy advice.

2.2.1 Stakeholder mapping and target group identification

At the start of the project, an initial stakeholder mapping exercise was conducted to identify stakeholder groups for potential engagement during the project. These groups were broadly categorised as follows:

- **European level stakeholders:** e.g., European Commission, similar EU-funded “sister projects,” National Contact Points (NCPs), ERA Forum, umbrella organisations such as LERU and Coimbra Group.
- **International organisations:** e.g., UNESCO, Science Europe.
- **Research Performing Organisations.**
- **Research Funding Organisations.**
- **Research community:** e.g., early-career researcher organisations, professional societies, student associations.
- **National policymakers:** e.g., ministries, Members of Parliament, and bodies responsible for gender equality in R&I.



- **Civil society and NGOs:** e.g., LGBTQ+ groups, associations representing persons with disabilities, women in science, and campaign groups.

Recognising the overlapping roles and interests of these categories of entities, the mapping process ensured a comprehensive understanding of the stakeholder landscape and their potential relevance to the project objectives.

For each engagement activity, a detailed stakeholder mapping was undertaken. This involved setting up a database of individuals, organisations and networks to facilitate invitations and outreach. Invitations were sent directly to individuals as well as distributed via relevant networks and marketing channels. To facilitate the management of each event, invited stakeholders were asked to complete an online registration form.

2.2.2 Formats and methodologies for engagement activities

The design and methodology of each engagement activity were developed in consultation with the relevant WP leaders and tailored to the specific objectives. Common characteristics included:

- **Online consultation format:** Most activities were conducted as online events, allowing inclusive participation irrespective of geographic location.
- **Duration:** Sessions were designed to be concise, typically lasting 2-2.5 hours.
- **Interactive focus:** Events emphasised interactivity, with ample time for discussion, questions and feedback. Tools like Mentimeter and online polls were employed to encourage participation and collect real-time feedback.
- **Breakout group discussions:** Breakout groups were facilitated by GENDERACTIONplus partners, with dedicated note-takers ensuring all discussions were documented.
- **Confidentiality:** To foster openness, sessions were not recorded, enabling participants to share their views freely.
- **Document review and feedback:** For events focused on gaining feedback on guidance or policy recommendations, draft documents were shared in advance with participants. Google Docs was used to enable commenting, ensuring stakeholders who could not attend the event still had the opportunity to provide feedback.
- **Feedback questionnaire:** An event evaluation questionnaire was created for each event which participants were asked to complete in order to evaluate their satisfaction with the event in terms of content, speakers and discussions as well as how the content of the event might benefit the work of their organisation and what they had found most interesting about the event. Participants could also request to join the GENDERACTIONplus newsletter mailing list. The link to the evaluation questionnaire was sent in a follow-up thank you email with speakers' presentations to all of those who attended. Those that were unable to attend on the day also received information from the event.

This approach ensured that the engagement activities were inclusive, adaptable, and aligned with the project's overarching goals. The combination of detailed planning, interactive methodologies, and



flexible participation formats enhanced the quality of stakeholder input and contributed to the overall impact.

2.3 Approach to the development and implementation of NIPs

2.3.1 Reporting processes

Although the NIPs were foreseen as a flexible tool that should be tailored to the national needs, timeline and capacities, a reporting process was agreed with the reporting partners in order to collect relevant information on the progress at national level. Therefore, the development of Task 4.3 consisted of four main phases:

1. *Design of NIPs*: Following instructions provided for the design of NIP actions and objectives, all NIPs were submitted by partners and reviewed by the Task leader, verifying that entities specified their forecast on the outputs of the project that they plan to employ, and they established concrete and achievable objectives.
2. *Support and reflection on NIPs*: During the consortium meeting held in Madrid in June 2024, the two CoPs had the opportunity to share information about the achievements of their NIP implementation and insights into the process of NIP implementation. The session highlighted that both RFOs and national authorities faced significant challenges in implementing gender equality initiatives, including financial constraints, political changes, and the need for better monitoring and stakeholder engagement. At the same time, new opportunities were highlighted from national developments and the ERA policy agenda, offering avenues to advance gender equality through strategic partnerships, increased stakeholder engagement, and leveraging policy support from the European Commission.
3. *Update of NIPs making use of digital solutions*: Partners implementing NIPs were asked to provide an update on the implementation of their actions in 2024 once the online platform designed under Task 8.4 for the monitoring of NIPs was in place.
4. *Final reporting on NIPs*: At the end of the project, implementing partners were asked to complete a final update of their actions making use of the online platform for NIPs. Although 19 NIPs were created and started the journey of monitoring during the first years of the project, the final monitoring could not be completed by all the implementing partners, mainly due to changes in the staff assigned to the project.

2.3.2 Online platform

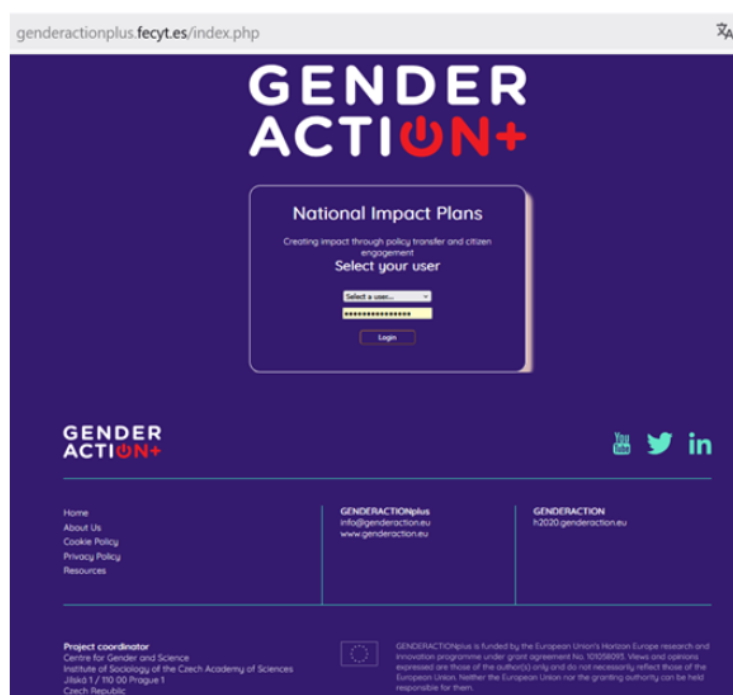
The need to employ digital solutions for a proper management, analysis and storage of data led to the design of a website where the Task leader could collect updates on NIP implementation and to visualise this updated information using graphics and maps.



The website was installed on FECYT servers, and each implementing partner received a password to access their NIP information. The web application has been designed with two differentiated parts, one for internal use which only project partners can access and another part with information ready to be used by the Task leader for the purpose of analysis and visualisation of results.

Once an implementing partner accesses their private section of the system, the system allows entities to consult their own data and update the status of their NIP development by modifying the status of each action and including information related to each of the indicators defined for a given task.

The visual identity of the project has been followed in all aspects of the design and visualisation of results. Moreover, the website has been designed to be sustainable over time without developer maintenance after the lifetime of the project, so that the progress of the NIP actions could be updated in the future if necessary.



Picture 1. NIP online platform login page



2.4 Approach to the development and implementation of EUIP

The main aim of the EUIP has been to raise awareness and encourage greater engagement with gender equality policy in the European Union. The focus was on disseminating project outputs and raising awareness and buy-in from EU-level policy makers and stakeholders. The strategy was to target the development of relevant EU policies, in particular the implementation of the ERA Policy Agenda 2022 / 2024 and the negotiations of the upcoming Framework Programme¹⁰ (FP10), to ensure that gender equality and inclusiveness are engrained in R&I policy priorities. This involved not only reaching EU institutions such as the European Commission and the European Parliament but also ensuring that other key ERA stakeholders were engaged in the process.

To support this, the EUIP was developed. The EUIP outlined goals, specific activities to achieve them, the target audiences and stakeholders, messaging and content strategies, relevant outputs, responsibilities for implementation, and timelines. These were all documented in a structured table to ensure accountability and ease of tracking.

The method was grounded in four main tactics:

1. The development of databases of key contacts, including members of the European Parliament, umbrella organisations, and other invested stakeholders.
2. The ISAS CR regularly scanned for and identified windows of opportunity for dissemination—this included tracking developments within EU institutions, such as committee activities, EU events, and policy developments, as well as monitoring discussions on social media.
3. Efforts were made to establish and nurture relationships and lines of communication with policymakers and other decision-makers, with a focus on long-term engagement rather than one-off exchanges.
4. Social media platforms were used strategically to amplify policy outputs and reach a broader audience, both within and beyond the immediate policy sphere.

2.5 Approach to communication and dissemination activities

In GENDERACTIONplus, communication has played a key role in supporting stakeholder and citizen engagement activities, ensuring broad outreach and effective dissemination of policy recommendations.

By leveraging targeted communication strategies, the project has amplified the visibility of consultations and increased awareness of the importance of inclusive gender equality policies. The events were promoted through a mix of online channels, including social media and project's website.

2.5.1 Social Media

Since the beginning of the project, X (formerly Twitter) was used as primary communication channel; after some time, [LinkedIn](#) started to play a role as well. However, following challenges associated with Elon Musk's acquisition of X, the project's presence on the platform was discontinued, and communication efforts continued exclusively on LinkedIn. As a professional network focused on work,



education, and data-driven discussions, LinkedIn provided an optimal platform for disseminating updates on stakeholder engagement activities. It played a crucial role in expanding outreach, facilitating participant engagement, and effectively sharing the outcomes of each event.

2.5.2 Website

The project [website](#) has served as the central communication hub, offering a comprehensive repository of activities and outputs. Each stakeholder engagement event was documented through dedicated articles, which presented key messages and conclusions. These articles, prepared in collaboration between VA and ISAS CR, were published in a timely manner following each event, delivering insights, conclusions and knowledge gained during the stakeholder engagement events.



3. CITIZEN AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

3.1 Introduction

As outlined in the grant agreement, the objective was the organisation of six ERA stakeholder and citizen engagement actions to increase robustness and policy buy-in of developed solutions and recommendations in the new ERA.

In total, eight specific stakeholder engagement activities, both online and face to face, have been undertaken during the project. More than 300 participants from across the EU have joined the different events. Working closely with relevant WP leaders, Task 8.3 leader VA has been responsible for the design, marketing, registration process, moderation and evaluation of each event.

Agendas for six online stakeholder consultation workshops can be found in Annexes 1 to 6. The WP 5 consultation on the monitoring ERA Action 5 implementation at national level in November 2024 was conducted as part of the meeting of the ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality and therefore a specific agenda is not available. Similarly, the consultation for the mid-term conference was conducted online and onsite without a specific agenda for this engagement activity.

Table 1. Overview of engagement activities

Date	WP	Type of activity	Topic	Number of participants	Number of countries represented
21/09/22	WP3 (Gender-based violence)	Online consultation workshop	Tackling gender-based violence in academia	15	10
29/11/23	WP6 (Advancing institutional change through GEPs)	Online consultation workshop	GEP monitoring systems at national level	24	14
15/01/24	WP2 (Intersectionality and inclusiveness)	Online consultation workshop	Intersectionality policy recommendations	25	11
13/02/24	GA+	Mid-term conference	Future of gender equality in the European Research Area	60	?
30/09/24	WP2 (Intersectionality and inclusiveness)	Online consultation workshop	Inclusive Research Careers	35	18



01/10/24	WP4 (Gender dimension in R&I)	Online consultation workshop	Inclusive Gender Analysis in Research and Innovation beyond the European Research Area	25	13
15/11/24	WP5 (Monitoring and evaluation of ERA GE policies)	Online consultation meeting	Monitoring ERA Action 5 implementation at national level	26	16
27/03/25	WP6 (Advancing institutional change through GEPs)	Online consultation workshop	Consultation with Gender Equality Practitioners	24	14

3.2 Overview of stakeholder engagement activities

A description of each GENDERACTIONplus stakeholder engagement activity, including its objectives, target audience and format is provided below:

Online stakeholder consultation on Tackling gender-based violence in academia | WP3 | 21/09/22

On 21 September 2022, GENDERACTIONplus organised its first stakeholder engagement event. Due to the approaching conference on “Ending gender-based violence in academia: Toward gender-equal, safe and inclusive research and higher education” on 24-25 November in Prague, as part of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU, an opportunity was identified to develop a Call for Action to be published. In order to encourage as many organisations as possible to support the Call for Action and ensure voices within academia were represented, it was decided to organise a consultation on tackling gender-based violence in academia with representatives from student and early-career researcher associations across Europe. The event organisation was led by partner VA in conjunction with WP 3 partners.

All project partners were invited to suggest associations to invite, and invitations were sent out to over 100 associations representing student or early career researchers from 36 countries, in addition to a number of EU-wide organisations.

Specific objectives of the consultation workshop were:

- To engage with student and early-career researcher organisations in order to better understand their needs and ensure their voices are heard within the project.
- To identify recommendations that could be fed into a Call for Action published by GENDERACTIONplus in association with the conference on “Ending gender-based violence in academia: Toward gender-equal, safe and inclusive research and higher education” on 24-25 November in Prague, as part of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU. In addition,



recommendations would be used to inform a toolkit being developed by the H2020 sister project UniSAFE as well as the GENDERACTIONplus project WP focused on gender-based violence.

Thirty stakeholders registered to attend the event from 17 countries. Email correspondence with the organisations was encouraging with many welcoming the initiative and expressing interest in the GENDERACTIONplus project. On the day, 15 participants from 10 countries attended.

At the start of the workshop, Marcela Linková, GENDERACTIONplus project coordinator, provided an overview of the aims and planned impacts of the project and how it is working to advance gender equality in the European Research Area, with gender-based violence in academia as one of its five key thematic areas. This was followed by an overview by Fredrik Bondestam, Director of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg, of the current situation with regards to gender-based violence in Europe as well as the different forms of violence that GBV encapsulates.

Two facilitated breakout group discussions were also held in which participants were invited to discuss the main issues they see in terms of GBV and the most pressing needs when it comes to tackling GBV in their country. Discussions were captured on a Miro board so that groups could view each other's responses. An online poll was also used to ask whether their association/organisation ever addressed the issue of GBV and if yes, to explain in what way.

The second breakout discussion was focused on the draft Call for Action, which was briefly presented, and participants could put forward concrete recommendations on how to tackle GBV within academia. Each group selected their top 3 ideas and participants were invited to vote on which ideas they thought were the most important/pressing recommendations by placing stars next to them.

An embargoed copy of the finalised Call for Action was circulated to participants prior to the conference inviting them to sign the Call for Action upon its launch on 25 November 2022¹.

Online stakeholder consultation on GEP monitoring systems at national level | WP6 | 29/11/23

This event was organised by VA in collaboration with WP6 partners to support Task 6.2 (Guidance on establishment of GEP monitoring systems) and took the format of a two-hour online consultation event on Wednesday 29 November 2023. The objective of the event was to gather input from national authorities and discuss the draft guidance on establishment of GEP monitoring systems under development in Task 6.2, which aims to provide concrete guidance on how to set up a monitoring system at the national authority level to monitor GEP implementation. The aim was to ensure that a diverse range of perspectives are taken into consideration and to gain a better understanding of the needs and challenges of organisations at different stages of monitoring GEPs.

Specific objectives of the consultation workshop were:

- To get input and buy-in from national authorities on the development of the GEP monitoring guidelines including a particular focus on the widening countries.

¹ Call for Action WORKING TOWARDS SAFE AND RESPECTFUL HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOR ALL <https://genderaction.eu/call-for-action-to-end-gender-based-violence/>



- To better understand the challenges and needs of organisations who may be at different stages in monitoring GEPS in order to future proof the system.

Invitations were primarily sent to national authorities in Europe via the ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality in the ERA and GENDERACTIONplus partners, although the information about the event was also distributed to those working at other organisations, who had broad knowledge of GEP monitoring within their countries. On the day, 24 participants from 14 countries attended.

In the registration form, participants were asked to provide some brief information about the state of play with regard to GEP monitoring in their country. This helped to inform the distribution of participants for the discussion breakout sessions to ensure a range of perspectives were given space to be discussed.

All participants were sent a link to a draft copy of the guidelines one week prior to the event and requested to read the guidelines prior to the meeting. In addition, they were encouraged to add comments to the document prior to and for two days after the meeting.

The workshop started with a short introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project and GEP monitoring guidelines followed by two group discussions, in which participants were split into three smaller breakout-out groups, the first to gain input on gaps and needs, and the second on indicators and monitoring. These were each facilitated by a GENDERACTIONplus partner and supported by a note taker, whose role was to ensure discussion was captured.

Feedback was subsequently incorporated into D6.2 Guidelines for establishing GEP monitoring systems.²

Online stakeholder consultation on Intersectionality policy recommendations | WP2 | 15/01/24

This event was organised by VA in collaboration with WP 2 (Intersectionality and inclusiveness) partners to support Task 2.1 on Intersectionality, diversity and inclusion, and took the format of a two-hour online consultation event on Monday 15 January 2024. The objective of the event was to gather feedback and input on policy recommendations being developed within Task 2.1 on how to lift the focus on intersectionality and inclusion in European, national and RFO policies for higher education and R&I. In particular, the focus was on gathering perspectives outside of the project, from people/entities/stakeholders with diverse perspectives and backgrounds, as well as from countries that did not participate in the GENDERACTIONplus the benchmarking survey of European national authorities and research funding organisations (RFOs) on the terminology used and current work on intersectionality, inclusiveness integration in R&I laws and policies across MS and AC. (See Deliverable 2.1 Benchmarking report on terminology and policy on intersectionality).

Specific objectives of the consultation workshop were:

- To receive feedback from stakeholders external to the project on the policy recommendations on intersectionality.

² D6.2 Guidelines for establishing GEP monitoring systems https://genderaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/GENDERACTIONplus_D6.2_Guidance-on-establishment-of-GEP-monitoring-systems.pdf



- To exchange with countries that did not respond to the WP2 benchmarking survey.
- To better understand the challenges and needs of organisations with regard to implementing the recommendations.

Invitations were sent to a number of different stakeholders including:

- National authorities, including members of the ERA sub-group on Gender Equality.
- Organisations representing researchers, including those who act as Observers on the ERA Forum sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality (e.g. The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities; Science Europe; European University Association; Coimbra Group; CESAER; Aurora Universities Network; Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN); LERU.
- European and national organisations representing disadvantaged groups and discrimination grounds such as disability, gender, LGBTQ+, ethnicity.
- Research Funding Organisations.

Anyone responding that they were unable to attend the workshop but were interested in the guidelines, was offered the opportunity to provide comments on a draft copy of the policy recommendations. On the day, 17 participants from 11 countries attended. Combined with project partners also attending, this made a total of 25 participants.

The workshop started with introductory presentations on the GENDERACTIONplus project, the intersectionality benchmarking survey and policy guidelines. Participants also asked questions via menti.com to provide an overview of which countries and type of organisation participants were representing, the discrimination grounds that their organisation works with, and whether intersectionality is something that their organisation discusses.

Anne Pépin, who was at the time Gender Sector Team Leader within DG Research & Innovation at the European Commission, also provided an overview of the ERA policy context and latest developments regarding inclusion and intersectionality at European level. This was followed by two group discussions in which participants were split into two break-out groups, the first to provide specific feedback on the recommendations and the second to discuss potential challenges to implementation and how they could be used to change the policy agenda. These were each facilitated by a GENDERACTIONplus partner and supported by a notetaker, whose role was to ensure the discussion was captured.

Feedback was subsequently incorporated into the position paper 'A New ERA of Inclusion and Intersectionality.'³

3 Position Paper n. 2: A New ERA of Inclusion and Intersectionality https://genderaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GENDERACTIONplus_Position-paper_A-new-ERA-of-inclusion-and-intersectionality.pdf.



Stakeholder consultation on Future of gender equality in the European Research Area | 13/02/24

In addition, a number of stakeholder engagement actions were undertaken at the GENDERACTIONplus midterm conference on ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality held in Brussels on 13 February 2024. The objective of the activities was to engage participating stakeholders to provide feedback on GENDERACTIONplus' position paper on the future of gender equality in the European Research Area.⁴

All participants were sent a link to the position paper one week prior to the event and were informed that they would be able to provide feedback during the event. Engagement activities during the conference included the use of interactive conference tools as Mentimeter to enable both onsite and online participants to provide input and feedback. In addition, key points from the position paper were printed on large posters, displayed at the venue, and stakeholders engaged in discussions by project partners about the position paper during the conference breaks. Feedback was captured on post-it notes.

The conference was attended by over 60 stakeholders with more than 100 participants joining remotely.



Picture 2. Example of a poster at the conference.

4 Position paper n. 1: ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality https://genderaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GENDERACTIONplus_Position-paper_ERA-of-Inclusive-Gender-Equality.pdf



Online stakeholder consultation on Inclusive Research Careers | WP2 | 30/09/24

An online stakeholder engagement event was organised within Work Package 2, Task 2.2 'Inclusive Research Careers', which took the format of a two-hour online consultation event held on Monday 30 September 2024. The objective of the event was to gather feedback and input on policy recommendations being developed within Task 2.2 on the promotion of gender+ inclusive research careers.

Specifically, the focus was on gathering perspectives outside of the project. As the recommendations are addressed at policymakers, at both European and national levels, as well as related national authorities, research funding organisations, research performing organisations and higher education institutions, representatives from all these types of stakeholder groups were invited to participate at the event.

Specific objectives of the consultation workshop were:

- To gain feedback and input from stakeholders external to the project on the policy recommendations on inclusive research careers being developed by the project.
- To better understand the challenges and opportunities with regard to implementing the recommendations.

Invitations were sent to a wide range of different stakeholders including:

- National authorities, including members of the ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality
- Organisations representing researchers, including those who act as Observers on the ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality (e.g. The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities; Science Europe; European University Association; Coimbra Group; CESAER; Aurora Universities Network; Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN); LERU, Eurodoc. Representatives from individual Higher Educational Institutions also attended
- Higher Education assessment and accreditation agencies, gender equality observatories and commissions
- Research Funding Organisations
- European policy makers and experts

Anyone responding that they were unable to attend the workshop but were interested in the recommendations, were offered the opportunity to provide comments on a draft copy of the policy recommendations. In total, 48 participants plus 9 members of the GENDERACTIONplus consortium were registered to attend from 18 countries. On the day, 35 participants attended.

The workshop started with introductory presentations on the GENDERACTIONplus project as well as the overall ERA policy context with a focus on Action 4 research careers, and finally a presentation of the policy recommendations. This was followed by two group discussions, in which participants were split into three groups. Each were facilitated by a GENDERACTIONplus partner and supported by a



notetaker, whose role was to ensure the discussion was captured. The input gathered at the workshop was incorporated into the final version of the policy recommendations.⁵

Online stakeholder consultation on Inclusive Gender Analysis in Research and Innovation beyond the European Research Area | WP4 | 01/10/24

Another stakeholder engagement event was organised within WP4 (Gender dimension in R&I), Task 4.3 (Strategic policy advice to advance the gender dimension in R&I), which took the format of an online consultation event held on Tuesday 1 October 2024. The starting point of building this advice has been the GENDERACTIONplus benchmark report developed as part of Task 4.1 and activities from Task 4.2, which support National Contact Points in promoting gender considerations in R&I.

To deliver more impactful and innovative policy recommendations, it was important to broaden perspectives and learn from global experiences. This was particularly necessary to address two key challenges in integrating the gender dimension in R&I: monitoring and evaluating relevant policies, and making intersectionality operational. It was therefore decided to organise a stakeholder consultation on the respective policies involving RFOs with advanced experience with these approaches outside of Europe as well as from Europe to which a selected RFOs would be invited to share and discuss.

Specific objectives of the consultation workshop were:

- To gain new inputs on how to request and evaluate research projects with a gender dimension in R&I from an intersectional perspective in order to inform policy advice to advance the gender dimension in R&I and the upcoming European Union's 10th Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

Invitations were sent to selected RFOs in the United States, Canada, France, Spain, Sweden, Ireland and the UK. In addition, members of the GENDERACTIONplus RFO Community of Practice of the GENDERACTIONplus project were also invited to participate.

On the day, 25 out of 28 registered participants from 13 countries attended.

The consultation took the form of an online workshop using Zoom that lasted 2 hours 45 minutes. The workshop was recorded to support the note-taking process.

The event opened with an introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project by Marcela Linková, Project Coordinator followed by an overview of EU policy on the integration of the gender dimension in R&I content by Katerina Svíčková, Head of Sector for Gender in the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and Innovation.

Four research funding organisations then shared their own approaches for embedding gender analysis into research funding processes:

- Sophia Ivarsson from Vinnova, Sweden's Innovation Agency.

⁵ Position Paper n. 7: Research Careers: The Ground for Gender+ Inclusion https://genderaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/GENDERACTIONplus_Position-Paper-7_Inclusive-Research-Careers.pdf



- Angela Kaida, Scientific Director at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).
- Emma Roques from the French National Research Agency (ANR).
- Elizabeth Barr, Associate Director for Interdisciplinary Research at the US National Institutes of Health Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH).

These were followed by a 40-minute discussion involving all participants, facilitated by a GENDERACTIONplus partner, supported by a notetaker, whose role was to ensure discussion was captured. Discussion focused on the factors influencing successful gender integration in R&I and strategies for promoting intersectional approaches. Participants also shared insights on designing funding mechanisms that incorporate a gender dimension effectively and discussed the role of policy in fostering an inclusive research environment.

Online stakeholder consultation on Monitoring ERA Action 5 implementation at national level | WP5 | 15/11/24

WP5 had the opportunity to present and discuss the main results of D5.2, entitled "Second Report on Monitoring ERA Action 5 Implementation at National Level", at a meeting of the ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality on 15 November 2024. The objective of the presentation was to inform participants representing the European Commission, Member States and Associated Countries as well as umbrella organisations about the main insights of the analysis. These related to a monitoring of the implementation of ERA Action 5 at the national level of MS and associated countries.

The key takeaway for MS and the Commission were the challenges related to the non-existence of an obligatory monitoring mechanism for ERA Actions at the MS level. This hinders the ability to assess developments at the national level in a comparative manner. Overall, the commitment to advancing gender equality is strong; however, actions continue to be fragmented and not underwritten by a coherent policy. Additionally, the lack of monitoring and evaluation weakens the commitment. The recommendations presented at the end were an important contribution to ongoing discussion in the ERA Forum sub-group about the future implementation of the ERA structural policy in ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027.

Online stakeholder consultation with Gender Equality Practitioners | WP6 | 27/03/25

A GENDERACTIONplus stakeholder engagement event was organised within Task 6.5 (Policy advice on achieving, monitoring and evaluating institutional change through GEPs), which took the format of a two-hour online consultation event on Thursday 27 March 2025.

The objective of the event was to gather input and discuss the draft policy brief on 'A new ERA for GEPs: Challenges for Gender Equality Practitioners'⁶. The aim was to create a forum where a wide range of

⁶ Position paper no. 13 A new ERA for GEPs: Challenges for Gender Equality Practitioners available at https://genderaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/GENDERACTIONplus_Position-Paper-13_A-new-ERA-for-GEPs_Challenges-for-GE-practitioners.pdf.



perspectives can be gathered so we can better understand the needs and challenges faced by gender equality practitioners in RPOs in relation to monitoring and evaluation.

Members of the GENDERACTIONplus Communities of Practice were asked to each identify two Gender Equality Practitioners within their country who could take part in the meeting. In total, 24 participants were registered to attend. On the day, 19 gender equality practitioners from 14 countries plus 6 members of the GENDERACTIONplus consortium participated in the workshop.

Specific objectives of the consultation workshop were:

- To get input from participants as experienced gender equality practitioners and leaders working on GEP implementation relating to challenges and best practices with regard to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of GEPs.
- To gather feedback to inform the further development of the policy paper aimed at the European Commission and national authorities.

In the registration form, participants were asked to provide some brief information about the state of play with regard to GEP monitoring in their country and any challenges or needs that they have in relation to GEP monitoring and evaluation.

The consultation took the form of an online workshop using Zoom that lasted 2 hours. The workshop was not recorded as it was felt that it was important that participants felt comfortable speaking freely and it was stressed that comments would not be attributed to individuals in order to encourage open discussion.

All participants were sent a link to a draft copy of the policy paper one week prior to the event and requested to read the paper prior to the meeting. In addition, they were encouraged to add comments to the online document prior to and for two days after the meeting.

The workshop started with a short introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project and policy recommendations followed by two group discussions, in which participants were split into three smaller groups. These were each facilitated by a GENDERACTIONplus partner and supported by a note taker, whose role was to ensure discussion was captured. The first discussion focused on challenges related to implementing, monitoring or evaluating GEPs as well as experiences related to embedding gender equality work and GEPs in the participants' institution. The second discussion focused on gathering feedback on the policy recommendations.



3.3 Outcomes of Engagement Activities

Below is a summary of the key findings and feedback received from stakeholders, highlighting how these engagement activities have influenced policy design and contributed to achieving the project's objectives.

Online stakeholder consultation on tackling gender-based violence in academia | WP3 | 21/09/22

This online consultation engaged representatives of student and early-career researcher organisations in order to better understand their needs and to inform the development of a Call for Action to ending gender-based violence in academia.

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders

At the event participants were asked to complete an online poll to say whether their association/organisation ever addressed the issue of GBV and if yes, to explain how in the chat. 77% of the representatives attending the workshop said that their organisation had addressed the issue of GBV, with some providing examples of activities they had been involved in, such as training, gender equality plans, research or awareness raising. 15% responded “no” and 8% “didn’t know”.

Some of the key issues highlighted during the discussions included a need for robust institutional policies and procedures for reporting and handling cases, more training and awareness raising, clear and convincing definitions of gender-based violence as well as reliable data and evidence to support effective actions. Further issues touched upon were trauma-informed approaches to addressing GBV as well as micro-aggressions and sexist jargon as part of a continuum of different forms of violations and abuse experienced by students especially.

Feedback on the event was very positive with 100% of participants that completed the evaluation questionnaire saying they “were very satisfied” with the content, discussion and format. Several indicated that they would disseminate information gained, including possible solutions and the propositions in the Call for Action, through their country network, plus expressed a desire to engage in further discussions and events. One participant reported that “my university has recently adopted a GEP, so discussions on best practices and recommendations would be more than useful in promoting GE and tackling GBV.”

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives

This session gave researchers in WP3 confirmation on the importance of including student and early career researchers in dialogues on policy development on addressing GBV. Especially, the focus on everyday sexism and micro aggressions were important contributions to the way we nuanced claims on including all forms of GBV when developing different recommendations to stakeholders in the ERA. Also, the student perspectives were incorporated in the process of contributing to the development of the recently adopted zero-tolerance code of conduct on GBV in the ERA. The latter was a specific part of the output from this work in WP3 through emphasizing the need for tailored support structures and services for survivors and victims of different marginalised student groups.



Online stakeholder consultation on GEP monitoring systems at national level | WP6 | 29/11/23

This online consultation sought to engage representatives of national authorities on the development of guidelines on how to set up a monitoring system at the national authority level to monitor GEP implementation.

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders

The stakeholder event assisted WP6 in understanding the current state of play. The feedback gathered through the event supported the findings of the GENDERACTIONplus benchmarking including the need for coordinating gender equality activities and taking responsibility for monitoring. Participants highlighted that there can be challenges in gathering the data required for monitoring, especially qualitative data. As seen across the GENDERACTIONplus project, there is a need for greater and more unified understanding of the term intersectionality and how it applies to GEPs.

Participants also highlighted that

- The European Commission should make the Horizon Europe GEP recommended areas mandatory (work life balance and organisation culture, gender balance in leadership, gender equality in recruitment and career progression, integration of gender dimension and measures against GBV)
- Access to mutual learning is important in sharing best practice.
- Resources are critical to ensure this work continues.
- Political forces can impact on this work and gender equality work more generally.
- Guidance on monitoring should take into impact the differing national contexts and each country's ability to implement the guidance.
- The additive levels of monitoring proposed provide an easier route to implementation while emphasising the need to progress through the levels.
- Clear indicators are important to ensuring effective monitoring.
- Shared responsibility for monitoring is important at institutional level, and this can be supported by training.

Feedback provided through the event evaluation was very positive, with 54% of respondents to the evaluation questionnaire saying they were “very satisfied” with the contents of the event and 46% “satisfied”. Participants said they had valued the opportunity to contribute and that they had found the event “beneficial for sharing ideas and exchanging experiences” and had “learned new things” and “it contained a lot of food for thought.” In terms of benefits to the work of their organisation, participants responded that “it will provide insightful comments for the possible establishment of the national monitoring framework,” that “this work is very important for our efforts at the national level,” that it is “good to have such a structured way to discuss the draft” and that “the guide and its recommendations will be very useful and will provide a robust roadmap of actions to further improve our monitoring system.”



The aspects that participants found particularly interesting included “to see how different countries are overcoming issues,” “Realising how the recommendations will impact our future work” and “the exchange of challenges and responsibilities in different countries.”

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives

The event provided WP6 with a more nuanced understanding of the issues that national authorities face in their own national context. This impacted how WP6 formulated the differing levels of monitoring to ensure a relevant entry point to monitoring for each national authority. It was clear from the GENDERACTIONplus benchmarking and stakeholder feedback that the Horizon Europe GEP eligibility criterion had an impact on GEP implementation. In general, it was clear from our stakeholders that effective top-down guidance from the European Commission has a positive impact on the work done at national authority level.

Online stakeholder consultation on Intersectionality policy recommendations | WP2 | 15/01/24

This consultation sought to gather feedback and input on policy recommendations on how to lift the focus on intersectionality and inclusion in European, national and RFO policies for higher education and R&I from representatives of a broad range of including national authorities, organisations representing researchers, organisations representing disadvantaged groups and discrimination grounds such as disability, gender, LGBTQ+, ethnicity as well as RFOs.

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders

The audience was asked to complete a number of questions using menti.com. In response to the question ‘Which discrimination grounds does your organisation work with?’ - 13 responded “Gender”, 6 “Disability”, 6 “LGBTQ+”, 7 “Ethnicity”, and 4 “Age”. In response to the question ‘Is intersectionality something that your organisation discusses?’ - 10 responded “Yes” and 3 “No”.

Feedback provided through the event evaluation was positive, with 50% of respondents to the evaluation questionnaire saying they were “very satisfied” with the contents of the event and 50% “satisfied”. Participants said they had valued the opportunity to contribute and that they had found the event had helped to “foster the understanding of inclusive gender equality” and provide “a clearer view of what the most pressing problems are.” They particularly valued “hearing about specific situations in other countries and how they are approached” and commented “that this work is going on at EU-level and yet the connection between the draft recommendations and the inclusive GEP criterion seems so implicit.”

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives

Feedback from the consultation was reviewed by WP2 partners and incorporated into a final version of the policy recommendations. The workshop yielded positive outcomes due to the broad-based and constructive input received from participants. This feedback enhanced the quality of the final recommendations.

The workshop highlighted the need for European and national efforts to close the gaps in data collection and research as the basis for inclusive and intersectional policies in higher education, R&I.



Online stakeholder consultation on Inclusive Research Careers | WP2 | 30/09/24

This consultation sought to gather input to inform policy recommendations for the promotion of gender+ inclusive research careers engaging a broad range of stakeholders including European and national policy makers, national authorities, research funding organisations, research performing organisations and higher education institutions.

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders

Beyond enhancing policy recommendations, the workshop had a positive side effect of raising awareness among key actors about inclusive research careers. Discussions on developing research careers, mobility, and precarity often overlook gender and inclusion, or are gender neutral. This workshop helped highlight these important aspects.

In the breakout sessions discussing the recommendations and their potential implementation, participants praised the recommendations as "comprehensive" and "holistic," addressing a wide array of stakeholders. Discussions explored challenges in implementation, highlighting the varying national contexts that could affect the adoption of these recommendations, and stressing the need for tailored approaches. The need for concrete incentives and instruments, similar to the Gender Equality Plan requirement, was highlighted to encourage uptake and commitment from national and institutional actors. In addition, discussions also touched on the importance of collecting relevant data to monitor progress and how current data protection laws pose challenges to gathering more detailed demographic information beyond gender. A call was also made for showcasing national and institutional best practices as a way to inspire and guide implementation across different contexts.

Feedback provided through the event evaluation was positive, with 70% of respondents to the evaluation questionnaire saying they were "satisfied" with the contents of the event and 30% "very satisfied". In terms of benefits to the work of their organisation, participants responded that "the content was very inspiring for the work our institution is doing on this topic," that they "will share the discussion with colleagues to inform our strategy on the topic of research careers and gender equality" and that it would "inform ongoing discussions." As some participant also put it: "we will be able to base our recommendations on the aspects of the research careers that should be monitored in our country on the knowledge gained during the meeting. The broad presentation of the entire ecosystem of research careers and gender+ equality actions was also useful."

The aspects that they found particularly interesting included "the knowledge of the topics presented by the speakers", "the possibility to discuss in the breakout rooms", "having a possibility to contribute to such an important brief", the "breakout sessions with input from different stakeholders, to understand better the difficulties involved in formulating these policy recommendations", and "the holistic approach."

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives

Feedback from the consultation was carefully reviewed by WP2 partners and incorporated into a final version of the recommendations.

Engaging with experts, academic organisations, and institutional representatives had a greater significance than merely improving the quality of recommendations. The process involved finalising the policy report to identify key issues, obtaining expert input on draft recommendations, presenting these to stakeholders at national and European levels during the workshop, and presenting draft



recommendations to a larger audience. This dialogue raised awareness and enhanced understanding of core issues for the project participants and external stakeholders.

Online stakeholder consultation on Inclusive Gender Analysis in Research and Innovation beyond the European Research Area | WP4 | 01/10/24

The consultation workshop gathered valuable insights from representatives of RFOs within and beyond Europe, including from Canada and the United States.

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders

The diversity of institutional and national perspectives stimulated a rich exchange of practices and challenges related to inclusive gender analysis in R&I. The workshop was particularly useful to get understanding for challenges experienced by RFOs.

Key issues raised during the discussion included:

- The operationalisation of intersectionality in research funding processes.
- The importance of internal support and leadership within RFOs.
- Terminological ambiguities and the need for shared definitions.
- Practical strategies to embed inclusive gender analysis throughout the funding cycle.

Feedback provided through the event evaluation was positive, with 67% of respondents to the evaluation questionnaire saying they were “satisfied” with the contents of the event as well as discussions and 17% “very satisfied”. In the event evaluation, participants reported that it was “interesting to hear what the other countries are doing,” and that they were “considering some tips from other RFOs”. Others highlighted that “some ideas from presentations can be used, also solutions and challenges proposed in the breakrooms” and that “now I have a couple of arguments more to push forward these initiatives.”

Particularly valued were exchanges on “how to work with intersectionality,” “how the EC aims to progress on the topic,” and “hearing from different institutions/countries/perspectives.”

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives

The workshop contributed significantly to the formulation of strategic policy advice under WP4 by grounding recommendations in the lived experiences of highly engaged RFOs. Insights from the session directly informed the content of Position Paper No. 8, Driving Forward Inclusive Gender Analysis in R&I Policies, which laid out a series of actionable recommendations for FP10. These included the development of specific indicators for inclusive gender analysis, improved evaluation criteria, communication strategies, and mechanisms for policy alignment across the ERA.

The workshop also contributed to the co-development of the Framework for the Integration and Evaluation of an Inclusive Gender Analysis in R&I Content, endorsed by the ERA Forum Subgroup on Gender Equality and Inclusiveness. The engagement confirmed the need for a “whole sector approach,” involving all key actors—RFOs, national authorities, HEIs, and scientific journals—to embed inclusive gender analysis effectively. Overall, the workshop provided a critical validation point for WP4’s outputs



and helped align them with stakeholder realities, thereby enhancing both the credibility and relevance of the project's policy advice.

Online stakeholder consultation on Monitoring ERA Action 5 implementation at national level | WP5 | 15/11/24

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders.⁷

The ERA Forum sub-group members welcomed the analysis and insight into the challenges of monitoring progress on ERA Action 5. They expressed support for the recommendations presented and will continue to engage with the findings in the ongoing development of the ERA monitoring mechanism.

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives.

The analysis is vital for understanding the design of the current monitoring system in the ERA, specifically as related to ERA Action 5 in the ERA Policy Agenda 2022 – 2025. The findings and insights will be useful for further discussions of the ERA monitoring mechanism.

Online stakeholder consultation with Gender Equality Practitioners | WP6 | 27/03/25

The objective of the event was to gain a better understanding of the needs and challenges faced by gender equality practitioners in RPOs in relation to monitoring and evaluation and inform the policy brief on 'A new ERA for GEPs: Challenges for Gender Equality Practitioners.'

Key findings and feedback from stakeholders

Participating gender equality practitioners welcomed the policy recommendations and valued the opportunity to contribute. Discussions in the breakouts highlighted that gender equality practitioners face unique challenges in complex institutional environments. They particularly emphasised that more support is needed to address the challenges they face within their institutions, including:

- A strong institutional framework with gender equality and diversity support systems
- The value in recognising qualitative indicators
- The necessity of transparency and clarity
- The value of including funding allocated to gender equality and GEPs as a monitoring indicator.
- The dynamic impact of mandatory requirements on GE work in R&I.

Feedback provided through the event evaluation was positive, with 57% of respondents to the evaluation questionnaire saying they were "satisfied" with the contents of the event as well as discussions and 43% "very satisfied". In terms of benefits to the work of their organisation, participants responded that "it is important for us to be able to follow what is happening in other countries with regard to the implementation of the GEPs and to stay up to date with regards to developments regarding Horizon Europe." Others stressed that they liked the event "Very much, especially good/bad practice sharing

⁷ In the case of this consultation, feedback was not collated in a similar way to the other stakeholder events.



and information about national policies” and appreciated gaining a “context for the future to use to motivate others.”

The aspects that participants found particularly interesting included “being able to share our thoughts on the recommendations and share our experiences, and in that way contribute to a renewed focus on gender equality in our institutions”, “listening to other’s situations”, “the opportunity to meet GEP practitioners on an international level”, “links to interesting materials” and “seeing that EDI representatives seem to face similar challenges across borders”.

Impact of engagement on policy design and project objectives

The aim of the WP6 final policy paper is to highlight the ongoing challenges faced by gender equality practitioners, so this was a key event in informing the drafting of this paper. This event provided a space to engage directly with gender equality practitioners who work in GEP implementation daily. It was clear from the discussions that there needs to be strong institutional support for this group of change agents and this support begins with strong leadership, appropriate resourcing and mutual learning opportunities. This is reflected in the policy recommendations. It was also clear that the impact of the Horizon Europe GEP eligibility criterion has been positive and that FP10 must continue to emphasise GEPs to ensure this work continues effectively. It was highlighted in discussions that monitoring and evaluating GEP impact can be difficult without guidelines. Guidance on monitoring and evaluation can be found in previous WP6 reports but it is highlighted again in this policy paper. In general, as in previous events, it was clear that effective top-down guidance from the European Commission has a positive impact on the work done at national and institutional level.

3.4 Lessons learned by GENDERACTIONplus

The engagement activities conducted as part of the project offered valuable insights into both the opportunities and challenges inherent in fostering meaningful engagement with a broad range of stakeholders as part of the GENDERACTIONplus project. This section outlines the overall lessons learned, key challenges and barriers, and recommendations for future engagement initiatives.

3.4.1 Challenges and barriers in engagement processes

Online event participation: As stated, running online events proved to be an effective method for engagement, as it allowed participants to join regardless of their geographical location. However, a common challenge was that some stakeholders did not attend the events on the day despite registering. This was often due to competing priorities, busy schedules and sickness. To minimise this, reminders about the events were sent a week before and a day before. In addition, for certain events, we provided registered participants with a Google Doc containing the draft policy recommendations in advance and the opportunity to review and provide comments, even if they were unable to attend the live session.

Representation of disadvantaged groups: One of the key aims of the stakeholder and citizen engagement activities was to consult a diverse range of stakeholders and therefore benefit from a broad range of perspectives. Particularly in activities associated with Work Package 2 (Intersectionality and inclusiveness) there was a focused effort to engage European and national organisations representing



disadvantaged groups and discrimination grounds, such as disability, gender, LGBTQ+, and ethnicity. Despite these efforts, attendance from such organisations at the events was lower than hoped. This could simply be due to competing priorities and time constraints preventing their participation, or possibly a perception that their contributions would be limited. Nonetheless, a number of representatives did express appreciation for being approached and included in the process, highlighting the importance of outreach and inclusive efforts, even if immediate participation is not achieved.

Identifying the right participants: Another challenge was identifying the right individuals to participate who could share their experiences and insights on behalf of their organisations. This work is very time consuming especially in projects such as this when representation from stakeholders across the EU is the objective. In addition, careful consideration was given to the allocation of participants between breakout groups to ensure the right mix of participants from different organisations in each group.

3.4.2 Recommendations for future engagement initiatives

Based upon the experience gained from undertaking stakeholder and citizen engagement in the GENDERACTIONplus project, the following recommendations are identified:

Utilise online formats: Online events should remain a key tool for stakeholder engagement. However, it is crucial to limit the duration of these events e.g. to a maximum of two hours, wherever possible, to maintain participant focus and engagement. It is also important to take into the account the different time zones in order to allow as many participants to participate as possible.

Timely and effective communication: Send email reminders to participants at key intervals: upon registration, one week before the event, and one day before. These reminders should include the meeting link, agenda, and any preparatory materials to maximise attendance.

Flexible engagement options: Provide alternative ways for participants to contribute if they are unable to attend live events. For example, sharing materials (e.g. papers, recommendations) in advance and allowing for asynchronous feedback ensures their voices are still heard.

Sensitivity to stakeholders' time: Recognise that stakeholders are often busy and may have limited time to dedicate to such initiatives. Keep preparatory materials concise and easy to review, focusing on the most critical elements.

Tailored outreach to underrepresented groups: Make additional efforts to demonstrate the value of participation for organisations representing disadvantaged groups. This might involve more personalised outreach or being more concrete about how their input will shape the outcomes of the project.

Dedicated facilitator and notetaker for breakout discussions: Assign both a facilitator and a separate notetaker to each breakout session. This ensures that discussions remain focused and productive while capturing key points and insights without burdening participants or interrupting the flow of conversation.

Ensuring sufficient time for discussion: To meet the objectives of the events, prioritise time for discussion during breakout sessions. Keep main presentations concise, focusing only on essential information, and allocate the majority of the programme to discussion and feedback. This ensures that their insights and experiences are fully captured and valued.



Facilitate open and safe discussions: Continue to prioritise the use of small, unrecorded breakout rooms to foster honest and meaningful conversations where the participants feel secure and listened to.

By addressing these challenges and implementing these recommendations, future engagement initiatives can build upon the successes and lessons learned from this project, ensuring greater inclusivity, participation, and impact.



4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NIPS

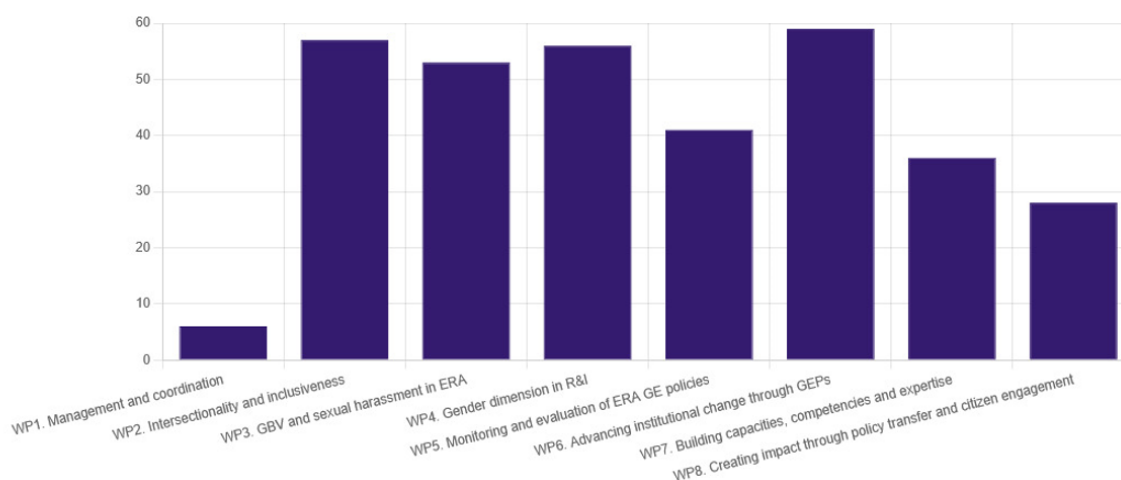
4.1 Introduction

The development of a National Impact Plan was set as a task in WP8 to ensure maximum impact in terms of policy coordination in line with the strategic policy advice developed in the project, fostering exchange with ERA stakeholders and citizens, and communication, dissemination and exploitation of results and outputs of the project as they become available. The NIP was meant to ensure policy uptake and impact at the national level.

4.2 Overview of NIPs

Thematic areas addressed by NIPs

Most of the NIPs have focused on dissemination and communication as a transversal action that would ensure impact of the project at national level. In terms of GENDERACTIONplus Work Packages (WPs), Advancing institutional change through GEPs (WP6) was one of the most common thematic priorities of the NIP objectives. Moreover, most of the NIPs included goals addressing explicitly intersectionality and inclusiveness (WP2), gender-based violence (WP3) and gender dimension in R&I (WP4). In addition, almost all NIPs included other actions not directly related to the project WPs, such as strengthening national structures, different aspects of research careers and research evaluation, among others.

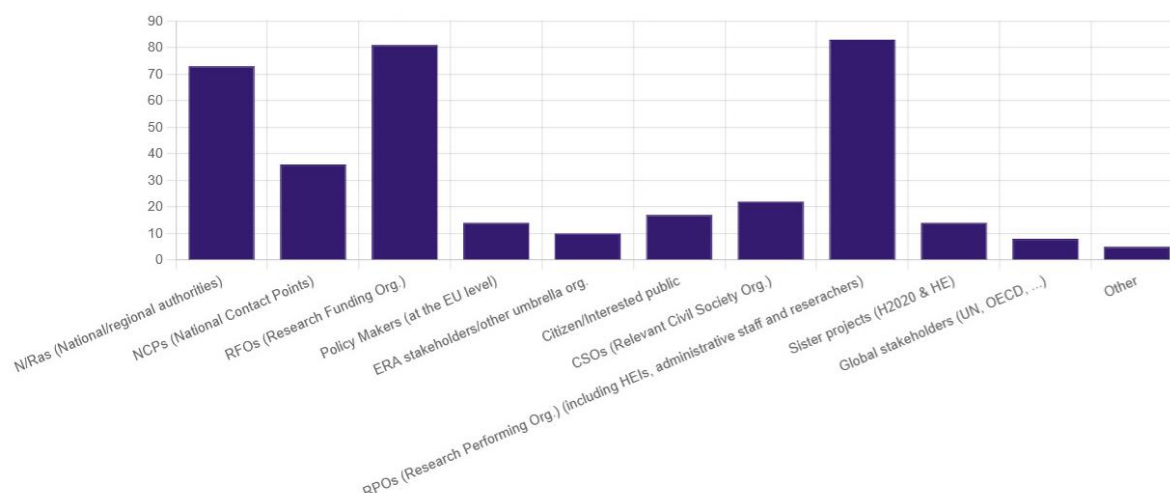


Graph 1. GENDERACTIONplus Work Packages addressed in the NIPs objectives



Targets of the NIPs

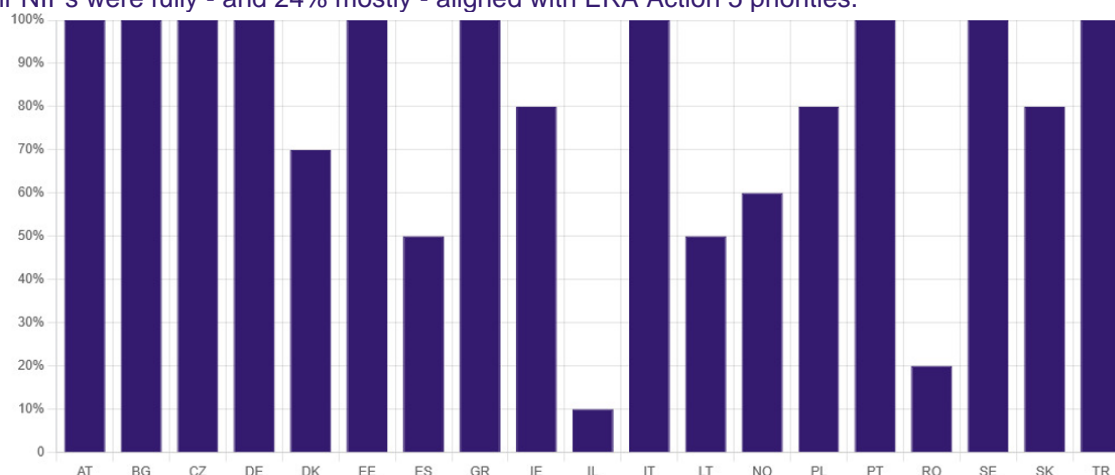
The GENDERACTIONplus NIPs have involved a great variety of targets, with national authorities, RPOs and RFOs as the most common institutions targeted by the NIP actions. Almost half of the countries indicated an interest in receiving the support from the European Gender Equality Taskforce (the actions of which have been implemented in the framework of Task 7.5) in addressing the different targets.



Graph 2. Types of target audiences addressed in the NIPs (no. of actions)

Alignment of NIP actions with ERA Action 5

One of the indicators of coordination advancement in terms of gender equality policies at national level is the alignment of the objectives and measures with the priorities of ERA Action 5 (ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024). According to the responses of the implementing partners, 71% of the proposed actions of their NIPs were fully - and 24% mostly - aligned with ERA Action 5 priorities.



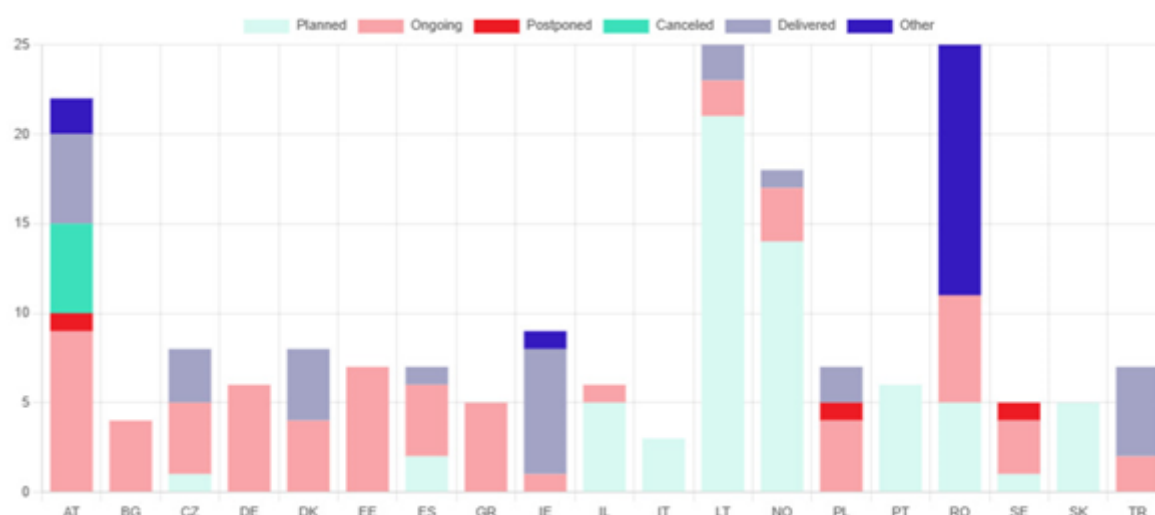
Graph 3. Alignment of each NIP with ERA Action 5 (% of actions)

4.3 Analysis and NIP outcomes

Two different strategies could be seen in the design of NIPs by the implementing partners: One group developed very ambitious NIPs in terms of the number of actions and high goals (AT, CZ, DK, ES, PL, RO) and their degree of achievement was high. The other group developed less ambitious NIPs in terms of the number of actions and goals, and their degree of achievement was also high (see for instance, GR and PT). The rest of the implementing partners have ranged from the lack of – or incomplete - reporting on their NIPs to low level of achievement by the end of the project

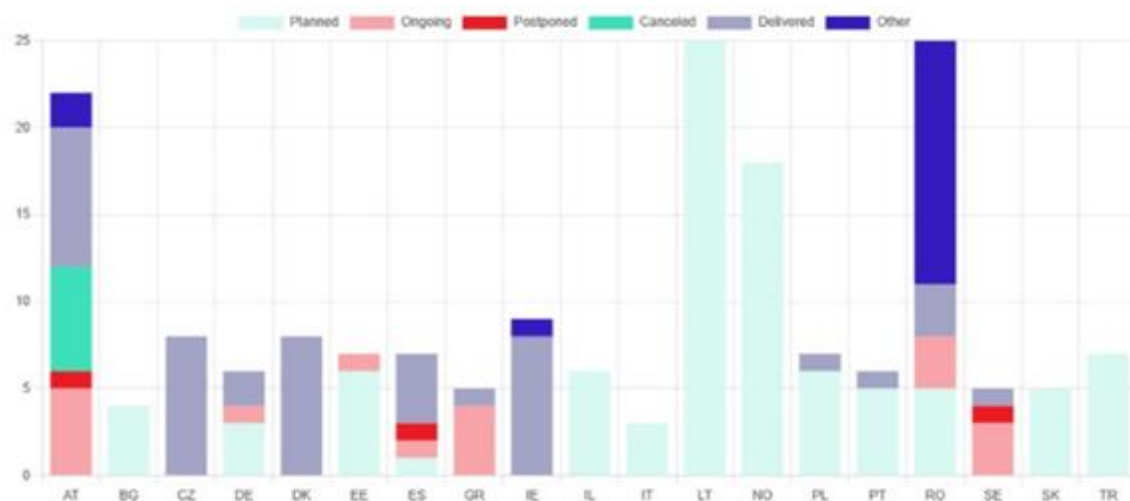
Status of NIPs implementation

The online platform allows visualising the change in the status of the implementation of NIPs. At the time of the first reporting using the online platform (3rd phase of the reporting process as stated above), most of the actions were planned, ongoing or postponed. By the end of the project, for those implementing countries completing the final report, the majority of the actions were delivered.



Graph 4. Status of NIP implementation according to 1st reporting

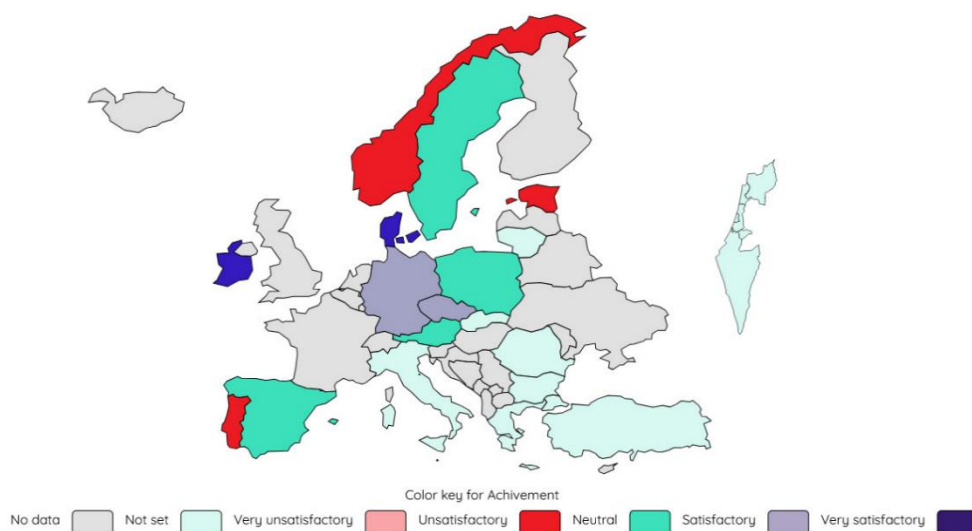




Graph 5. Status of NIP implementation as for the final reporting

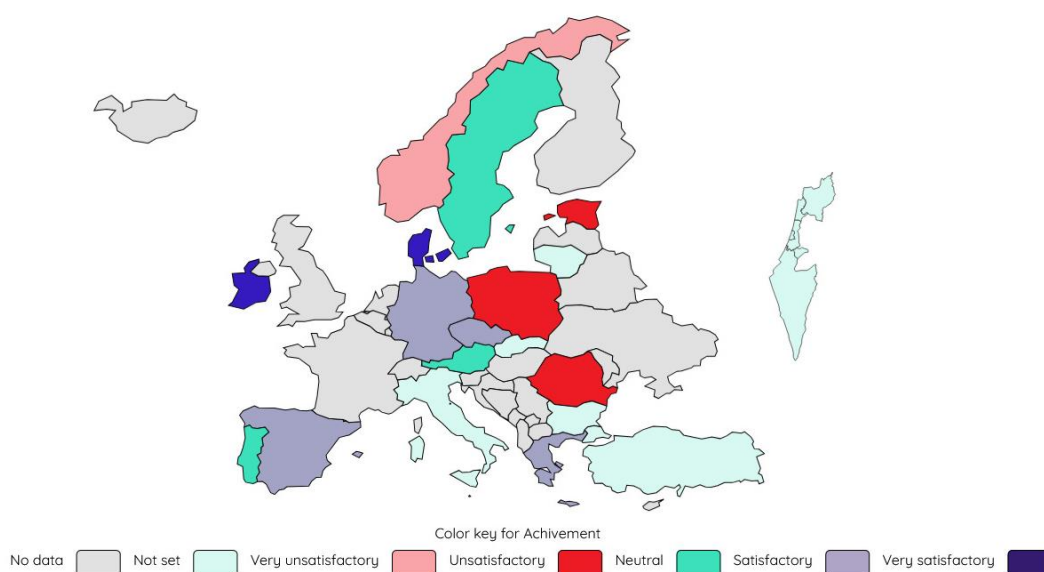
Degree of achievement of the actions

The degree of achievement of every action was rated by the implementing partners in the first reporting using the online platform (3rd phase of the reporting process as stated above) and again at the time of the final reporting, at the end of the project. The maps below show how the degree of achievement increased during the last year of the project, showing the efforts conducted by the majority of the implementing partners.



Graph 6. Degree of achievement of NIP actions according to 1st reporting (average of actions)



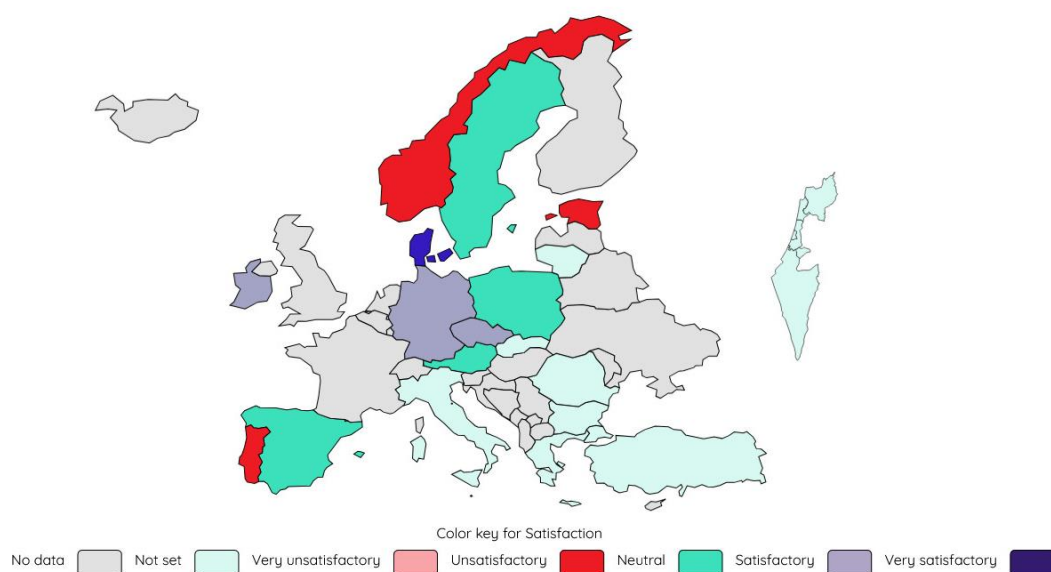


Graph 7. Degree of achievement of NIP actions as for the final reporting (average of actions)

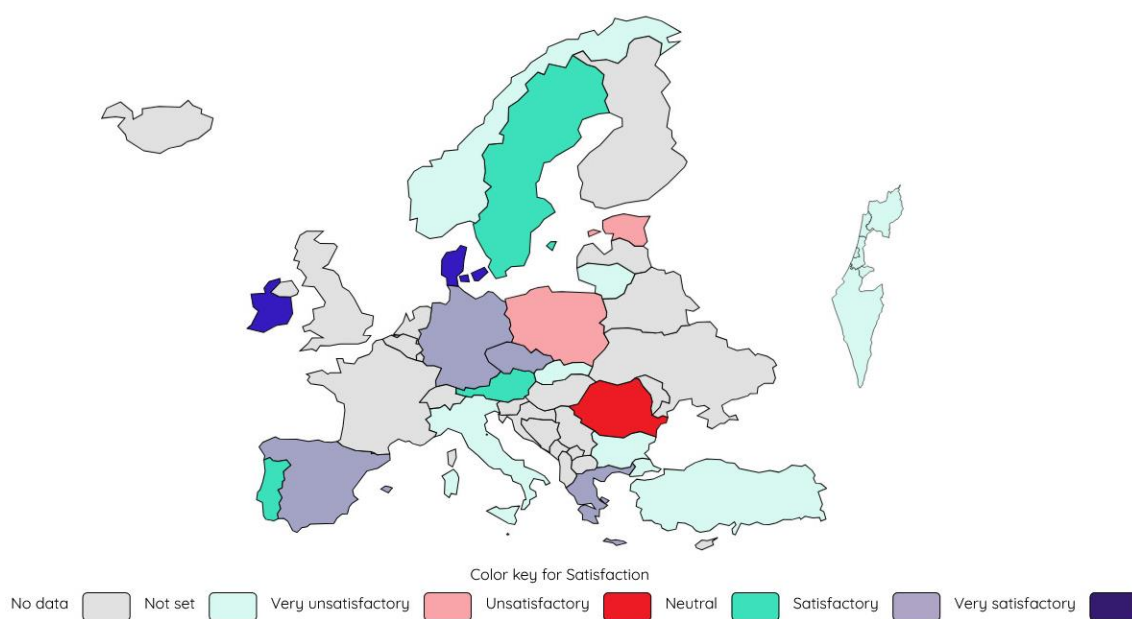
Satisfaction rating with the action implementation

Similarly, the satisfaction of the implementing partners with the actions was rated separately. In the first reporting using the online platform (3rd phase of the reporting process as stated above), the degree of satisfaction ranged from being rated as unsatisfactory to neutral. By the end of the project, the degree of satisfaction increased in most cases. Among those completing the final reporting, the degree of satisfaction has been maintained or increased. The highest degree of satisfaction was recorded for DK and IE.





Graph 8. Satisfaction rating with the actions according to 1st reporting (average of actions)



Graph 9. Satisfaction rating with the actions as for the final reporting (average of actions)



4.4 Examples of positive policy developments

As the continuous supporting process for the development of NIPs suggested, the implementation of gender equality actions has not been without its difficulties. In some cases, GENDERACTIONplus partners have been constrained by the political situation and time issues in developing their initially planned activities. Up to three cases of quite ambitious actions in terms of gender equality structures and policy advancement have been reported as either cancelled or indefinitely postponed by AT, ES and SE. However, it should be stressed that the NIP elaboration process has had a very positive collateral effect, since the process of preparing the NIPs has allowed some entities to establish new synergies and collaborations with their national authorities and has promoted networking among various stakeholders, including ministries, universities, and gender equality practitioners. See for instance the working groups on gender equality and diversity management and the working group on intersectionality at the BMBWF (AT Federal Ministry Women, Science and Research). In addition, several workshops focusing on GEPs, mentoring, and incorporating gender dimensions into academic and administrative processes were organised by project partners under their NIPs and were highlighted as crucial components of this collaborative effort. See, for instance, the workshops on gender dimension in different research topics reported under the DE NIP and the capacity-building and gender awareness activities organised by the RO implementing partner. In that sense, enhanced cooperation and coordination between national bodies dealing with gender equality and diversity were also noted as key achievements. Lastly, partners also highlight the importance of effective communication of deliverables, results, and recommendations from the GENDERACTIONplus project to their national bodies.

Some promising practices in showing impact at national level have been identified as outstanding among the NIPs:

- The **CZ NIP** included several actions with a clear focus on RFOs and the thematic WP4 on gender dimension in R&I. A CZ RFO Network was established by ISAS CR and TA CR to work on gender aspects of research funding (e.g. gender dimension, inclusive research careers, bias in evaluation of proposals, GBV, relevant data collection) at national level. During the last meeting of the CZ RFO Network, two project outputs were introduced: 1) Framework for the integration and evaluation of inclusive gender analysis in research and innovation content and 2) the draft of the policy brief Addressing resistances to policies promoting sex/gender analysis in research and innovation content.

Moreover, TA CR (Technology Agency of the Czech Republic) developed guidelines on how to promote the integration of gender analysis in R&I projects. These guidelines were shared with all managers of funding programmes at TA CR with the aim to ensure the implementation across the programme portfolio.

The sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project of these two lines of action with CZ RFOs has been ensured by ISAS CR and TA CR.

- The **DK NIP** included different stakeholder engagement events at national level that provided great visibility to GENDERACTIONplus thematic priorities. To give two examples: 1. An In-house personnel awareness raising event was organised at the beginning of 2024 in which the advisory board member Yvonne Benschop gave a presentation on intersectional gender equality in theory and practice; 2. A very successful webinar series on discrimination and career progression was organised in 2024 with high rates of attendance. Moreover, ERA Action 5



Subgroup and GENDERACTIONplus' outputs were disseminated through the national network of gender equality practitioners in Danish academia. The connection with this network was considered very relevant by the implementing partner and their satisfaction with this action was the highest. According to the verbal assessment:

“DAHES (Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science) is very active in the national network, which is chaired by SDU. At the yearly 2-day seminar DAHES representatives always provide a status on GE related activities at national and EU level, also on ERA Action 5 subgroup work and status of the work in GENDERACTIONplus. At the same time DAHES participants also bring with them home important knowledge from the different sessions. An extremely important network for DAHES to be part of.”

- The **ES NIP** had foreseen the creation of a Spanish network of European projects on gender with the aim of strengthening the Ministry's alliances with the gender & science community in Spain. This network was launched in 2024 and is currently comprised of 25 Spanish institutions involved in EU projects with a focus on gender (funded under WIDERA and Clusters of Pillar II of HE). The ES partner has used this network to spread the word of GENDERACTIONplus and the new developments at ERA level. According to the final verbal assessment of the ES partner, the GENDERACTIONplus umbrella was crucial to set up the network and its sustainability has been ensured beyond the lifetime of the project under the coordination of the Women and Science Unit and FECYT:



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“A first in-person meeting of the network was organised in Madrid in March 2025. Most of the projects attended this 4th meeting and the discussions focused on the results of the gender projects and on the current threats of the anti-gender discourse and movements. This activity will continue beyond the lifetime of the project. The support from GENDERACTIONplus to create the network was crucial and its sustainability is now guaranteed by MICIU-FECYT”.





Picture 3. First in-person meeting of the ES network of European projects on gender (Madrid, 24 March 2025)

- The **RO NIP** promoted the establishment of a task force dedicated to advancing gender equality policies in research and innovation at the national level. A strategic plan for promoting gender equality policies and collaboration with national authorities and institutions was developed by the task force. As a result, research funding applicants are asked to describe gender and inclusiveness aspects at all levels of research project from study design to disseminating outcomes. Final reports of research projects must include a paragraph on how the results of the research may affect gender or other inclusiveness aspects (yes/partly yes/no). These are steps forward at national level in the achievement of WP4 objectives on inclusive gender analysis in R&I content.
- The **PL NIP** has been used to put in place a method of monitoring GEPs in Polish Higher Education Institutions and research institutes. A survey was also conducted for this purpose. The report "Gender Equality Plans in Scientific Institutions in Poland. An Analysis of Implementation Status" presented both the current level of advancement in equality initiatives and the challenges faced by universities and research institutes.¹ Two of the key Findings include:
 - a) Scope of Gender Equality Plan Implementation: Among the 534 institutions in Poland's higher education and research system, 183 (34%) have GEPs. These plans are most commonly implemented by research institutes (65% of entities) and public universities (47% of entities).
 - b) Compliance with EU Requirements: Most GEPs meet the EC conditions for participation in Horizon Europe. As many as 98% of GEPs are publicly available, 94% of institutions collect gender-disaggregated employment data, and 82% include training on gender equality and unconscious bias prevention.

The verbal assessment of the PL implementing partner addressed the main barriers of R&I institutions implementing GEPs as follows:



“The implementation of GEPs faces challenges such as a lack of dedicated financial resources, staffing limitations, and insufficient awareness of gender equality issues within the academia. The report highlights the significant role of GEPs as a tool for driving structural changes in science and higher education. Effective implementation of these strategies can contribute to creating a more inclusive and innovative academic environment in Poland.”

These examples show that the NIPs have been a quite flexible and open tool at the disposal of the GENDERACTIONplus partners, with their potential being dependent on the human resources available, capacities and support at national level in each case. Some implementing partners have been able to make the most of the NIPs under the umbrella of GENDERACTIONplus and have made a great impact at national level, even ensuring the sustainability of the successful actions beyond the lifetime of the project.



5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUIP

5.1 Introduction

This section presents the implementation and outcomes of the EUIP, which aimed to amplify the project's influence on EU-level policy and advocacy. It outlines the strategic activities undertaken to promote gender equality and inclusiveness in R&I through targeted outreach to EU institutions, engagement with the European Parliament, and participation in policy dialogues. The section also highlights the role of key project events, such as the mid-term and final conferences, as vehicles for impact creation, and evaluates the impact of these activities in contributing to the ERA policy agenda.

Objectives and strategies for EU-level dissemination and engagement

The primary objective of the EU dissemination and engagement strategy was to increase awareness and promote the adoption of gender equality measures within R&I at the EU level. This involved ensuring the integration of gender equality in Horizon Europe and its successor programme, promoting gender equality and inclusiveness more broadly, and advancing specific recommendations within the European Commission, the European Parliament, and other relevant ERA stakeholders.

The following strategies have been deployed to support this goal:

- **Conferences and Events**
 - Final and midterm conference: Expand the project's reach through conferences to bring together stakeholder audiences.
 - Media events, press releases, reports: Push outcomes beyond the conference audiences through additional dissemination tactics and outputs.
- **Policy Outreach**
 - Public hearings: Engagement with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to push gender equality objectives in the new Commissioner-Designate hearings.
 - Direct advocacy: Present materials to the new Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Startups to shape policy priorities for FP10.
- **Dissemination of project outputs: Identify and capitalise on windows of opportunity to share the project's findings**
 - Social media: Post project deliverables and policy advice on social media as part of ongoing campaigns or one-time events.
 - Direct outreach: Dissemination of policy advice through letters to MEPs, umbrella organisations, and think tanks.
- **Networking and coalition building**
 - Expansion of Collaborative Networks: Strengthen the GENDERACTIONplus network by fostering connections with embassies, cultural organisations, and other entities that share similar goals.



- Engagement with stakeholders: Push outreach beyond our main audience to gather support for the open letter to shape FP10.
- Continuing to share our outputs beyond the project: The development of a mobilisation network to ensure the momentum continues.

This strategy was designed to take advantage of opportunities for engagement and to support ongoing communication with stakeholders. Progress was monitored through the EUIP tracking document, which tracked activities and evaluated impact. The EUIP tracking document acted as a practical, living framework to coordinate and assess this work overtime, using indicators such as the number of outreach activities, the establishment of relationships, and the visibility of project outputs. While not based on a fixed set of metrics, these indicators have supported ongoing reflection and adaptation of the strategy in response to evolving opportunities for impact. In this way, the strategy is both embedded in and guided by the EUIP.

Integration with broader ERA initiatives and policy developments

The dissemination and engagement strategy was closely aligned with the six priority areas of the Ljubljana Declaration and specifically geared toward supporting the implementation of ERA Priority 5 on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The five thematic areas addressed by the project were specifically selected in alignment with the priority areas of the ERA Action 5, including: intersectionality and inclusiveness; gender-based violence in research; gender dimension in R&I content; monitoring of gender equality in the ERA; and the promotion of institutional change through GEPs.

The EUIP further supported ERA policy implementation by ensuring GENDERACTIONplus outputs reached key actors across the ERA. Through targeted dissemination to the European Commission, members of the ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality, and influential stakeholders, the plan integrated project findings into relevant policy discussions, contributing to the adoption of inclusive GEPs and advancing gender equality within the ERA. These outputs, aligned with ERA Action 5 priorities, also contribute to the ERA monitoring mechanism, offering valuable data and recommendations that inform ongoing assessments of gender equality within the European research ecosystem.

5.2 Execution and achievements

5.2.1 Mid-term event and its outcomes

In February 2024, the mid-term conference titled *ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality: Shaping Future Priorities* was held in Brussels. The event featured the findings from the GENDERACTIONplus benchmark studies⁸ and a dedicated position paper title ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality⁹ introducing

⁸ All benchmark reports are available on the project website in the section Outputs under the heading Policy mapping and benchmarking reports at <https://genderaction.eu/outputs/>.

⁹ Position paper n. 1 ERA of inclusive gender equality. Sustaining momentum and addressing challenges through joint action available at https://genderaction.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GENDERACTIONplus_Position-paper_ERA-of-Inclusive-Gender-Equality.pdf.



initial high-level recommendations for the future of gender equality in the ERA. It served to position GENDERACTIONplus on inclusive gender equality by engaging a diverse range of key stakeholders, and to confirm the importance of inclusive gender equality at the initial stage of the FP10 negotiations. Speakers from the European Commission, national authorities, and research performing and funding organisations provided insights into current developments and upcoming policy directions. The conference was seen as a key moment to share project activities and strengthen commitment to inclusive gender equality at EU level. For more detail on the mid-term event, see section 6.5.

5.2.2 Final event and its outcomes

The GENDERACTIONplus final conference, *Towards new Horizons: Inclusive Gender Equality in FP10 and Beyond*, was a key outcome to promote the ERA policy agenda. It contributed to the implementation of ERA Priority 5 on gender equality and gender mainstreaming by addressing key policy areas outlined in the ERA Policy Agenda 2022–2024. It focused on institutional responses to gender-based violence, the development of inclusive and intersectional Gender Equality Plans, the gender dimension in the future of research assessment, and the impact of illiberal governance and anti-gender backlash on academic freedom and gender equality policy. These discussions supported structural change and strengthened the policy framework for inclusive R&I systems. See more detail on the final conference in section 6.6.

Dissemination

Under the EU-Impact Plan, the dissemination of invitations and promotion of conference outputs was prioritised.

- **Invitations to the conference** were shared widely through existing relationships and targeted outreach. Consortium partners, sister project newsletters, and relevant networks helped ensure strong participation, with policy advice clearly highlighted. The Head of the British Council also forwarded the invitation to EU National Institute for Culture (EUNIC) and British Council members. In parallel, outreach was extended to 24 stakeholder organisations (15 follow-ups, 9 new) aligned with FP10 priorities. This effort resulted in additional participants and the establishment of a partnership.
- **Promoting conference outputs:** Social media and website posts were published to document the event and share key takeaways with a wider audience. These posts ensured that the conference outcomes reached those unable to attend and expanded impact beyond the project.
 - Two **news articles** were posted on the project's website, and the full video and photos from the final conference were uploaded to YouTube and linked on the website for broader accessibility.
 - A [press release](#) was developed to highlight the final conference's key outcomes, ensuring media coverage and public attention
- **[Final Conference Report](#)** with Key Takeaways and Summary: A detailed report, including photos, was created to thoroughly document the conference discussions and outcomes. This report served as a key tool for dissemination among participants, the consortium, and the broader community.



5.2.3 Engagement with the European Parliament

The strategic outreach efforts began after the European Parliament elections in June 2024 during the EP hearings for the new Commissioners. It aimed to engage MEPs and other key stakeholders in advocating for gender equality in R&I. The following activities were executed to ensure effective collaboration and influence on policy discussions.

- **Developing a Contact List of MEPs for Collaboration:** A contact list of MEPs, mostly in the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), who were likely to support gender equality in the hearings was created. Letters were sent to these MEPs, requesting their collaboration and support during the hearings and beyond. Collaboration with GenderSAFE was initiated to distribute simplified campaign information (in digest form) to encourage further collaboration and policy input. The campaign had the following outcomes:
 - *Round 1:* An initial campaign launched in October 2024 called for advocacy during the hearings for the new Commissioner. 17 emails were sent, resulting in one positive response.
 - *Round 2:* A renewed campaign at the end of November targeted additional MEPs and re-contacted those who had not responded, requesting further collaboration on the campaign against gender-based violence as part of the policy dissemination plan. 42 emails were sent, yielding an additional positive response.
- **Establishing Personal Partnerships with MEPs:** Personal relationships were cultivated with key MEPs to secure their support for the hearing of the new Commissioner. Special emphasis was placed on MEPs with pre-existing connections with the project. Three meetings were held, leading to the establishment of three new partnerships and one question raised at the hearing.
 - A meeting with MEP Lina Gálvez resulted in a positive response and further collaboration, with Gálvez asking a question during the hearing.
 - MEP Markéta Gregorová expressed support for the initiative.
 - MEP Danuše Nerudová committed to providing support for collaboration and pledged to utilise her resources to assist in the efforts.
- **Ongoing Participation with Lina Gálvez to Influence FP10:** Project coordinator maintained ongoing communication with MEP Gálvez's assistant to contribute policy input and remain updated on gender equality policies within the European Parliament, particularly through Gálvez's involvement as chair of the FEMM Committees. Collaboration was ongoing:
 - Collaboration on the development of the [Own-Initiative Report \(INI\) on the assessment of the implementation of Horizon Europe in view of its interim evaluation and recommendations for the 10th Research Framework Programme](#). This involved sending recommendations based on the [draft prepared by Cristian Ehler](#) for the next FP10. The response from Gálvez's office confirmed that our input would be considered in her proposed amendments.



- The [ERA Forum Sub-group position paper](#) titled *Advancing Inclusive Gender Equality: A Vision for Framework Programme 10*, based on GENDERACTIONplus positions, was disseminated, and feedback was received from Gálvez's team, agreeing to incorporate our suggestions.
- Lina Gálvez agreed to contribute to the opening word of the GENDERACTIONplus final conference.

These activities successfully facilitated engagement with MEPs and contributed to influencing the gender equality agenda in the context of FP10 and other key EU policies. The ongoing dialogue with MEPs, especially those in positions of influence, ensured continued collaboration and alignment with our advocacy goals.

5.2.4 Advocacy for gender equality with new Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Startups

A key element of the advocacy strategy was the creation and dissemination of an open letter addressed to the new Commissioner for Research and Innovation, urging continued and strengthened support for gender equality in Horizon Europe and the ERA. The letter gathered a total of 664 signatures. The following activities were undertaken to ensure broad visibility and engagement:

- **Support from the Research and Innovation / Horizon Europe Communities:** Sister projects and existing networks were leveraged to gather widespread support for the open letter.
 - *Actions:* Direct contact with sister projects and the use of broader networks to solicit signatures and endorsements for the open letter.
 - *Outcome:* 13 connections were actively utilised and tracked, serving as the primary source of gathered signatures.
- **Social Media Campaign Promoting the Signed Open Letter:** A targeted social media campaign was launched to raise awareness of the open letter and encourage further dissemination.
 - *Actions:* Statements of support were shared alongside relevant EU activities and updates, using coordinated tactics to maximise visibility.
 - *Outcome:* Seven posts were published across social media platforms, promoting the open letter and highlighting its significance.
- **Think Tank Outreach:** Strategic outreach to think tanks was conducted to expand the reach of the open letter and encourage further collaboration on gender equality policy advice.
 - *Actions:* Direct emails were sent to leading think tanks, promoting the letter and inviting dialogue and cooperation around ongoing policy developments.
 - *Outcome:* 8 organisations were contacted, strengthening the project's visibility and engagement beyond the immediate R&I community.



- **Presentation of the Open Letter to the Commissioner:** A formal presentation by the project coordinator of the open letter was arranged to reinforce the message directly to the Commissioner.
 - *Actions:* A printed and bound copy of the letter was personally presented to the Commissioner during the Gender Equality Champions Award Ceremony.
 - *Outcome:* A brief but meaningful exchange took place, during which the coordinator highlighted the positive impact of GEPs on advancing gender equality in ERA research, underlining the importance of continued support. A social media post followed.

These activities contributed significantly to maintaining the momentum around gender equality advocacy in the transition to a new Commission, ensuring that stakeholder voices were heard and documented at a critical moment for EU R&I policymaking.

5.2.5 Dissemination of GENDERACTIONplus strategic policy advice and deliverables

The dissemination of strategic policy advice and project deliverables focused on maximising visibility, promoting stakeholder engagement, and supporting policy influence at the EU level. Activities combined direct outreach, targeted social media campaigns, event-based dissemination, and integration into existing stakeholder communication channels. The following Table 2. Overview of the dissemination of strategic policy advice for impact creation details the actions undertaken across multiple dissemination methods, aligned with the overall objective of promoting gender equality in R&I.

Table 2. Overview of the dissemination of strategic policy advice for impact creation

Dissemination Method	Position paper(s) disseminated	Activity	Strategy
Email	WP3: Position paper 4 Position paper 5	Disseminate gender-based violence position papers to the European Parliament	Renew MEP campaign to email position papers and disseminate zero-tolerance conduct pledge
	WP3: Position paper 4 Position paper 5	Disseminate gender-based violence position papers to umbrella organisations	Email position papers + GenderSAFE zero-tolerance code of conduct pledge and request collaboration
	WP1-4, 6: Position papers 2-7	Dissemination to the Commissioner	Reference and link policy advice in the open letter email
Social media campaigns	WP3: Position paper 4	GenderSAFE 16 Days Against Gender-based Violence Campaign	LinkedIn post highlighting briefs



	Position paper 5		
	WP4: Position paper 8	Promote the Commission's Release of the Framework Principles for Inclusive Gender Analysis and new GA+ position paper	Article outlining inclusive gender analysis + social media campaign pushing the article and position paper
Event-related Posts (Windows of Opportunity)	WP2: Position paper 7	Research Careers Conference	Attend event; draft social post highlighting inclusive research careers
	WP2: Position paper 2	Disability Rights Week	Post linking FEMM hearing outcomes to position paper
	WP3: Position paper 5	EU Survey on Violence Against Women	Post linking survey results to position paper
	WP2: Position paper 7	Strategic Innovation Agenda Release	Post about "Benefit of an EU strategic innovation agenda – Cost of non-Europe", highlighting position paper
	WP3: Position paper 5	Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) Hearing	LinkedIn post linking the FEMM discussions of the MFF discussions to position paper
	WP2: Position paper 7	She Figures Release	Post connecting She Figures results to position paper 7 and intersectionality
	WP6: Position paper 6 and 10	WP6 Stakeholder Engagement Event	Post about stakeholder engagement feeding highlighting previous policy advice
	WP5: Deliverable 5.2	Gender Equality Index 2024 Release	Post linking D5.2 deliverable findings to EIGE Gender Equality Forum presentation
Other dissemination activities	WP1-4, 6:	Inspiring ERA newsletter	Article advertising final conference summarising



	Position paper 2-7		and linking all policy advice
	All WPs: Position papers 1-7, 9-11	Final Conference Invite	Policy advice linked in the final conference invite sent prior to event
	All WPs: Position papers 1-7, 9-11	Final Conference Goodie Bag	Virtual goodie bag highlighting policy advice for conference attendees
	All WPs: Position papers 1-13	GA+ Website Policy Dashboard	Create dashboard with summaries and links to all policy advice

5.2.6 Stakeholder Outreach Beyond Core Networks

As part of the broader dissemination and stakeholder engagement strategy, additional outreach efforts were undertaken to expand the network of collaborators and promote GENDERACTIONplus policy objectives. These activities focused on establishing new relationships with cultural institutions, diplomatic missions, and university networks to strengthen dissemination channels and foster future collaboration opportunities.

- Engagement with the European Union National Institutes for Culture
 - In January, GENDERACTIONplus and the Centre for Gender and Science were presented at a EUNIC meeting to explore opportunities for collaboration and build connections with cultural institutions across Europe.
- Collaboration with the British Embassy of the Czech Republic
 - Following the EUNIC meeting, further engagement was pursued with the British Embassy Values Committee to discuss potential event partnerships, research sponsorship opportunities, and collaboration on initiatives promoting gender equality.
- Building Relationships with the British Council
 - GENDERACTIONplus participated in the British Council's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Launch Event to exchange views on shared priorities and to promote the project's policy positions.
- Collaboration with the Diversity & Inclusion Hub of European University Alliances
 - Outreach was conducted to the chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Hub to discuss opportunities for further dissemination of GENDERACTIONplus policy advice within the European higher education sector.
 - GENDERACTIONplus attended the second meeting of the Diversity & Inclusion Hub.



- Mobilisation network
 - Develop a new mobilisation network, which is a rapid response and coordination platform to protect and advance inclusive gender equality in European R&I beyond the project's duration.
- Disseminate the network to all contacts collected during the project, including umbrella organisations, think tanks, final conference participants, project partners, and social media followers.

5.3 Evaluation of the EUIP Impact

The EUIP played a central role in ensuring the visibility, uptake, and influence of GENDERACTIONplus outputs at the EU level. The strategic alignment of dissemination and advocacy activities with ERA Policy Agenda priorities—particularly ERA Priority 5 on gender equality and inclusiveness—enabled the project to effectively reach and engage policymakers, institutions, and stakeholders across the ERA.

The implementation of the EUIP resulted in a number of key achievements:

- **Strategic positioning:** The mid-term and final conferences successfully positioned GENDERACTIONplus as a policy agenda setter in shaping future ERA policy on inclusive gender equality. These events attracted diverse stakeholders and amplified the project's policy messages in the context of Horizon Europe and the upcoming FP10.
- **Policy uptake and visibility:** Targeted dissemination of policy recommendations through direct outreach, social media campaigns, newsletters, and stakeholder events contributed to the integration of GENDERACTIONplus outputs into relevant policy debates. The open letter to the Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Startups, which garnered over 660 signatures, and its personal handover during a high-profile event, exemplify the project's commitment to policy advocacy.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Ongoing engagement with key MEPs, especially through collaboration with FEMM and ITRE committee members, resulted in sustained dialogue and build the ground for ongoing collaboration.
- **Broadening alliances:** The project extended its reach by engaging new stakeholders beyond the core R&I community. Outreach to think tanks, cultural institutions, embassies, and university alliances broadened the coalition of actors advocating for gender equality in R&I, creating a stronger foundation for future collaboration.
- **Adaptability and responsiveness:** The EUIP demonstrated a strong ability to seize windows of opportunity, responding rapidly to policy developments and mobilising advocacy when necessary—such as during the Commissioner hearings or major ERA Forum discussions. The project's capacity to pivot communication efforts (e.g., moving from X to LinkedIn) ensured continued impact despite external challenges.



Despite these achievements, challenges remain in sustaining momentum in a shifting political context. Challenging aspects of implementation included overcoming communication barriers with high-level EU policymakers, limited time to capitalise on collaborative relationships before the project's conclusion, restricted exposure to new public audiences due to the project's reliance on LinkedIn for social media outreach, and difficulties in identifying relevant contacts within stakeholder organisations. Future work will entail identifying ways to overcome these barriers and enhance the effectiveness of engagement strategies.

Overall, the EUIP's success underlines the importance of continued coordination, timely messaging, and coalition-building to maintain gender equality as a core priority in European R&I policy. Future efforts will benefit from the foundations laid by GENDERACTIONplus, particularly its strong stakeholder network, tested communication tools, and evidence-based policy positions.



6. PROJECT COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

This section provides an overview of the project's communication efforts, focusing on the tools, platforms, and strategies used to disseminate information, engage stakeholders, and raise visibility for GENDERACTIONplus. It details the role of the project website, newsletters, flyers, and social media channels, and describes how targeted campaigns were used to support key milestones and thematic priorities. The section also reflects on reach and audience engagement across communication channels, contributing to broader awareness and uptake of the project's objectives and outputs.

6.1 Project website

The website is the project's primary communication tool. It contains all the relevant information about the project and presents all the outputs and results. The website is hosted by the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences (ISAS CR) at the web address genderaction.eu. The website has taken the URL from the previous GENDERACTION project, which is accessible through the website as an archived web; after the end of the GENDERACTIONplus project, the website will continue to be operational as an informational platform on the projects' main achievements and outcomes. The website will continue to be hosted by ISAS CR, covering the hosting and domain costs. The website will be updated if necessary.



Picture 4. Picture of the Homepage of GENDERACTIONplus website in May 2025



Since September 2022, the website has developed 59 pages. It has published 53 News and 29 Event articles, received 75,747 pageviews, and attracted 3,816 unique visitors. Overall, the trend in the number of pageviews has grown continuously during the project; the monthly user activity has been more or less balanced, but permanently growing, following higher activity after major communication campaigns linked to the midterm and final events of the GENDERACTIONplus project.

Visitors of the website have come from 141 countries all over the world; most of them have come from Spain, Belgium, Sweden, United States, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Czechia and Poland. Geographically, the most active users come from Brussels, Dublin and Prague. In addition to the home page (4.5k pageviews), the most visited pages were the page presenting the projects' Deliverable reports.

WHEN	REACH (PAGE VIEWS)
OCTOBER 2022 - OCTOBER 2023	19 579
OCTOBER 2023 - OCTOBER 2024	31 658
OCTOBER 2024 - MAY 2025	29 827

Picture 5. Page views of genderaction.eu during the implementation of the project

6.2 Flyer

Published at the start of the project in 2022, a project flyer was created to present the project's main goals and key information, with a print run of 500 copies. It was distributed at projects events or at the project presentation on the Czech Days for European Research (CZEDER) event. However, spreading of the project materials and outputs was primarily done online, and this has included the flyer presentation of the project on the project website or shared [online](#).

6.3 Newsletter

The GENDERACTIONplus newsletter has provided information about project activities and new developments in the area of gender equality policies in research and higher education in the EU. Since 2022, the newsletters have been published twice a year (in June and December) in electronic format. The Mailchimp platform has been used for distribution. Links for the Mailchimp editions of newsletters are provided also through the project's website on the [Dissemination](#) page. A total of eight issues of the newsletter have been published during the project.

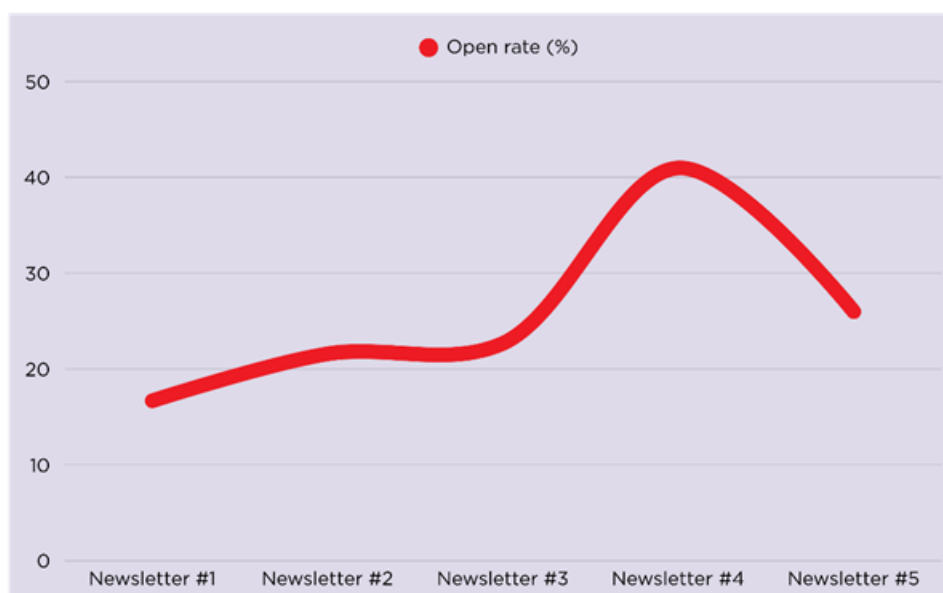
The number of newsletter subscribers almost doubled (647=>1224) during the project implementation. The open rate increased or stagnated over time, as shown in the overview below. The open rate is a



Picture 6. Flyer of the GENDERACTIONplus project.



percentage that indicates how many successfully delivered emails were opened by recipients, the average number is 15-20 % when aiming for a specific audience. Therefore, our data below shows that GENDERACTIONplus newsletter open rate is increasing from normal to above average. The last newsletter will be published at the end of the project, end of May 2025.



Graph 10. The performance of the newsletters – open rate

6.4 Social media

6.4.1 Platform X (former Twitter)

In addition to project website, social media channels were key dissemination tools during project implementation. Originally, a Twitter account was established as the main public communication channel. However, due to a change in ownership and relatedly management, account verification, analytic tools and subscription requirements changed. As a result, the analytic tools have become a paid subscription possibility only. Due to continuous issues and changes due to company management terms, restricting accounts access to analytics tools or forcing account managers to pay for subscription or continuous verification changes, the GENDERACTIONplus Coordinator decided to leave the platform, following many worldwide academic institutions and organisations in winter 2024. For this reason, activity invested on the Twitter/X platform cannot be tracked (only by accounts still active on this social media).





Picture 7. Project activities on Twitter / Platform X during the project implementation.

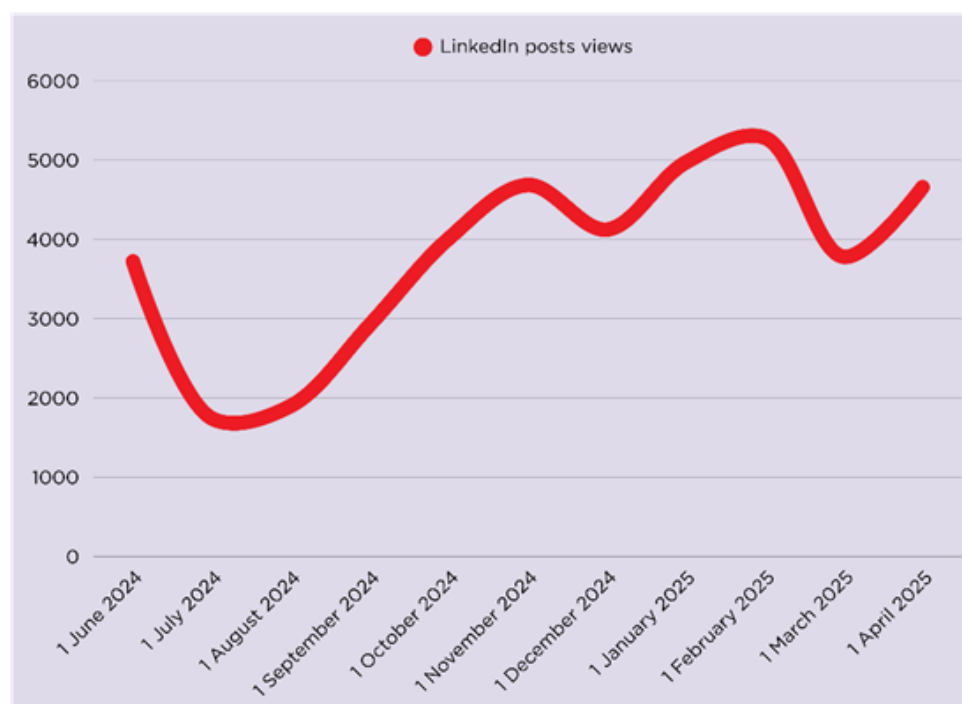
During the period between the start of the project in June 2022 and the deletion of the GENDERACTIONplus X account in November 2024, in total 354 posts were published to share the outputs of GENDERACTIONplus, as well as to communicate news from the sister projects. Communication campaigns preceding the midterm event of GENDERACTIONplus in February 2024, or campaigns regarding the International Day of Women and Girls in Science were published and shared on Twitter and LinkedIn. Posts were published under the GENDERACTIONplus project and shared by project partners or sister projects accounts.

6.4.2 LinkedIn

The GENDERACTIONplus LinkedIn account was established as an important platform later during the project implementation in winter 2023 to interact, connect and share project milestones and cooperation with institutions, organisations and sister projects. In its entire existence, the LinkedIn account of GENDERACTIONplus gained 870 followers (as of May 2025).

The activity of GENDERACTIONplus LinkedIn account followers has been growing or stable since its launch; in the last year of the project implementation post views were reaching between 1,600 to 5,800 views per post (see the chart below).





Graph 11. An overview of the GENDERACTIONplus LinkedIn profile posts views (June 2024 – April 2025)

6.4.3 Social media campaigns

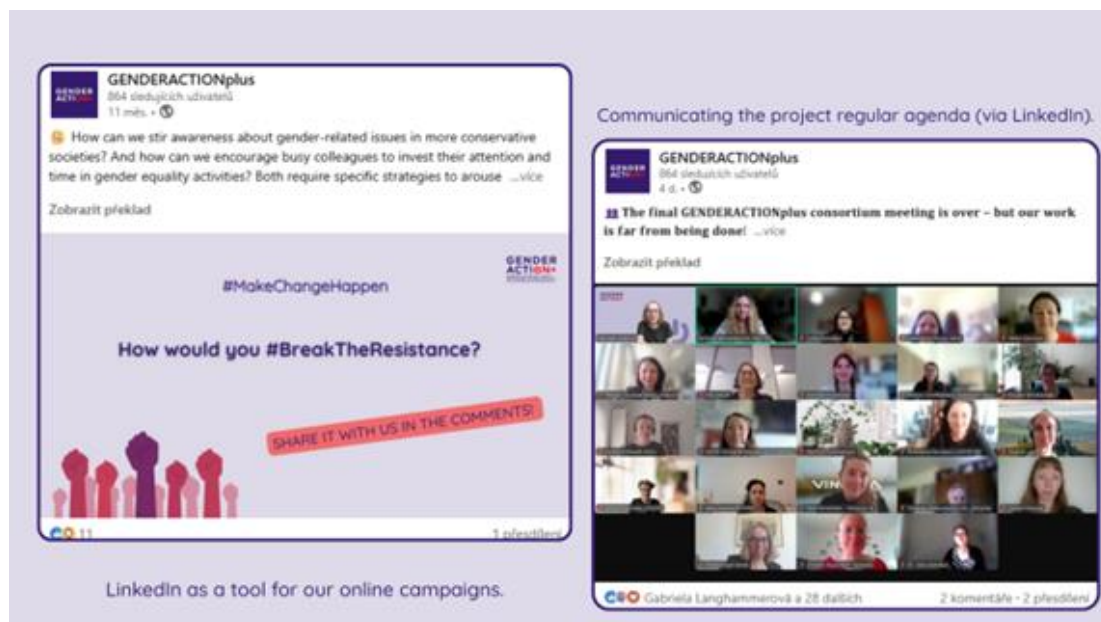
Every year during the project implementation of GENDERACTIONplus and its sister projects, International Day of Women and Girls in Science was celebrated with an online campaign or a post. For example, the goal of #SafeAcademia campaign in 2022 was to raise awareness about the importance of creating safe, respectful, and inclusive environments in academia for all. It lasted from 11 and 17 February 2023 on Twitter, and an informational article was published on the project website.

Another example of a collaborative social media campaign was an involvement in the international initiative 16 Days of Activism in 2024, which raised awareness among public about the issue of gender-based violence. GENDERACTIONplus co-worked on a 16 day campaign in November 2024 with the Horizon Europe GenderSAFE project, the goal of which was to urge higher education and research institutions to take definitive action against gender-based violence, bring attention to the critical need for advancing zero tolerance, providing concrete



Picture 8. An example of the post for #16DaysOfActivism campaign in November 2025.

recommendations, and spotlighting institutions that had already committed to taking the pledge for a zero-tolerance approach.



Picture 9. Examples of LinkedIn posts during the project implementation.

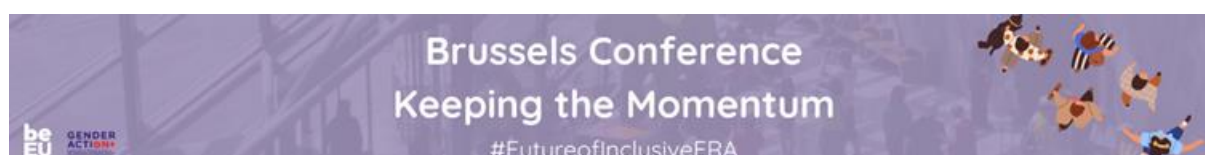
In preparation for the Mutual Learning Workshop on resistances to gender equality policy efforts in June 2024, GENDERACTIONplus launched a targeted social media campaign to raise awareness and stimulate dialogue on the issue under the hashtag #BreakTheResistance.

Running for two months prior to the workshop in Madrid, the campaign engaged followers on LinkedIn and X by sharing videos, visuals, and data collected from GENDERACTIONplus consortium members. These materials illustrated real-life experiences with various forms of resistance, including survey results showing how frequently representatives of national authorities and research funders encountered such challenges. The campaign aimed to foster knowledge exchange, connect with like-minded stakeholders, and explore strategies to address resistance—laying the groundwork for deeper discussion during the workshop. During the campaign, we also shared a handful of toolkits and literature to better understand issues surrounding resistance to gender equality advancement and ways to tackle them.



Picture 10. Examples of posts for platform X during the social media campaign focused on resistances in implementing gender equality.

6.5 Mid-term conference ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality



Picture 11. Banner for the mid-term event of GENDERACTIONplus.

In celebration of the International Day of Girls and Women in Science, the mid-term conference titled ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality took place at BOSA, Brussels, on 13 February 2024, with 61 people attending on site and 105 online. To inform the debates about further actions and measures at the conference, GENDERACTIONplus issued a position paper on the future of gender equality in the European Research Area. The conference brought together relevant stakeholders to discuss the future priorities for inclusive gender equality in the European Research Area. This was done against the backdrop of the results of GENDERACTIONplus benchmark studies on gender equality policy implementation in European research, which identified ongoing challenges and gaps and highlighted advances achieved in recent years. The debates emphasised the importance of advancing intersectional and inclusive approaches to gender equality policy, focusing on creating an inclusive research environment through institutional change and improving the quality and social relevance of R&I by integrating the gender dimension into its content. The outcomes of the conference served to contribute to the debates on the future ERA policy agenda and, ultimately, the next European framework programme for R&I.

An online social media campaign prior to the event took place on both X and LinkedIn channels. The goal was to attract attendees to the event and raise awareness on the topics of the mid-term event.



Picture 12. Twitter/X post announcing speakers of the mid-term event.





Picture 13. Pictures from the mid-term event of GENDERACTIONplus held at BOSA, Brussels.

Mid-term conference materials:

- [Programme](#) (PDF)
- [Press release](#)
- Policy brief: [ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality](#)
- [Video recording of the conference on YouTube](#)

6.6 Final conference Towards New Horizons

The GENDERACTIONplus final conference titled Towards New Horizons: Inclusive Gender Equality in FP10 and Beyond took place in Brussels at Les Ateliers des Tanneurs under the patronage of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU on 12 February 2025. 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. The conference gathered a diverse audience of 67 participants onsite and over 132 online participants online from over 40 countries. The conference gathered broad representation from many countries across the EU and beyond, including Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, UK, Ireland, Germany, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Estonia, Portugal, Lithuania, Norway, Czechia, France, Italy, and Greece. Participants came from a variety of



organizations, such as National Authorities, Research Funding Organizations, European and national organizations, and others.



Picture 155. Introduction speech by Lina Gálvez at the final conference of GENDERACTIONplus

The conference opened with reflections from high-level representatives, who underscored the progress made in advancing gender equality in R&I and the significant challenges that remain in the current political climate. Representing the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Zuzanna Hazubska, Minister Plenipotentiary for the Coherence of National Science Policy, framed gender equality as an essential dimension of "Security Europe," the overarching priority of the Presidency. Lina Gálvez, Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), addressed the growing challenges to gender equality in R&I, warning against what she described as an organized effort to roll back progress.

The conference was preceded by an extensive communication campaign which started with a "Save the date" post in December 2024 and continued with intensive communication from the beginning of 2025. During the campaign, we highlighted the work we accomplished during the implementation of the project, highlighted the published policy briefs, deliverable reports and stressed the importance of our work under the current European political climate missing a continuous support of gender equality related topics in R&I. The campaign was run on LinkedIn with the support of engaged organisations and sister projects.

The aim of the conference was to review the progress made in advancing inclusive gender equality in R&I in the EU; assess advances in policy coordination accomplished through GENDERACTIONplus Communities of Practice; and engage in a 'whole system' dialogue with Policy makers, research funders, ERA stakeholder organisations, ERA gender equality officers, and scholars to discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead.

The conference opened with reflections from high-level representatives, who underscored the progress



Picture 14. An example of the social media post on the occasion of final conference.



Picture 16. Examples of social media posts for the final conference social media campaign

As part of our dissemination efforts beyond the project's implementation period, we produced two videos during the final conference.

- [The first video](#) features conference guests and panellists delivering key messages on the urgent gender equality measures that should be prioritised in future R&I policies.
- [The second video](#) highlights the relevance and added value of participating in a project such as GENDERACTIONplus. Both were placed on the project's YouTube channel.



Picture 177. Photos from the GENDERACTIONplus final conference.

Final conference materials:

- [Programme](#) (PDF)
- [Press release](#)
- [Goodie bag](#) with GENDERACTIONplus materials
- [Final report from the final conference](#)
- [Video recording of the conference](#)
- [Video with the guests and panellists](#) of the conference
- [Photo gallery of the final conference](#)



6.7 Videos

A total of nine videos were produced by the GENDERACTIONplus team to support the communication of deliverable reports and other project outputs. All of them are shared on the project [YouTube channel](#) which has been also transformed from the previous GENDERACTION project.

Videos shared during the GENDERACTIONplus implementation period include coverage of various events, such as conferences or the Mutual Learning Workshop held in Madrid in June 2024. Of the nine videos, five were directly based on GENDERACTIONplus deliverables. Among them, the explainer-style graphic videos achieved the highest viewership on the project's YouTube channel, as shown in the table below.

Overall, the numbers of YouTube views are decent and stable between 49 – 364 views per video (there is an interesting statistic deviation regarding the *GENDERACTIONplus benchmark report: Guidelines for sex/gender analysis* video, but as watch time from YouTube analytic tools suggests, it is caused by misleading wording “attractivity”), which was anticipated as the content aims to a specific niche audience. Notably, the two conference message videos received surprisingly low view counts; however, both videos are meant to be communicated during the final stage of project implementation and also in the post-project period. The final conference after-movie *Towards New Horizons: Final Conference of GENDERACTIONplus* was also shared on LinkedIn in a shortened “reels” format, where it performed significantly better, reaching 289 views.

In addition, two conference recordings can be found on the GENDERACTIONplus [YouTube channel](#): from the [midterm event](#) and [final conference](#).



Picture 18. Screenshot from the social media video reel post.



Table 3. Overview of GENDERACTIONplus videos

Name of the video	Views (YouTube)
GENDERACTION is back as GENDERACTIONplus!	176
Benchmarking analysis of monitoring/evaluation of GEPs	49
GENDERACTIONplus benchmark report: Guidelines for sex/gender analysis	5.8k
Report on monitoring ERA actions implementation at national level	79
GENDERACTIONplus benchmark report: Terminology and policy on intersectionality	97
Gender-based violence and sexual harassment: research review and policy analysis	364
Why is it important to tackle resistance? GENDERACTIONplus on Mutual Learning Workshop in Madrid	64
What is the main benefit of participating in project like GENDERACTIONplus?	21
Together, we must stand by our core values in R&I. Messages from our final event	128

6.8 Evaluation of the project's communication activities

Throughout the duration of GENDERACTIONplus, communication activities played a vital role in supporting stakeholder engagement, disseminating project outputs, and enhancing the visibility of inclusive gender equality policy across the European Research Area. The project's **multi-channel communication strategy**—combining a dynamic website, regular newsletters, targeted social media campaigns, and event-based outreach—ensured broad and sustained visibility for project activities and strategic policy messages.

A key strength of the project's communication approach was its **adaptability**. The project effectively transitioned its primary social media presence from X (formerly Twitter) to LinkedIn in response to platform changes, maintaining a strong and growing audience throughout. The decision to focus on LinkedIn as a professional and policy-oriented platform enabled more targeted engagement with relevant stakeholders, particularly during key milestones such as the midterm and final conferences. LinkedIn posts regularly reached between 1,600 and 5,800 views, reflecting high levels of engagement within the R&I and policy communities.

The **project website** served as a central hub for sharing deliverables, news, and event outcomes. With nearly 76,000 pageviews and visitors from 141 countries, it significantly expanded the reach of GENDERACTIONplus. Notably, pages hosting project deliverables and stakeholder event summaries



were among the most visited, indicating that the site successfully met the needs of target audiences seeking knowledge and guidance.

The **newsletter** also proved effective, nearly doubling its subscriber base and maintaining strong open rates. Distributed twice a year, the newsletter provided a reliable channel for highlighting progress, promoting events, and updating the community on new resources and policy developments.

GENDERACTIONplus further strengthened its communication impact through issue-focused **campaigns**—such as #SafeAcademia, 16 Days of Activism, and #BreakTheResistance—which helped connect project content to broader debates and raise awareness around core topics like gender-based violence and resistance to gender equality.

Overall, the project's communication activities successfully fulfilled their objectives: raising awareness, driving engagement, and amplifying the project's messages to a wide and diverse audience. The combination of strategic timing, professional content, and responsive platform management ensured that communication efforts contributed meaningfully to the project's overall impact. Lessons learned—particularly regarding social media management, cross-promotion with sister projects, and stakeholder-specific targeting—offer valuable insights for future initiatives aiming to combine research, policy, and public engagement.



7. OVERALL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The GENDERACTIONplus project has achieved meaningful progress in embedding inclusive gender equality within the evolving European Research Area (ERA) policy landscape. Its impact is visible at both national and EU levels, across policy coordination, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication.

- **Strengthened national-level capacity through National Impact Plans**

The NIPs provided a structured approach for partners to engage national stakeholders, identify policy needs, and co-develop context-specific responses. They enabled countries with varying levels of gender equality infrastructure to tailor actions to national conditions and fostered institutional learning and change.

- **Influenced EU-level policy through the EUIP**

The EUIP enabled timely and targeted advocacy aligned with Horizon Europe evaluations, FP10 preparations, and Commissioner hearings. The open letter to the new Commissioner, signed by over 660 organisations and individuals, exemplified the project's ability to mobilise the community and amplify its voice at critical policy junctures.

- **Mobilised and empowered Communities of Practice**

The CoPs of national authorities and research funding organisations provided a trusted, peer-based structure for mutual learning and exchange. They served as platforms for testing policy recommendations, sharing implementation challenges, and ensuring relevance and ownership of outputs.

- **Enhanced quality and legitimacy of policy recommendations through stakeholder and citizen engagement**

The engagement of more than 300 participants in structured consultation activities contributed to the refinement of policy proposals, with input from underrepresented voices, early-career researchers, and equality practitioners. This participatory approach strengthened both the substance and acceptance of the project's outputs.

- **Increased visibility and policy uptake through strategic communication**

The project's communication tools—including a high-traffic website, a growing newsletter audience, and strong LinkedIn presence—enabled widespread dissemination of project findings. Targeted campaigns like #SafeAcademia and #BreakTheResistance tied project work to wider societal conversations, reinforcing relevance and urgency.

- **Positioned inclusive gender equality as a pillar of ERA transformation**

By directly contributing to discussions on ERA Action 5, the future of GEP eligibility, and the future of FP10, GENDERACTIONplus shaped how gender equality is framed in R&I policy. Its outputs were cited in official meetings, referenced in policy dialogues, and supported by key ERA stakeholders.

- **Built a foundation for sustained impact beyond the project**



Through the development of policy tools, stakeholder networks, and shared advocacy practices, GENDERACTIONplus created assets that will continue to inform and support gender equality policy in Europe. The sustained engagement of CoPs, the continued hosting of the project website, and integration of project outputs into policy fora all contribute to this legacy.

In conclusion, GENDERACTIONplus has not only advanced the ERA gender equality agenda but also demonstrated an effective model for collaborative, inclusive, and impact-oriented policy coordination. Our structured approach, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication provide valuable lessons for future initiatives seeking to embed equality and inclusiveness at the heart of European R&I policy.



8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final section offers a synthesis of what we have learned and achieved. It brings together key insights from across the project's core activities—stakeholder and citizen engagement, impact planning, strategic communication, and policy development—and reflects on the collective value of our coordinated efforts. The chapter concludes with forward-looking reflections on how we, as communities of practice and policy actors, will build on this foundation to sustain and expand our impact in future work on gender equality in the European Research Area and beyond.

8.1 Key Insights

- **Engagement enhanced both the relevance and legitimacy of our policy outputs.**

Stakeholder and citizen engagement proved invaluable not only for gathering feedback, but for building trust and ensuring that our strategic policy advice responded to real-world challenges and needs.

- **The Communities of Practice emerged as a cornerstone of our approach.**

They supported mutual learning, created a space for peer exchange, and contributed directly to the co-development of outputs. Their continuity beyond the project would sustain policy dialogue and further deepen capacity among national authorities and RFOs.

- **Timely and coordinated advocacy had measurable influence on the policy landscape.**

From the open letter to the Commissioner to engagements with MEPs and ERA Forum Sub-group on Inclusive Gender Equality, our coordinated advocacy contributed to shaping policy discussions and ensured that inclusive gender equality remained on the agenda during a politically sensitive time.

- **Strategic communication amplified our visibility and helped us speak beyond our immediate community.**

The project website, LinkedIn activity, newsletters, and campaign messaging gave visibility to our work and created opportunities to engage new allies—from think tanks and embassies to cultural institutions and university networks.

- **Internal coordination across engagement, communication, and policy outputs was crucial.**

The project's impact was not only the result of strong individual activities but of the integration between them. Where engagement fed into communication, and communication reinforced advocacy, we achieved the strongest outcomes.

- **We need to track uptake more systematically.**

While some results are visible—like signatures collected, events held, and recommendations cited—we could improve the way we monitor longer-term policy uptake and institutional change triggered by our outputs. This will be key to demonstrating lasting impact.



8.2 Implications for our future work

The experience of implementing GENDERACTIONplus has deepened our understanding of how to drive inclusive and effective policy coordination across complex systems. As we look ahead, we are committed to applying and expanding on the successful strategies we have developed. The following reflections will guide our approach in future initiatives:

- **We will deepen our commitment to inclusive and sustained engagement.**

Meaningful stakeholder and citizen engagement has proven to be a cornerstone of our work. In future projects, we will build on this foundation by exploring new ways to sustain engagement over time and by reaching even more diverse communities through tailored and trusted outreach strategies.

- **We will continue to expand our networks and reach across policy ecosystems.**

Our work has shown the power of engaging with actors beyond the core R&I community. In future efforts, we will continue to seek partnerships with cultural institutions, advocacy coalitions, EU networks, and other allies who share our commitment to inclusive and equitable research systems.

- **We will sustain and evolve the collaborative model developed in this project.**

The close integration between stakeholder engagement, communication, and policy development proved vital to our success. We will carry forward this model of collaboration, refining our internal coordination structures to support even more coherent and impactful delivery.

- **We will ensure continuity and build on the GENDERACTIONplus legacy.**

The tools, knowledge, and relationships built through this project provide a strong platform for future work. We are committed to maintaining the project website, sustaining the Communities of Practice where possible, and carrying forward the vision of inclusive gender equality that shaped every aspect of GENDERACTIONplus.

8.3 Reflection on strategic challenges

Two broader reflections emerged that warrant consideration in future projects involving multi-stakeholder engagement and national-level implementation planning.

- **Balancing inclusivity with participation limitations**

Despite targeted outreach, participation from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups—particularly in consultations on intersectionality and inclusiveness—was lower than anticipated. This highlights an important limitation: outreach alone does not guarantee participation, especially when stakeholders face structural barriers such as time constraints, resource limitations, or perceptions of limited influence, as well as structural discrimination and disadvantage. Future projects should consider co-designing engagement strategies in collaboration with representative organisations, exploring models such as advisory panels or compensated contributions to promote sustained and meaningful inclusion.



- **Managing continuity in NIP implementation amidst institutional change**

Final reporting on National Impact Plans revealed that staff turnover negatively affected some partners' ability to complete planned actions. This underscores a common challenge in long-term coordination projects: over-reliance on individual staff members can jeopardise continuity. To mitigate this, future initiatives could aim to institutionalise responsibilities more firmly. However, this experience also reflects the reality that, at the national level, the responsibility for advancing gender equality in the ERA often rests with a single individual. The related risk is that, if the person responsible leaves, the tacit knowledge accrued, the networks and relations built, and even awareness of how the project functions may be lost.

- **Aligning ambition with implementation capacity in NIPs**

The development of NIPs allowed project partners to tailor actions to their national contexts, and two effective approaches emerged: some countries pursued ambitious multi-action plans, while others focused on fewer, targeted initiatives. However, some partners struggled with incomplete reporting or limited implementation due to internal constraints, such as staffing shortages or shifts in institutional priorities. This points to the need for better alignment between ambition and capacity in national planning. For future initiatives, a phased or modular approach to action planning could support more realistic goal-setting that accounts for evolving national circumstances.

In conclusion, GENDERACTIONplus has demonstrated that strategic coordination, inclusive engagement, and timely communication are mutually reinforcing pillars of impactful gender equality policy. The lessons and tools developed through the project offer a strong foundation for future action across the ERA and can inform broader efforts to embed equality and inclusion in European R&I policy.



9. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Agenda for Online stakeholder consultation on tackling gender-based violence in academia | WP3 | 21/09/22

Consultation on tackling gender-based violence in academia

Online workshop on Wednesday 21 September 2022

14:00 - 15:45 CET

14:00-14:05	Welcome <i>Moderator, Helen Garrison, VA (Public & Science)</i>
14:05-14:10	Presentation: Introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project, the Czech conference and objectives of the workshop. <i>Marcela Linková, Project Coordinator of GENDERACTIONplus project and Head of the Centre for Gender and Science at the Czech Academy of Sciences in the Czech Republic</i>
14:10-14:20	Presentation: Scene-setting on the current situation on gender-based violence in academia in Europe <i>Fredrik Bondestam, Director of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research and leading project Work Package on Gender-based violence</i>
14:20-14:30	Q&A and Zoom poll <i>Has your association/organisation ever addressed the issue of GBV? (Yes/No), If yes, how.</i>
14:30-15:00	Group breakout discussion 1 <i>What are the main issues you see in terms of GBV from your point of view? What are the most pressing needs you see when it comes to tackling GBV in your country?</i>
15:00-15:05	Plenary: Review of Miro board
15:05-15:10	Introduction to breakout discussion 2
15:10-15:35	Group breakout discussion 2 <i>With regard to the recommendations on how to tackle GBV within</i>



	<i>academia. What needs to be done? What other actions are required at Research Performing Org or Research Funding Org level, or some other level.</i>
15:35 - 15:40	Plenary review of feedback
15:40 - 15:45	Closing



Annex 2. Agenda for Online stakeholder consultation on GEP monitoring systems at national level | WP6 | 29/11/23

Stakeholder consultation workshop on GEP monitoring systems at national level.

Online workshop on Wednesday 29 November 2023
10:00 - 12:00 CET

10:00-10:05	Welcome <i>Moderator, Helen Garrison, VA (Public & Science)</i>
10:05-10:15	Menti questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which country are you representing? • Which type of organisation are you representing (National Authority / Other) • Do you have a GEP monitoring system in place at national level? (Yes, Under development / No / Unsure)
10:15-10:30	Presentation: Introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project, the objectives of the consultation and an overview of the monitoring guidelines <i>Dr Jennie Rothwell, Senior Manager of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the Higher Education Authority in Ireland</i>
10:30-11:00	Group breakout discussion 1: Gaps and needs <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From the gaps identified in 'Gaps/needs identified' is there anything else that needs to be addressed or added here for national authorities? 2. In the section on 'Recommendations for National Authorities' would you like to add to or change any of our recommendations. Why? 3. Are the 'recommendations for national authorities' useful for you in your country? Could they be implemented? What would be the



	<i>challenges?</i>
11:00-11:10	Plenary feedback from breakouts and discussion
11:10-11:40	Breakout discussion 2: Indicators and monitoring <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What do you think of our 3 levels of monitoring? What would you change?</i> 2. <i>How can national authorities ensure the sustainability of a monitoring system?</i> 3. <i>How do national authorities advance from compliance with the current Horizon Europe GEP requirement to a more robust system?</i>
11:40 - 11:50	Plenary feedback from breakouts and discussion
11:50 - 12:00	Closing



Annex 3. Agenda for Online stakeholder consultation on Intersectionality policy recommendations | WP2 | 15/01/24

Stakeholder Consultation on Intersectionality Policy Recommendations
Making policies for higher education and research and innovation
intersectional - what to recommend and how to implement?
Online workshop on Monday 15 January 2024
14:00 - 16:00 CET

14:00-14:05	Welcome <i>Moderator, Helen Garrison, VA (Public & Science)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which country are you representing? • Which type of organisation are you representing? • Which discrimination grounds does your org work with? • Is intersectionality something your org discusses? •
14:05-14:10	Presentation: Introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project <i>Marcela Linková, Project Coordinator of GENDERACTIONplus project and Head of the Centre for Gender and Science at the Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
14:10-14:20	Presentation: The ERA policy context and latest developments on the work for inclusion and intersectionality at European level <i>Anne Pépin, Gender Sector Team Leader, DG Research & Innovation, European Commission</i>
14:20-14:40	Presentation: Overview of the results of the WP2 benchmarking study and draft policy recommendations



	<i>Heidi Holt Zachariassen and Ella Ghosh, Senior Advisers for the Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research (KIF) situated at Universities Norway.</i>
14:40-15:05	Group breakout discussion 1: Feedback on the policy recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they clear enough? • Are any missing?
15:05-15:20	Plenary feedback
15:20-15:45	Breakout discussion 2: Implementation of the recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the recommendations be implemented? • How can they be used to change the policy agenda?
15:45 - 15:55	Plenary feedback from breakouts
15:55 - 16:00	Closing and next steps



Annex 4. Agenda for Online stakeholder consultation on Inclusive Research Careers
| WP2 | 30/09/24

**Stakeholder Consultation on Inclusive Research Careers - what to
recommend and how to implement?**

Online workshop on Monday 30 September 2024

14:00 - 16:00 CET

14:00-14:05	Welcome <i>Moderator, Helen Garrison, VA (Public & Science)</i>
14:05-14:10	Presentation: Introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project <i>Marcela Linková, Project Coordinator of GENDERACTIONplus project and Head of the Centre for Gender and Science at the Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
14:10-14:20	Presentation: The European policy landscape concerning research careers <i>Luisa Henriques, Co-sponsor of the ERA Policy Agenda Action 4 and Senior Policy Analyst at the Foundation for Science and Technology in Portugal.</i>
14:20-14:40	Presentation: Overview of policy recommendations and their development <i>Maria João Sequeira and Maria do Rosário Costa, the Foundation for Science and Technology, Portugal</i>
14:40-15:05	Group breakout discussion 1: Feedback on the policy recommendations



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they clear enough? • Are any missing?
15:05-15:20	Plenary feedback
15:20-15:45	Breakout discussion 2: Implementation of the recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we set priorities? • How can the recommendations be implemented?
15:45 - 15:55	Plenary feedback from breakouts
15:55 - 16:00	Closing and next steps



Annex 5. Online stakeholder consultation on Inclusive Gender Analysis in Research and Innovation (R&I) beyond the European Research Area | WP4 | 01/10/24

Stakeholder Consultation on Inclusive Gender Analysis in Research and Innovation (R&I) beyond the European Research Area

Online workshop on Tuesday 1 October 2024

15:00 - 17:45 CET

15:00-15:05	Welcome <i>Moderator, Helen Garrison, VA (Public & Science)</i>
15:05-15:10	Presentation: Introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project <i>Marcela Linková, Project Coordinator of GENDERACTIONplus project and Head of the Centre for Gender and Science at the Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
15:10-15:30	Presentation: Recent developments in the ERA <i>Katerina Svickova, Head of Sector for Gender, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission</i>
15:30-15:45	Presentation: Implementing and monitoring the integration of the gender dimension in Vinnova's funding programmes. <i>Sophia Ivarsson from Vinnova, Sweden's Innovation Agency.</i>
15:45-16:00	Presentation: Innovation in sex and gender integration policies at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. <i>Angela Kaida, Scientific Director for the CIHR Canadian Institute of Gender and Health</i>



16:00-16:15	<p>Presentation: Gender innovations at the French National Research Agency</p> <p><i>Emma Roques ANR, the French National Research Agency</i></p>
16:15-16:30	<p>Presentation: Advancing gender-related research and innovation at the US National Institutes of Health.</p> <p><i>Elizabeth Barr, US National Institutes of Health</i></p>
16:30-16:35	Questions
16:35-16:45	BREAK
16:45-17:30	<p>Group breakout discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which factors in the work of research funders (e.g. in the design of the measures or setting of processes) are key for the successful integration of the sex/gender analysis in the content of R&I funding? • How to systematically promote the intersectional approach / inclusive gender analysis?
17:30-17:40	Plenary feedback
17:40 - 17:45	Closing and next steps



Stakeholder consultation workshop for gender equality practitioners

Online workshop on Thursday 27 March 2025

14:00 - 16:00 CET

14:00-14:05	Welcome <i>Moderator, Helen Garrison, VA (Public & Science)</i>
14:05-14:15	Menti questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which country are you representing? • Which are most important recommendations to act on right now? (ranking question)
14:15-14:30	Presentation: Introduction to the GENDERACTIONplus project, the objectives of the consultation and an overview of the policy recommendations <i>Dr Jennie Rothwell, Senior Manager of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the Higher Education Authority in Ireland</i>
14:30-15:00	Group breakout discussion 1: Challenges <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any further thoughts on the biggest challenges shared relating to implementing, monitoring or evaluating GEPs? Were you surprised by any of them? 2. In relation to embedding gender equality work and GEPs in your institution, what is working well? (prompts: mutual learning at national level, including gender equality in staff performance evaluation)
15:00-15:10	Plenary feedback from breakouts and discussion
15:10-15:40	Group breakout discussion 2: policy recommendations



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What would you add or remove from the policy recommendations? What is the most important thing included in the draft?</i> 2. <i>Is there anything we have missed?</i> 3. <i>How has the Horizon Europe GEP eligibility criterion impacted your work?</i> 4. <i>What improvements are needed in FP10 to ensure that GEPs continue to be implemented?</i>
15:40 - 15:50	Plenary feedback from breakouts and discussion
15:50 - 16:00	Closing

