



EIT Gender mainstreaming Policy

A gender responsive portfolio of activities and balanced gender representation in decision making

1. Gender equality and diversity

Equality between men and women is at the core of values of the European Union (EU) and enshrined in its legal and political framework, e.g. the European Commission's Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2020-2025¹ and the joint EC/EEAS Gender Action Plan².

Gender equality is also a matter of human rights, and it also lies at the heart of the Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030³ and is also deeply connected to all 17 SDGs.⁴

Throughout all Horizon 2020 activities, gender equality was identified as a crosscutting issue, this observation is based on the following four key performance indicators, developed according to the legal requirement of Horizon 2020:

- KPI 1: Percentage of women participants in Horizon 2020 projects (total workforce);
- KPI 2: Percentage of women project coordinators in Horizon 2020 projects, including Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) fellows, European Research Council (ERC) principal investigators and scientific coordinators in other Horizon 2020 activities;
- KPI 3: Percentage of women in EC advisory groups, expert groups, evaluation panels, individual experts, etc.;
- KPI 4: Percentage of projects taking into account the gender dimension in R&I content.⁵

The EIT, as a body of the European Union and integral part of Horizon 2020, plays a vital role in supporting the EU's objectives of creating sustainable economic growth and jobs by enabling entrepreneurs and innovators to turn their best ideas into products and services for Europe. Consequently, the Horizon 2020 gender equality KPIs are of significant importance for all EIT supported and funded activities, as well as the EIT Headquarter (HQ) and EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs).

Policy makers, the public and private sectors and civil society, as well as national, regional city-level government often collaborate to produce an effective response to gender inequality, each with its own role, capacity and ability to influence change and produce results.

¹https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en#gender-equality-strategy-2020-2025

²<https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/articles/eu-gender-action-plan-ii-how-eu-delegations-contribute-gender-equality-worldwide>

³<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg5>

⁴https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender_equality_as_an_accelerator_for_achieving_the_SDGs.pdf and https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1900unwomen_surveyreport_advance_16oct.pdf

⁵https://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_gender_equality/interim_evaluation_gender_long_final.pdf and https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-swfs_en.pdf page 25-34.



Over the last several decades, on the whole significant progress has been made towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

However, much work remains to be done, and the level of improvement achieved has been thus far uneven in different member states, as evidenced by Eurostat data⁶ available for all EU Member States, and a lot of work remains to achieve greater gender equality in many industry sectors.

Many of the well-researched general barriers for gender equality, like gender biases and the influence of stereotypes have not yet been fully addressed. As a result, they often lead to greater difficulties for women to access financial services, training, and networking opportunities, which would enable to thrive as business owners, entrepreneurs and leaders.⁷

Gender mainstreaming although applied at organizational level, is also very much personal, as it is about attitudes, norms, beliefs and biases that are often unconscious and unintentional in people.

Women are particularly underrepresented in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)⁸. They are the minority student body in STEM related programmes (e.g. mathematics and engineering) in higher education, although they make up nearly 60% of the total number of university graduates. And their representation in the work force, where skills stemming from these STEM studies would allow them to thrive, subsequently suffer.

Evidence points to companies being more successful when they are able to harness the innovation and creativity of women, as well as men. The vast underutilisation of the skills and competences of women is also deemed as a significant loss for the present and future of the European economy, especially in the light of current and anticipated skill shortages and demographic changes. It is estimated that if women participated in the European economy on equal terms as men, the EU GDP per capita could potentially increase by 6.1 to 9.6% by 2050⁹, and in Europe, the gender employment gap is equivalent to an overall loss to the economy estimated at around €370 billion, or 2.8% of the EU's annual GDP. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, advancing women's equality could add between USD12-28 trillion to global GDP by 2025.¹⁰

In addition, as evidenced by several recent studies¹¹, women's upwards advancement in the private sector brings benefits in terms of business economic results, as companies with higher gender diversity are more likely to have higher financial returns compared to national industry medians in their sector.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Gender_statistics#Labour_market_and
<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019>

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en#gender-equality-strategy-2020-2025

⁸ <https://horizon-magazine.eu/key-themes/women-science> and <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eigepublications/work-eu-women-and-men-opposite-ends> and <http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/women-science>

⁹ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/policy-areas/economic-and-financial-affairs/economic-benefits-gender-equality> and https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en#gender-equality-strategy-2020-2025

¹⁰ https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/Organization/Our%20Insights/Delivering%20through%20diversity/Delivering-through-diversity_full-report.ashx

¹¹ https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/Organization/Our%20Insights/Delivering%20through%20diversity/Delivering-through-diversity_full-report.ashx, https://www.ey.com/en_gl/workforce/three-strategic-reasons-to-increase-the-number-of-women-on-our-b



Several studies have also found that diverse and inclusive work environments lead to increased profitability, innovation, creativity, productivity, and employee retention¹².

Gender inequality and the resulting problems for the whole society are being highlighted by the Covid-19 crisis. As the society strongly relies on workers in essential services it becomes clear that women are significantly overrepresented in these, especially in the health and care sectors, supermarkets, and other essential stores. Women all over the world are on the front line of the crisis in often low-paid jobs and with a high risk of infection. The pandemic pushes various inequalities between the genders to the centre of attention. A development that could become “an opportunity to be more conscious of the public infrastructure, including the invisible, undervalued and often low or unpaid work that holds our communities together, and which is predominantly undertaken by women”.¹³

2. Gender Equality in the EIT Community

The EIT was founded to strengthen Europe’s ability to innovate and this is only possible through engaging men and women equally, in every industry sector it operates in and societal challenges it addresses (health, digitalisation, food, urban mobility, manufacturing, raw materials, climate and energy).

Through its Knowledge and Innovation Communities, EIT is part of a broad network of more than 1500 partners in all of Europe and beyond. EIT is in a unique position to support the change towards gender equality and mainstreaming, in industry, research and universities.

Increasing the visibility of women in innovation is key to powering more women in entrepreneurship. This is about equality and social inclusion, and it is also about a good economic sense. The EIT HQ supports gender equality in all aspects:

- Transparent, gender-neutral promotion and salaries system, parental leave available for both women and men, refund of nurseries and kindergartens (common for all EU organisations) – are only some of the elements in place to ensure equal development opportunities for women and men.
- Currently **8 of the 12 members of the EIT Governing Board** are women - a diversity that is key in enabling the EIT to be more effective and drive innovation across the EU.
- Furthermore, the EIT is aiming to implement gender mainstreaming at all levels. For example, in the use of **independent external experts**: In 2019, **55% of experts** participating in the EIT KICs' business plan evaluation and grant reporting have been women, compared to only 11% in 2013. The years 2015-2018 alone saw an increase of 250%.
- That is also why **gender diversity at management level is a criterion in the annual funding allocation to all eight EIT KICs**.

Please find more references regarding women employed at the EIT and KICs and management level of the EIT and KICs for the years 2016-2018 in the Annex 1.

¹² <https://hbr.org/2016/02/study-firms-with-more-women-in-the-c-suite-are-more-profitable> and https://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudiesPDFs/Innovation_Through_Diversity.pdf

¹³ <https://charter-equality.eu/news/francais-gender-equal-cities-under-covid-19.html>



3. EIT Gender Action Plan

The EIT has decided to adopt the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) Define-Plan-Act-Check methodology¹⁴ to implement and improve its Gender Action Plan, adopted in January 2020.

The first phase of the Gender Action Plan will focus on **learning, and capacity building** for EIT and EIT KIC staff, evidence gathering, piloting and prioritization of actions.

The second phase will build on learnings from the first phase and focus on **replicability, scalability and gender equality impact through EIT activities**.

As a result, the most important steps of the EIT Gender Action Plan, are awareness raising and capacity building, implementation, performance, monitoring and reporting as follows:

Awareness Raising and Capacity Building	Implementation	Performance (associated KPIs to developed)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EIT Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Objectives• Capacity building and awareness raising at EIT HQ and EIT KICs (Gender Education Training)• Communication Strategy• HR policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research and evidence gathering (Gender Analysis)• Gender Equality Training for all staff• Piloting, good practice sharing, partnerships• Reporting and monitoring structure• Development of external communication plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define-Plan-Act-Check cycle in place• All EIT KICs engaged• Gender balance in representation achieved• Gender responsive portfolio objectives achieved• EIT recognized leader on Gender mainstreaming

The EIT Headquarter itself is striving to be an equal opportunity employer and follows all European Commission rules and regulations in that respect.

The EIT HQ aims to:

- Equip its staff with the necessary knowledge, guidance, tools and resources, and ensure that staff members of the KIC Legal Entities are also equally equipped of the preceding;
- Continue utilizing tools such as the bi-annual staff survey and analyse main resulting issues / aspects, to take corrective actions, where required;
- Carry out gender-sensitive analyses of the EIT KICs strategies, activities and sectors (Climate, Digital, Health, Raw Materials, Energy, Food, Manufacturing, Urban Mobility, and future sectors), as well as of EIT cross-cutting activities such as Education, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and, with a view to include gender relevant information in the refinement of the EIT KIC strategies, operations and activities.
- Communicate effectively, internally and externally, and displays leadership on the relevance of gender equality to its operations and activities;

Finally, together with the KICs, EIT will work to take the potential impact on Gender Equality into account in the design, implementation and monitoring of operations and activities.

¹⁴ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming/policy-cycle>



4. Specific objectives of the EIT Gender action plan activities, and expected results

The EIT formally adopted its Gender Action Plan in January 2020. It applies to the EIT HQ level activities and decisions, and to the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities level.

It aims to address the highlighted issues in the specific context of Innovation, Business Creation and Entrepreneurial Education, and throughout its unique and decentralized model of EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities across Europe, with the **following overarching objectives**:

A gender responsive content and balanced activity portfolio:

- To ensure that the policies, strategies and the selection of the EIT's portfolio of activities do not reinforce existing gender inequalities, ensuring that needs of all citizens, women and men, are equally addressed and that women and men equally benefit from them;
- To ensure that the gender specific impacts, vulnerabilities and barriers that women face are considered and addressed across EIT activities, to minimise any harm that the EIT investments make unknowingly.
- To promote the equal ability to access and utilise the assets, services, benefits and opportunities generated by the EIT Community activities, regardless of sex, to maximise their positive impacts.

A gender-balanced representation:

- To ensure that women participate equally at all levels (including decision-making) in all operations and activities led by EIT KICs and investments made by EIT;
- To measure and assess the EIT and KICs performance, results and impact with regards of gender equality.

The EIT has identified the **possible specific improvements** through the implementation of its Gender Action Plan:

- **More balanced Women's participation and leadership** in all forms of **decision-making**, including at EIT Governing Board level, and EIT KICs Management level, at company boards of start-ups/scale-up supported by the EIT and its KICs;
- **No gender pay gap** for equivalent roles and levels of responsibility within the EIT Community;
- **Level playing field independent of Gender in investments** going to women led innovative companies and market-oriented innovation projects supported by EIT investments;
- **Mobilization of untapped potential of women talent and contributions** to the EIT Innovation & Entrepreneurship activities.
- **Gender sensitive planning and monitoring** of work programmes, business plans and budget;
- Better access for women to EIT KICs activities in the fields of:
 - o **Business support activities**¹⁵ (such as accelerators) for women entrepreneurs;
 - o **Educational activities**¹⁶ for women, including at secondary school, higher-education and professional levels;
 - o **Innovation activities**¹⁷ of EIT KICs for women innovators;

¹⁵ <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/entrepreneurship>

¹⁶ <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/education>

¹⁷ <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/innovation>

- **Regional Innovation Scheme activities¹⁸**, of which the objective is to contribute to boosting the innovation capacity of countries and regions in Europe that belong to the groups of so-called 'modest and moderate' innovators.
- **More balanced** representation in terms of gender when **employing external experts at EIT KICs level** when conducting evaluations of projects.

To achieve the adopted EIT Gender Action Plan in January 2020, EIT intends to develop a gender information management system (GIMS), with the following purposes / characteristics:

- An essential part of the GIMS is a gender equality monitoring system and gender impact assessment. Systematic (annual) assessment of the design and planning (objectives, results pursued, activities planned), the implementation and results of EIT Community activities from a gender perspective shall be conducted. To ensure this, gender sensitive indicators, KPIs, at all levels of strategies, policies and plans and sex disaggregation of all datasets shall be introduced.
- Information on a gender mainstreaming support structure to be established (human resources devoted to the gender mainstreaming topic, EIT Community gender mainstreaming group etc).

Gender mainstreaming activities will integrate the gender perspective into all EIT procedures and activities (preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all EIT Community strategies, procedures, monitoring and evaluation systems, budgets and activities) with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination.

5. Commitment, improvement and dissemination of good practices

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), as a body of the EU, is committed to gender mainstreaming of its activities and to reflect on all its strategic decisions and operations to create a fully inclusive innovation ecosystem.

The EIT will reflect on the 2020-2021 implementation period of its Gender Action Plan, particularly its results and its lessons learned, and will also consider any additional strategic recommendations in the area of women leadership and entrepreneurship issued by the European Commission for the revisions of its Gender Action Plan for subsequent periods in Horizon Europe up to the end of 2027.

The implementation of the EIT Gender Action Plan, and of a system for gender disaggregated data collection, results measurement and monitoring will enable the EIT to develop its expertise in tackling gender inequality, and also will lead the EIT to disseminate good practices from the EIT Community supporting gender mainstreaming to targeted audiences.

¹⁸ <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris>



Annex 1: Women employed at the EIT and KICs

Women employed at the EIT and EIT management positions:

31/12/2018					
Gender	Category			TOTAL	
	TA		CA	SNE	
	AST	AD	FG		
Male	0	19	6	1	26
Female	5	19	14		38
TOTAL	5	38	20	1	64

Management: 1 out of 5 (<https://eit.europa.eu/who-we-are/headquarters/eit-management-team>)

31/12/2019					
Gender	Category			TOTAL	
	TA		CA	SNE	
	AST	AD	FG		
Male	0	21	9	0	30
Female	5	18	13		36
TOTAL	5	39	22	0	66

Management: 1 out of 5 (<https://eit.europa.eu/who-we-are/headquarters/eit-management-team>)

Women employed at the KICs and KICs management positions:

Women working in KICs: **50% as of 2018**

	2016	2017	2018
Total Number of female staff	259	271	415
Total number of staff	629	538	823

Women in management positions in KICS: **44% as of 2018** (* EIT Climate-KIC report that they have 123 management staff out of which 70 are women)

	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%
Total Number of Female Management Staff	31	28%	50	35%	106	44%
Total Number of Management staff	110		142		243	

Annex 2: 2017-2020 EIT Women Leadership & Entrepreneurship activities (WEL)



Even before formally adopting its Gender Action Plan, EIT has been working for many years to improve the situation of the underrepresentation of women in entrepreneurship, economic leadership, and technology.

Since 2017, together with its partners across Europe, EIT has developed and implemented several **dedicated Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership Activities (WEL)**¹⁹:

EIT Woman Award, as part of the annual EIT Awards

- The problem: Not enough female role models in innovation and business and especially in entrepreneurship.
- The action: The EIT introduced the annual Europe-wide ‘EIT Woman Award’ in 2018, recognising talented and inspiring women entrepreneurs and leaders as part of its annual Awards.
- The results: Not just the winner but all nominees of the EIT Woman Award were able to get better exposure on European media outlets, on social media, to policy makers and interesting network contacts. Several of the nominees and winners were able to participate in further leading industry awards, raise additional private and public growth funding, in the process expand their company and also present their work and results to European policy makers on behalf of the EIT Community.

EIT contribution to the EC Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP)

- The problem: Women are underrepresented in entrepreneurship, economic leadership, and the technology sector, which remains a significant and globally recognised problem.
- The action: Inspire women to become entrepreneurs from a young age. The EIT has been running in 2017 entrepreneurship and digital workshops for young women aged 12-18, as part of the European Commission’s Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP).
- The results: In the course of 2019 only, over 1 600 young women aged between 12 and 18 took part in workshops dedicated to inspirational leadership or digital and entrepreneurial skills workshops organised in following EIT RIS countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Turkey.²⁰

EIT Alumni led Women@EIT initiative

- The problem: Limited access to business networks for women entrepreneurs and innovators.
- The action: The EIT Alumni Community created Women@EIT initiative – a vibrant, unique network of women from the EIT Community, connecting students, alumni and senior business community members, with the aim to grow together, get encouraged to start their own business and to promote inspiring women in entrepreneurship and technology. It acts as a platform for sharing opportunities, events, and ideas relevant to its mission. It can also provide female role models speakers to external industry events and aims to increase the visibility of EIT’s education and business acceleration programs to potential female applicants.
- The results: Up to date, 600+ active members, twelve events in seven European cities were organized and five events by external organizers were attended by Women@EIT members.

¹⁹ <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/entrepreneurship/women-entrepreneurship-and-leadership>

²⁰ <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/education/doctoral-programmes/eit-and-digital-education-action-plan>