

## Small Particles, Big Issues: PRIORITYze DEI

Issue 36 20/03/2025: Fostering Gender Equality: Key Figures from Horizon Europe

Dear all,

We hope this email finds you well.

Gender equality has become a focal point in the EU's Research and Innovation (R&I) agenda, particularly within the Horizon Europe framework. A recent European Commission report, *Fostering Gender Equality: Key Figures from Horizon Europe*, highlights how the program is evolving to enhance women's participation and leadership in research, as well as to integrate the gender dimension across projects.

This new report covers several major developments:

- **Increased Participation:** While the proportion of women researchers in Horizon Europe has gone up slightly compared to the previous framework (Horizon 2020), women still remain underrepresented, especially in higher academic ranks and in certain STEM fields.
- **Gender Equality Plans (GEPs):** As of 2022, public bodies, research organisations, and higher education establishments must have a Gender Equality Plan in place to be eligible for Horizon Europe funding. This requirement has helped foster greater awareness and practical steps toward institutional change.
- **Automation of the Gender Dimension:** By default, all relevant topics under Horizon Europe are expected to integrate the gender dimension (e.g., accounting for sex/gender variables in research design), which can significantly improve the quality and societal impact of R&I outcomes.
- **Women Innovators:** Certain funding schemes (like Women TechEU and the Women Leadership Programme) aim to reduce longstanding disparities in the start-up and innovation ecosystem.
- **Progress and Challenges:** Although many EU Member States have made headway in areas such as women-led consortia or GEP implementation, disparities remain, particularly in sectors like industrial R&I, and in ensuring women achieve the senior ranks of research and innovation leadership.

Overall, the publication underscores how policies such as GEP eligibility, reinforced funding calls, and more inclusive evaluation criteria can help the EU move closer to truly equitable participation in its R&I landscape.

To dive deeper into these insights and learn more about how Horizon Europe addresses gender equality, you can access the full publication here:

[Fostering Gender Equality: Key Figures from Horizon Europe](#)

Best regards,  
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