

**9th GENDER SUMMIT - EUROPE**

European Parliament, Hemicycle  
and BEL  
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REPORT FROM THE 2016 EUROPEAN GENDER SUMMIT  
TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Research and Innovation Quality through Equality

**Gender-based research, innovation and development for sustainable  
economies and societal wellbeing**

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## 1. Executive Summary

Gender balance and diversity in research and innovation teams and focus on sex-gender differences in research content are shown to improve scientific quality and societal relevance of science. The policy lead taken in Europe to mainstream gender into science institutions, science practice and science knowledge through Horizon 2020 should be extended to include sex-gender dimension in the European Innovation Scoreboard, and strengthened in facilitating initiatives like Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), ERA Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM), EURAXESS, and the Charter & Code for Researchers.

This Report summarises the recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> Gender Summit - Europe<sup>1</sup>, held in Brussels on 8-9 November 2016.

The key conclusions are:

- 1. Scientific evidence strongly supports the need to mainstream gender into the design and implementation of policies promoting challenge-based research and innovation, which form an important part of Horizon 2020<sup>2</sup>. Research shows that biological and socio-cultural differences between females and males can produce disparate results for women and men, and these effects can impact on scientific quality and relevance of science for society, which, in turn, impact on societal acceptance of new technological innovations.**
- 2. Gender issues and societal challenges are often closely intertwined<sup>3</sup>. The cross cutting aspects of gender can be a source of interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder collaborations that benefit entire knowledge value chain, from fundamental research to technological innovation, and socio-economic advancements. This can promote new synergies between policy actions to tackle societal challenges, such as Horizon 2020, the UN 2030 Sustainable Development agenda<sup>4</sup>; the OECD Inclusive Innovation programme; the AUC Africa 2063 agenda<sup>5</sup>; the UNESCO Science for Sustainable Future<sup>6</sup> vision, and the TAF Millennium Technology Prize<sup>7</sup>.**
- 3. Organising effective scientific response to societal challenges requires reliable statistics, careful data analysis, and high quality indicators to monitor and compare the position of women and men in research, innovation, and socio-economic activities. Collaboration is needed between the different efforts to improve accuracy of gender equality and STEM-related gender indices, which are currently promoted by NordForsk<sup>8</sup>, UNESCO<sup>9</sup>, IDB<sup>10</sup>, and UNSDSN<sup>11</sup>, for example. The EU She Figures**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gender-summit.com>

<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/societal-challenges>

<sup>3</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

<sup>4</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1300>

<sup>5</sup> <http://agenda2063.au.int>

<sup>6</sup> <http://en.unesco.org/themes/science-sustainable-future>

<sup>7</sup> <http://taf.fi/en/millennium-technology-prize/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nordforsk.org/en/news/nordic-programme-on-gender-in-the-nordic-research-and-innovation-area>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/priority-areas/gender-and-science/improving-measurement-of-gender-equality-in-stem/stem-and-gender-advancement-saga/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.iadb.org/en/topics/competitiveness-technology-and-innovation/call-for-proposals-gender-gaps-in-sti-in-latin-america,19829.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/140522-SDSN-Indicator-Report.pdf>

reports provide good indicators for monitoring gender equality in academic research and scientific human capital, but sex/gendered disaggregated statistics should be enhanced and introduced to also monitor innovation quality and performance, in particular through the European Innovation Scoreboard, to help identify gender equality benefits along the whole science knowledge value chain.

4. **Horizon 2020 (and FP7 before it) provides funding for projects implementing Gender Equality Plans in research performing and funding organisations. This experience is important for achieving structural change in academic research but the results should be also transferred to other EU mechanisms designed to attract and retain more women senior researchers, and to increase scientific quality and relevance - both structural and in research content - available through MSCA, SGHRM, EURAXESS, and the Charter & Code for Researchers.**
5. **The Gender Summit helps enhance Europe's voice in global debates on the role of science in society. The evidence- and consensus-based approach advanced by Gender Summit - Europe has spread to other continents. Incorporating institutions, leaders, practitioners and experts from different regions transforms the Gender Summit into a global alliance for promoting gender sensitive, challenge-based research and innovation; harmonization of rules and practices to facilitate international collaboration and mobility; as well interlinking criteria for scientific excellence with societal relevance of science.**

## **2. Summary of Summit Discussions**

The first part of the 9<sup>th</sup> Gender Summit was held at the Hemicycle venue of the European Parliament, hosted by the Committee on Gender Equality and Human Rights. Delivering the keynote address was Naledi Pandor, the South Africa's Minister of Science and Technology. The EU Commissioner Carlos Moedas welcomed the participants through a video message.

A number of high-level science policy makers from around the world have contributed their views to the 9<sup>th</sup> Gender Summit debate, including:

1. DG Research and Innovation Commissioner, Mr Carlos Moedas (through Welcome message)
2. Representatives of the European Parliament Committee on Gender Equality and Human Rights: Itraxe Garcia Perez (Chair), Beatriz Becerra (Rapporteur), and Elissavet Vozmerg-Vrionidi, (Member).
3. South Africa's Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor
4. President of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Canada, Mario Pinto
5. President of Royal Society of Canada and Director of Quebec Natural Sciences and Technology Granting Agency, Maryse Lasonde
6. Director General of Science Foundation Ireland and Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government of Ireland, Mark Ferguson
7. Director of Biocenter Finland and Member of the NordForsk Gender in the Nordic Research and Innovation Area Programme Committee, Marja Makarow
8. Research Director at National Research Council (CNR), Italy, Sveva Avveduto
9. Group Executive of Science Engagement and Corporate Relations at National Research Foundation of South Africa (NRF), Beverly Damonse
10. Vice-President of Science Council of Japan, Kumie Inose
11. Deputy Executive Director at Japan Science and Technology Agency, Director of the Office for Diversity and Inclusion at JST, as well as Director-General of the Center for Science Communication, Miyoko Watanabe
12. Director of Center for Gendered Innovations in Science and Technology Research, and of Korea Federation of Women's Science & Technology Associations, Hee Young Paik

13. President of European University Association, Rolf Tarrach (through Welcome message)

The policy lead taken in Europe to include gender as criterion of success in Horizon 2020 has galvanized interest among science leaders around the world in the benefits of improving gender balance and diversity for scientific quality, team performance, innovation, and socio-economic advancement. Of particular interest to research funders are the positive benefits of incorporating gender dimension in research and innovation content<sup>12</sup> to enhance scientific excellence, open up new directions for investigation, and use discoveries of sex-gender difference effects to open up new markets for science knowledge

Plenary speakers presented: new policy actions; new advances in understanding the role of sex-gender and the impact of sex-gender differences on research results and outcomes; new developments in research methods and initiatives to improve gender equality in science practice; outstanding gaps in knowledge on gender issues in science; and new directions for research and for sharing good practice. Participants debated a wide range of topics, including:

- How gender equality goals can be integrated into the STEM and innovation policy frameworks designed to advance benefits of research and innovation for society and environment
- How health status of women and men across the globe differs in disease trends, including mental health and illness, and why health policies must target gender disparities in healthcare to improve outcomes and effectiveness of healthcare
- What kind of gender equality indicators are best for STEM; what should be measured; what principles to adopt when making these decisions; how to adapt the collection and analysis of data to specific national, field or science system contexts; and how to calibrate data collection and analysis methods to enable systematic comparisons across research, innovation and socio-economic development.
- How to ensure that knowledge is reliable according to agreed scientific criteria but also relevant and robust according to societal impact criteria, one of which is to ensure equality of outcomes for women and men
- How STEM-related gender equality strategies and interventions are shaped by the historical, cultural and operational differences in the way that national and regional science systems are structured and function
- How to build upon and consolidate the accumulating experience of delivering institutional change through Gender Equality Plans, but also through other mechanisms such as EURAXESS or Marie Curie Sklodowska Actions, to tackle common gender problems and more effectively respond to the different structural contexts, related, for instance, to cultures of scientific fields or institutions
- How to demonstrate the benefits of advancing research on the role of sex, gender and environment, as independent and co-joint determinants of outcomes, and promote methods of sex-gender analysis in research and innovation, as well as in researcher training
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of system-level methods and approaches to removing barriers to gender equality in STEM practice, and what are the key conditions for creating supportive and inclusive research working environments
- How to communicate gender research evidence to inform and enlighten policy makers and the wider public about gender issues in STEM and to demonstrate the benefits of gender equality actions in science, innovation and development programmes.

### 3. Notes on the Background

The EC policy vision for research and innovation advanced by the Commissioner Mr Carlos Moedas is focused on three major challenges: 1) improving transfer of research results into new technologies and markets; 2) adapting to and capitalizing on the scientific method

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.globalresearchcouncil.org/meetings/2016-annual-meeting>

becoming more open, collaborative and participative; and 3) enhancing Europe's collective scientific importance and ensuring more active voice in science global debates<sup>13</sup>. These challenges have important connections with gender issues. For example, discoveries of sex-gender differences can act as source of new innovation, whilst increased participation of women in higher education can strengthen scientific human capital and innovation capacity.

The EU is determined to fully implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, across the range of its internal and external policies, aligning its own policies and actions to the objectives of the Agenda, and gender equality represents a core pillar of development policy as a prerequisite for lasting socio-economic development and poverty eradication<sup>14</sup>.

#### 4. Explanatory Notes

1. The Gender Summit 9 programme held at the European Parliament was organized jointly with the Committee on Gender Equality and Human Rights
2. The full Programme can be seen <http://www.gender-summit.com/g9-evolving-programme>
3. The Policy Partners and Patrons of Gender Summit 9 included: NordForsk, Elsevier Foundation and Elsevier. Plus, numerous science institutions from across Europe supported the Summit by enabling their representatives to attend.
4. Participants included representatives from 35 countries including many from outside Europe, for example USA, Canada, Argentina, Brasil, South Africa, South Korea, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Mozambique.
5. The convenors of the event were Portia Ltd<sup>15</sup> and the Da Vinci Institute.
6. The Gender Summit builds on the approach for advancing gender equality and gender dimension in science developed by Portia as part of the FP7-funded genSET<sup>16</sup>, gender in science, project. Key to this approach is scientific evidence, dialogue involving all relevant actors, and consensus on common issues and on the recommendations for actions that are most likely to deliver the improvements needed.
7. The Gender Summit started in Europe in 2011.
8. In 2013, the National Science Foundation (NSF) introduced Gender Summit – North America (GS3-NA). The next in this series was summit event in April 2016 in Mexico, organised by CONACYT, which will be followed by one in Montreal in November 2017, organised by NSERC and FRQ
9. In 2015, Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa introduced Gender Summit – Africa
10. Also in 2015, research funders in South Korea introduced Gender Summit – Asia Pacific. The next in this series will be summit event in Tokyo in May 2017, organised by JST.
10. Further details regarding the content of this Report can be obtained from Dr Elizabeth Pollitzer, [ep@portiaweb.org.uk](mailto:ep@portiaweb.org.uk)

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<sup>13</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-15-5243\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-15-5243_en.htm)

<sup>14</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_MEMO-15-5709\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-5709_en.htm)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.portiaweb.org.uk>, responsible for scientific content and programme

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.genderinscience.org>