

ERIC Forum 2

Webinar Programme on Gender Equality

Work Package 9 - Deliverable 9.1

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Author(s)	Author: Task 9.1 Leader - EATRIS ERIC (Eliis Keidong); Reviewers: Task force 9.1 members (EMSO ERIC (Valentina Tegas), European Spallation Source (Karin Borjesson), CESSDA ERIC (Panagiota Starida), and CLARIN ERIC (Julia Misersky), WP9 Leader - Charlotte Hartelius Klaar (European Spallation Source)
Dissemination level	PU
Description of deliverable	Webinar Programme on Gender Equality

Executive summary

This task 9.1 *Implementation of Gender Equality Plans and Gender mainstreaming among the ERICs* is a continuation of the efforts set forth, and the needs identified in the ERIC Forum 1st implementation project. By offering a webinar programme of three (3) episodes for all ERICs' staff in order to promote knowledge on Gender Equality topics, this task aims to provide ERICs staff with introductory knowledge about topics associated with gender equality such as unconscious bias, safe workplace environments, and the matter of integrating gender and sex dimension into research and teaching content. Three episodes of webinars were delivered in October, November and December of 2024. The topics of the webinars encompassed respectively unconscious bias, healthy work environments, and integration of sex and gender dimension into research and teaching content. The webinars were developed with the support of an expert in the field (Dr. Lisa Mittischek, Austria) and were recorded for further use by the project beneficiaries for their own staff onboarding and training on gender equality.

While the main Deliverable 9.1 of Task 9.1 is the Webinar Programme, the task also encompassed other important activities such as (1) workshop to train ERICs' Gender Equality reference persons (MS 9.1); (2) holding quarterly Gender Equality Working Group Meetings, as well as (3) collection and compilation of openly available resources on all topics related to Gender Equality, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion etc. and facilitating them amongst group members and beyond.

Document log

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1. Background

In 2021 the European Commission announced the mandatory requirement¹ of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for all applicants for Horizon Europe funding. At that time many research organisations including majority of ERICs found themselves in a situation where these documents did not exist or needed to be updated to comply with the requirements (5 Pillars) set forth by the Commission. The emergence of this requirement took place during the implementation of the first ERIC Forum project (2019 – 2022) and a clear need was identified for ERICs to collaborate on guidance and setting up of individual Gender Equality Plans. As a result, a working group was formed of *Gender Equality reference persons* from each ERIC to exchange best practice, share openly accessible training materials, and to collectively design a basic template for a GEP that could be customized and implemented by each ERIC as they see fit. This working group and the template proved to be a success and activities were formally planned for the second implementation project of ERIC Forum to address some further needs that arose from the group's work such as collaborate on designing and providing trainings to all staff on Gender Equality across all ERICs.

2. Description of work

With the kick-off of ERIC Forum 2 implementation project in September 2023, and as a part of the Work Package 9 Personnel Upskilling, a task force was formed for Task 9.1 *Implementation of Gender Equality Plans and Gender mainstreaming among the ERICs*. The task is led by EATRIS ERIC (Eliis Keidong), and supported by EMSO ERIC (Valentina Tegas), European Spallation Source (Karin Borjesson), CESSDA ERIC (Panagiota Starida), and CLARIN ERIC (Julia Misersky).

The task force meets monthly to plan and monitor the activities organised within Task 9.1. The activities are divided into following concrete workstreams:

- (1) Workshop for ERICs Gender Equality reference personnel (Milestone 9.1)
- (2) Gender Equality Webinar programme consisting of 3 webinars (Deliverable 9.1)**
- (3) ERIC Forum Gender Equality Working Group (quarterly meetings)
- (4) Repository of reading and training materials

Workshop for ERICs Gender Equality reference personnel

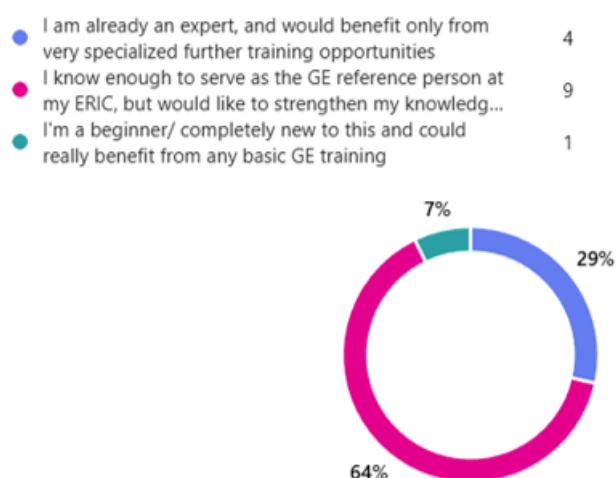
Ahead of the workshop the Task 9.1 taskforce as well as the Gender Equality Working group were consulted via two separate surveys to garner community-wide interest in the development of the curriculum to ensure it is fit for purpose. In addition to the topic focus, potential participants were surveyed on their knowledge levels (in GE matters) as well as asked about previous trainings and general expectations to the future workshop. Altogether 14 potential workshop participants responded to the survey. Just over half (64%) of the

¹ Gender Equality in Horizon Europe (https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en)

respondents stated that they had participated in expert-led training workshops already. While self-assessing their knowledge 64% of the respondents said that 'I know enough to serve as the GE reference person at my ERIC, but would like to strengthen my knowledge'. Four respondents stated that they were already experts and would benefit only from very specialized training and one respondent stated that they were a beginner and would benefit from basic training. While this survey was performed in advance of the workshop, the questions were repeated with participants at the registration step and the results differed. 16 workshop registrants stated the mid-level knowledge, while 4 said they were complete beginners and would benefit from basic training. There were no registrants to the workshop that self-assessed their knowledge level to 'expert'.

How do you assess your current knowledge on Gender Equality?

Pre-workshop survey n=14



Workshop registration n=20



Figure 1. Self-assessment of knowledge for Workshop participants

In the first survey the potential participants were asked to rank specific topics they would like to focus on at the workshop. The list of the topics was based on material from the [Gender Equality Academy](#) curriculum (which was still accessible in mid-2024). Figure 2 below illustrates the breadth of topics presented and the respondents prioritisation.

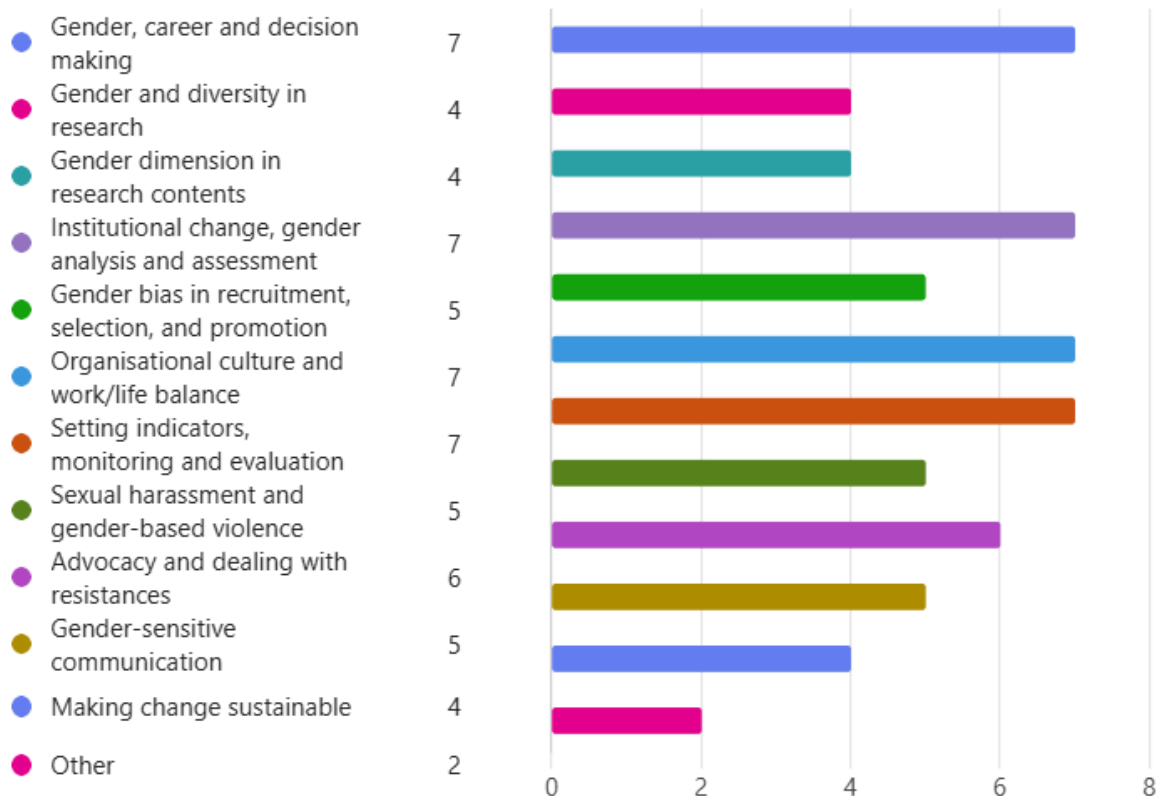


Figure 2. Topic prioritization for the Workshop

Eventually, the 8-hour workshop took place on 26-27 September 2024 in-person in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on the premises of EATRIS ERIC. It gathered 19 Gender Equality reference personnel from 16 ERICs, and was led by independent expert trainer Dr. Eva Eli Taxacher.

Topics:

- input on gender equality and diversity in organizations & changing organisational cultures
- rating and reflecting current states on the GEP (What are the main challenges? What has worked well?)
- sharing and presentation of best practices (resp. stories of failure), with focus on GEP in small organisations
- planning of next steps, gathering ideas

Aims:

- gaining new knowledge, ideas and strategies for future Gender Equality work
- hearing from each other's challenges and best practices
- strategies for engaging more people and/or dealing with resistance
- motivation to keep going



Figure 3. Participants of the Gender Equality Reference Personnel Workshop in Amsterdam 26-27 September 2024.

Participant feedback to the workshop was overwhelmingly positive (4/5), and 75% percent of the respondents said that the material was ‘just right’. Further comments included positive views on the networking and experience exchange parts of the event, and few participants noted that they would have appreciated more guidance and further reading/ training material. Overall, it can be interpreted as a very positive sign that the gender equality reference personnel of the ERICs are committed to their role, and interested in further development and training opportunities in this field.

17 of the 19 participants were women and two were men.

Gender Equality Webinar Programme

The main part of this Deliverable 9.1 is the **Gender Equality Webinar Programme**. In the development of the webinar programme the wider ERIC Forum Gender Equality Working Group (consisting of 30+ members) were consulted in addition to the discussions with the task 9.1 Task Force. The aim of the webinar programme was to provide introductory information about basic concepts in Gender Equality to all ERICs staff (beyond reference personnel who are involved in GEP development already). In this way more equitable, safe and welcoming work environments could be cultivated. This is especially important in organisations like ERICs where multicultural and very diverse environments are an inherent reality.

The three webinars – topics and organisation

In collaboration with the selected trainer (Dr. Lisa Mittischeck, Austria) the pre-identified potential webinar topics were condensed into 3 distinct webinar sessions as follows.

- (1) Webinar – Gender Equality Basics and Unconscious Bias
- (2) Webinar – Addressing Workplace Issues: Sexual Harassment, Undesirable Behaviour, Gender-based Violence, and Microaggressions
- (3) Webinar – Sex and Gender Dimension in Research and Teaching

The webinars were advertised as open to all ERICs staff and ERICs-to-be staff. The [Gender Equality Webinar Programme](#) (Annex 1) advertising was launched in September 2024 and was extensively promoted to ERICs staff through ERIC Forum Social media accounts, as well as internal mailing lists and at various meetings. Further dissemination was done within the Gender Equality Working Group, and the Gender Equality reference persons at each ERIC acted as multipliers and promoters of the information within their ERICs.

Details of the three webinars held between October and December 2024:

- (1) Webinar – Gender Equality Basics and Unconscious Bias, 8 October 2024, 14-15.00 CET
This webinar was focusing on the fundamentals of gender equality and the impact of unconscious biases. Participants gained essential knowledge and practical tools to foster an inclusive and equitable workplace and academic environment. The session aimed to enhance understanding and contribute to a more diverse and supportive workplace.
- (2) Webinar – Addressing Workplace Issues: Sexual Harassment, Undesirable Behaviour, Gender-based Violence, and Microaggressions, 12 November, 14-15.00 CET
This webinar focused on crucial workplace issues such as sexual harassment, undesirable behaviour, gender-based violence and microaggressions. It covered the role of external ombudspersons, showcased good practice examples, and provided essential knowledge on these topics. Participants gained valuable insights and practical strategies to create a safer and more respectful work environment.
- (3) Webinar – Sex and Gender Dimension in Research and Teaching, 10 December 14-15.00 CET
This webinar explored the sex and gender dimensions in research and teaching, covering funding opportunities and showcasing examples from various disciplines. It provided essential knowledge, illustrated examples, and offered background information on these topics. Participants gained valuable insights and practical strategies to integrate sex and gender considerations into their work.

All webinars took place via Zoom webinar tool of the coordinator of the project (BBMRI ERIC) and were hosted by Task 9.1 Lead Eliis Keidong, with technical hosting support by Viridiana Beltran-Venegas (BBMRI ERIC) and trainer Lisa Mittischek.

Participation statistics

Across all three editions participation statistics were collected by the Zoom environment and can be found in the following tables.

Webinar #	# registrations	# participations	% of participations	# respondents to feedback survey	Feedback Score out of 10
(1) 8 Oct	136	84	62%	11	7.73
(2) 12 Nov	150	88	59%	15	5.53
(3) 10 Dec	119	61	52 %	13	6.0
TOTAL	405*	233*	58%	35*	6.42

Table 1. Attendance and feedback survey completion by webinar date

Gender	Registered*	%	Attended*	%
Woman	301	74%	170	73%
Man	87	21%	48	21%
Non-binary	6	1%	4	2%
Not listed	3	1%	3	1%
Prefer not to say	7	2%	6	3%
blanks	1	0%	2	1%

Table 2. Attendance by gender

*This number represents registration/participation instances across all three webinars, not separate individual registrants/participants.

Overall attendance rate of the webinars was 58% which is considered quite high. It should also be noted that in several cases, more than one participant attended from the same physical space, therefore logging in with only one registrant's details.

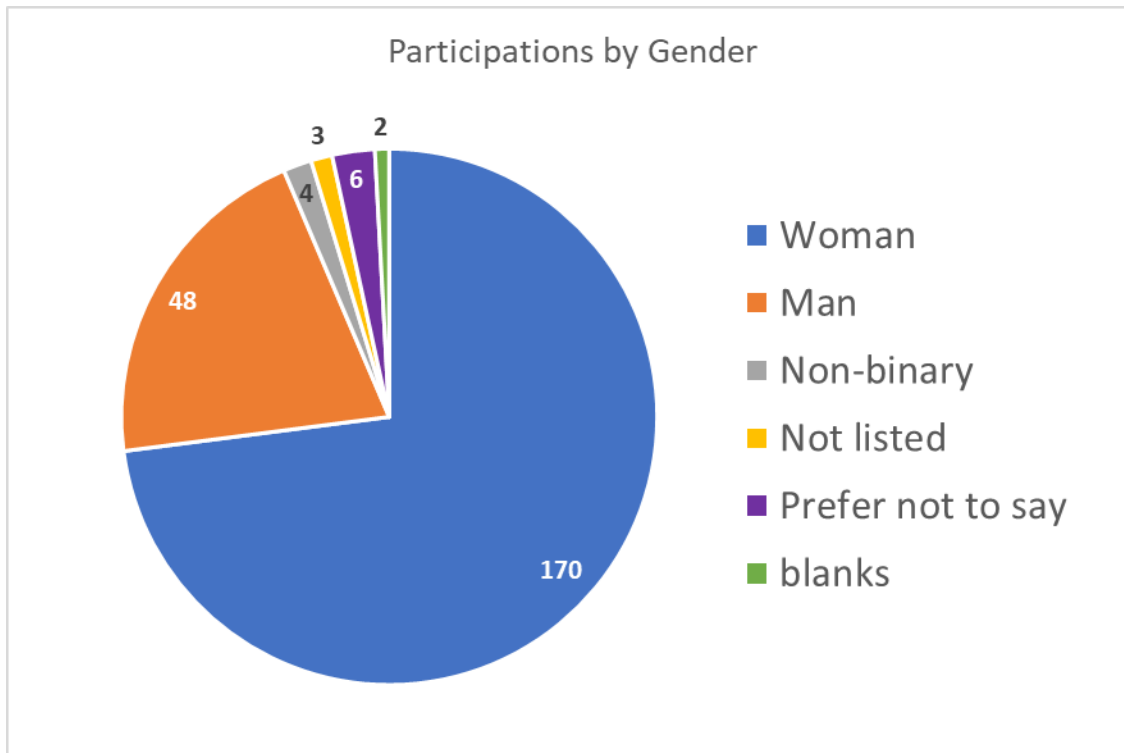


Figure 4. Participations by Gender

Nearly three quarters - 73% of all the attendees were women, and 74% of all the registrants were women. 21% of all the registrants and attendees were men. Non-binary represents 2% of the attendees, and 1% of the registrants. 1% or less of the registrants and attendees stated that the gender was not listed, while 3% of the attendees and 2% of the total registrants preferred not to answer this question.

Altogether **participants from 25 ERICs attended** the three webinars. Average time spent in session was a high of 50 minutes across all participations.

Feedback from the attendees

Anonymous feedback survey (through Microsoft Forms managed by EATRIS ERIC) was sent to the participants after the webinars, and all materials presented in the sessions were shared among all the registrants (including the ones who did not participate in the sessions).

Only 15% of all webinar participants (35 participants out of 233) responded to the feedback survey. For such events anything below a quarter (25%) could be considered fairly low and therefore not entirely reflective. Participants were asked to rate the overall quality, the teacher's materials and expertise and teaching style.

Feedback scores of 35 respondents	Webinar 1	Webinar 2	Webinar 3	Average
How do you evaluate the overall quality of this webinar?	7.73	5.53	6	6.42
How do you assess the quality of the teaching materials of this webinar?	7.27	5.27	5.77	6.10
How do you assess the expertise and teaching style of the speaker?	7.91	6.67	6.31	6.96

Table 3. Evaluation scores of survey respondents

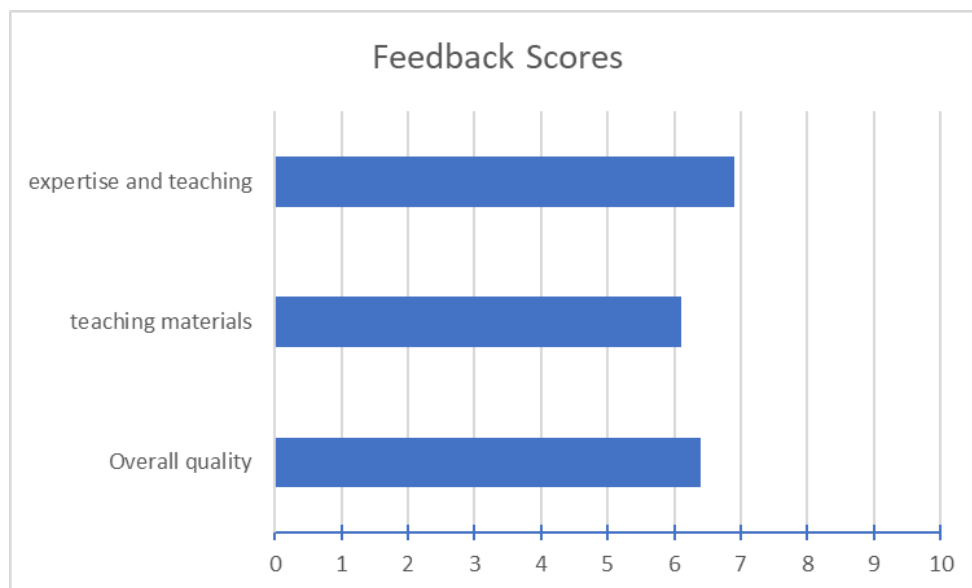


Figure 5. Average feedback scores

Participants were also asked about whether the webinars met their expectations in terms of scope. The average feedback on the scope across the three webinars is below in Figure 3.

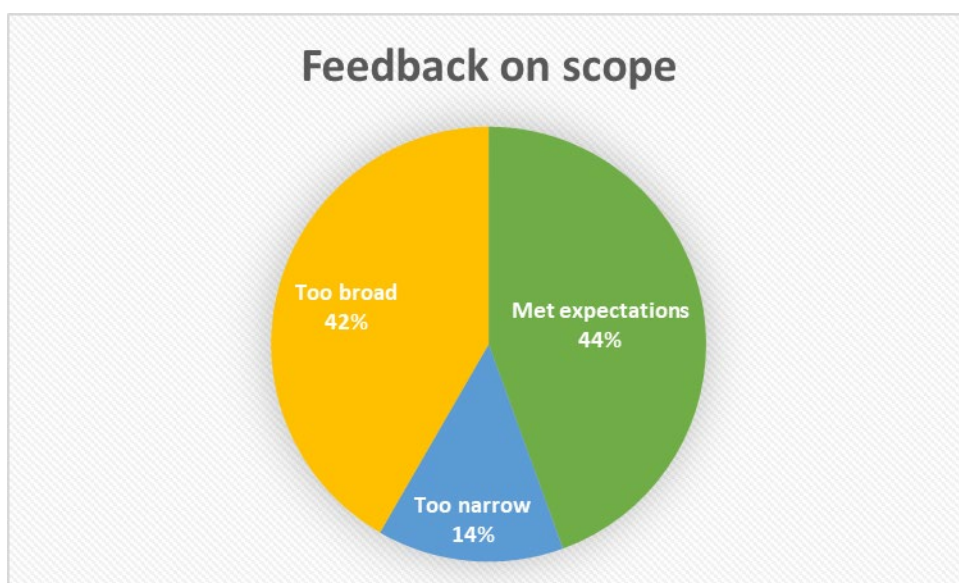


Figure 6. Average feedback on scope

Qualitative Feedback & Iterative Improvements

In addition to ratings, participants were also asked to leave narrative comments, improvement suggestions and potential further topics of interest. Considering that only 35 participants out of 233 total took the opportunity to leave feedback across the three additions, some concrete learnings emerged.

In the narrative comments, some respondents expressed that they would have preferred longer (than 1 hour) webinars and more time for discussion, as well as more concrete examples, statistics and specific action plans and hands-on strategies on how to tackle certain topics in the working environment (i.e. empowering employees to report sexual harassment). While some participants found that the webinars were too broad in scope, others suggested that the issues discussed were too narrow and that broader societal issues should be considered.

While all the feedback gathered was also forwarded to the trainer after each webinar in order to take into account in the continuous improvement of the teaching content, it must be said that the webinars organised were deliberately meant to serve as *introduction to the general concepts* of topics such as *unconscious biases*, *workplace harassment* and *sex and gender dimension in research*, and could have therefore been perceived as too basic by some participants who already possessed advanced knowledge in the field. For example, after the second webinar weblinks to additional open-access materials were shared with all who registered and wish to deepen their knowledge in specific matters of undesirable behaviour, (sexual) harassment at workplace and strategies to tackle it.

A number of participants suggested that the webinar modality could have been more participatory for the audience, and therefore interactive polls to engage audience were added to the last webinar.

Some suggested dedicated Q&A sessions following the webinar would have been an additional way to improve audience engagement. From previous experience of the organiser, it is not practical to organise virtual training webinars for longer than 1 hour as the participants tend to leave for other commitments at 1

hour mark. It is known from informal feedback that at least two organisations (EATRIS and European Spallation Source) took their own initiative to organise additional voluntary post-webinar (Q&A) discussions amongst their staff that attended the webinar(s).

As a conclusion to the webinar series, it is perceived that the interest of ERIC staff in GE matters is very significant. Some participants mentioned the need for more advanced knowledge and specific topics of EU Pay Transparency Directive, diversity and inclusivity at workplace, equality in recruitment and career progression, LGBTQIA+ matters, and gender quotas.

All webinars were recorded and the recordings are made available to all ERICs to be incorporated into their staff onboarding and training materials of employees. As per the agreement with the service providers (trainers are independent commercial contractors), the materials are proprietary and should be made available only to ERICs staff. The webinar recordings should not be made publicly available and should not be shared with parties who are not project beneficiaries. Therefore, each ERIC will need to exercise sufficient safeguards to ensure internal distribution only.

[ERIC Forum Gender Equality Working Group](#)

ERIC Forum Gender Equality Working Group (GE WG) was formed already during the first ERIC Forum implementation project in 2021 and has since been chaired by EATRIS ERIC. While in the first implementation project the working group was focused on developing a template for the Gender Equality Plan that could be utilised by all ERICs, in the second project the work revolved around activities in Task 9.1 including provision of input for the development of the workshop and webinar programme, as well as general monitoring and implementation considerations of the ERICs' GEPs, and experience exchange.

The GE WG meets on a quarterly basis and agenda is set based on the current needs and ongoing conversations. The membership of the group is open to all ERICs and has been expanding since the inception of the group. In 2024 there are around 30-40 members in the mailing list of the group and altogether 3 meetings were held, with the 4th quarterly meeting postponed to January 2025.

The GE WG is open to any ERIC staff member to attend and has a dedicated SharePoint environment that is also housing the repository of Gender Equality related reading and training materials.

[Repository of reading and training materials](#)

The repository of Gender Equality related reading and training materials is a growing list of open access resources that the GE WG members have come across in their work and found valuable to share with colleagues. It is shared among the WG members and housed on the WG SharePoint ensuring broad access. The repository is meant to be a 'work-in-progress' document where all WG members can add links to open access resources that may provide value to their colleagues.

Collaboration with other initiatives and groups

In January 2024 an exchange meeting was organised with Meike Flammer from European XFEL, who is the current rotating chair of the EIRO Forum Gender Equality Group. An invitation followed for the ERIC Forum Gender Equality Group Chair Eliis Keidong to attend a 2-day meeting in June in Hamburg on the premises of European XFEL. The meeting taking place on 6-7 June considered diversity and inclusion action plans among the EIRO Forum members (large single site research infrastructures). Eliis Keidong presented the activities of the ERIC Forum Gender Equality task as well as the example of EATRIS ERIC Gender Equality plan that is based on the GEP template developed among the ERIC Forum Gender Equality WG during the implementation project. While there are major differences in the possibilities of implementing GEPs in large single site research infrastructures with hundreds or thousands of employees, compared to distributed research infrastructures such as ERICs, the experience and lessons learned were nevertheless fruitful. For example the introduction to the GENERA Network, and the free lecture series organised by them.

As a follow-up, it is planned to invite a member of the EIRO Forum gender equality group to present at one of the ERIC Forum large WG meetings in 2025 to share their experience.

Further collaboration has been initiated with the data research infrastructure Elixir. An experience exchange call took place between several staff members of Elixir and the Task 9.1 lead Eliis Keidong on 6 December 2024. The meeting was held to discuss various ongoing efforts on both sides and explore any potential synergies and common utilisation of resources. In the current ongoing INFRADEV project ELIXIR STEERS, the Gender Equality topic is integrated, and as a follow-up activity Eliis Keidong was invited to participate one of the task force meetings in 2025 (time to be determined). In addition, the resource collection put together by the ERIC Forum GE WG was shared with Elixir colleagues. It is also planned that the invite to come and present the ELIXIR STEERS project gender equality activities, and other related activities at one of the ERIC Forum Gender Equality Working Group meetings will be extended to Elixir colleagues in 2025.

3. Future considerations

Training and Webinars

During the development of the Webinar programme discussions took place in the working group to extend the webinar series in a way that some of the webinars would be area specific corresponding to the 5 clusters of ERICs. Specifically when it comes to the topic of ‘incorporating sex and gender dimensions into research and teaching content’. However, within the constraints of the project timelines/ budget it was deemed overly resource intensive, but definitely something that would be encouraged to be carried out by the project beneficiaries in the respective 5 ERIC clusters on their own if there is enough further interest and specific members willing to lead the effort in each cluster. It is recommended that the organisers and speakers of such webinars would be consortium members contributing to the development of the programmes free of charge (in-kind) due to the exhaustion of dedicated trainer fees allocated for Task 9.1. Such webinars could for example include researchers from the member countries of ERIC clusters presenting concrete examples of how they have included sex and gender dimension into their research.

In terms of further training to ERICs Gender Equality reference personnel as well as all ERICs personnel in general it is the view of the Task 9.1 Task Force that there is strong interest in further training. Specifically when it comes to expanding the current concept of Gender Equality to Intersectionality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In their feedback for the Workshop as well as the webinar series, the respondents have called for more integration of topics around non-binary, transgender, and LGBTQIA+ matters. Additionally, participants want to dive deeper into specific examples, and discuss action plans of how to tackle these matters in their organisations. While the ERIC Forum Gender Equality Working group will remain active even beyond the Task 9.1 end, and basic information will be circulated to all interested parties in the future, it is also advised that each ERIC organise internal discussion sessions or round tables for its employees on the topics of gender equality, diversity, intersectionality, inclusion etc in the context of their particular organisation and individual Gender Equality Plans.

Lastly, the participant self-assessment at the workshop as well as the feedback to both webinars and the workshop shows that facilitating a fitting programme to ERICs is quite a challenge. ERICs are very diverse not only in their domains of operation, but also in structure and size. While for smaller ERICs or those with less specialised staff, the content might need to be more accessible, the larger ERICs or ERICs with specialised HR and gender equality staff might expect more advanced content.

This highlights the importance of having information on multiple levels, which is an important conclusion for the future development of the toolbox.

4. Annexes

Annex 1 - The Gender Equality Webinar Programme

GENDER EQUALITY

promoting familiarity with gender equality matters
among all ERIC personnel



REGISTRATION OPEN

ERIC FORUM 2 | WP9

Webinars

8TH OCTOBER

14-15.00 CET

GENDER EQUALITY BASICS AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

12TH NOVEMBER

14-15.00 CET

ADDRESSING WORKPLACE ISSUES - SEXUAL HARASSMENT,
UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND
MICROAGGRESSIONS

10TH DECEMBER

14-15.00 CET

SEX AND GENDER DIMENSIONS IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING

We are delighted to invite all ERICs' personnel to participate in three webinars taking place in the framework of ERIC Forum 2 project. These webinars are designed to promote promoting familiarity with gender equality matters such as unconscious bias, undesirable behavior at workplace and 'sex & gender dimension in research'.

*G*ENDER EQUALITY BASICS AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

8TH OCTOBER

14-15.00 CET

This webinar is focusing on the fundamentals of gender equality and the impact of unconscious biases. Participants will gain essential knowledge and practical tools to foster an inclusive and equitable workplace and academic environment. The session aims to enhance understanding and to contribute to a more diverse and supportive workplace.

REGISTER [HERE](#)



*A*DDRESSING WORKPLACE ISSUES - SEXUAL HARASSMENT, UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AND MICROAGGRESSIONS

12TH NOVEMBER

14-15.00 CET

This webinar focuses on crucial workplace issues such as sexual harassment, undesirable behavior, gender-based violence and microaggressions. It will cover the role of external ombudspersons, showcase good practice examples, and provide essential knowledge on these topics. Participants will gain valuable insights and practical strategies to create a safer and more respectful work environment.

REGISTER [HERE](#)



*S*EX AND GENDER DIMENSIONS IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING

10TH DECEMBER

14-15.00 CET

This webinar explores the sex and gender dimensions in research and teaching, covering funding opportunities and showcasing examples from various disciplines. It will provide essential knowledge, illustrate examples, and offer background information on these topics. Participants will gain valuable insights and practical strategies to integrate sex and gender considerations into their work.

REGISTER [HERE](#)



TRAINER

Lisa Mittischek holds a Doctorate in Adult Education and Continuing Education with a focus on gender and diversity-sensitive didactics. She is an independent trainer and speaker on gender and diversity issues, specializing in didactics, unconscious bias, work & HR, science, digitalization, and gender-based violence. She regularly conducts workshops and consulting on gender and diversity topics at various universities in Austria and Germany. Additionally, she serves as an independent evaluator for international research projects and social research in both university and non-university contexts.

See more: <https://www.mittischek.com>