9.4 Annual Impact Evaluation Report

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Information in this report that may influence other GEARING ROLES tasks

Linked Task	Points of Relevance
3.1 and 3.2	Evaluation of the process of diagnosis
7.1 and 7.2	Evaluation of the process of training and support

GEARING ROLES project

GEARING-Roles is a four-year Coordination and Support Action project that brings together a pan-European group of academics and industry professionals to collaborate and exchange knowledge, good practices, and lessons learned on designing, implementing, and evaluating 6 Gender Equality Plans (GEPs). The project, therefore, has a firm objective of challenging and transforming gender roles and identities linked to professional careers, and work towards real institutional change. This multi-disciplinary, multi-national, and multi-sectorial collaboration will be

supported by training in this space, mentoring activities, awareness-raising campaigns, as well as bi-annual videos and podcasts and annual networking events.

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EIGE   European Institute for Gender Equality

GEP   Gender Equality Plan

KPI   Key Performance Indicator

WP   Work Packages

Executive Summary

This report discusses the preparation of the Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) by the GEP implementing partners, the training and support in the whole consortium, and the ethical advice on the project. Using the criteria of feasibility, consistency and coordination, we discuss the GEP design of the six GEP implementing partners separately and then come up with recommendations. The evaluation shows all GEP implementing partners are well ahead in developing GEPs for their local institutions, but ran into a number of challenges throughout this process. These challenges included the tight timeframe of Deliverables and activities in the first project year (2019) and the delay in institutional decision-making between March and May 2020 due to the COVID-19 virus. The GEP development also presented opportunities, which included the factual overviews achieved in the participatory gender audits and the involvement of stakeholders in these audits, and in data collection and development of the GEPs. The consortium is very satisfied with the training and support offered by WP7 partner Yellow Window, and with the support of the coordinator, with some learning points in the use of the online forum Hermione. The ethical assessment is working as scheduled.

1. Introduction

As a project, GEARING-Roles (Grant Agreement Nr. 824536) sets out to make substantial progress in realizing gender equality in academic institutions in Europe. GEARING-Roles' main objective is the promotion and realization of structural change and gender equality in academia and research. The core element for realizing this objective is the GEP - Gender Equality Plan – that each of GEARING-Roles' six implementing institutions is designing and is due to implement in the coming years. These GEPs are designed combining context specific information with a common reference tool; the GEAR tool which can be found on the EIGE website: (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear).

This deliverable is the first of a series of three evaluations by work package 9 (impact assessment and evaluation) during the four year implementation period of the GEARING-Roles project. The evaluations will be based upon the rationale set out in earlier deliverables regarding the design evaluation (Deliverable 9.1), impact evaluation (9.2) and the roadmap provided for these evaluations (Deliverable 9.3). The present deliverable discusses the preparation of the Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) by the GEP implementing partners, the training and support in the whole consortium, and the ethical advice on the project. The evaluators recognize and acknowledge that the

GEP design may have met various challenges, but also provided opportunities for innovation and adaptation. Since local contexts differ, this report discusses this process for the GEP-implementing partners separately.

Current state of affairs: the disruption by the corona virus crisis

By March 2020 only two GEP implementing partners could share a summary of the GEP with the evaluator, while the others were waiting for institutional approval. In May 2020, all six GEP implementing partners are well on their way to having a final GEP design, having it approved via institutional decision making, and having it implemented successively. As stated in the previous deliverables on assessment and evaluation (Deliverables 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3), we are expecting the GEP implementation processes to be subject to various changes throughout its duration. We are planning to include attention for necessary adaptations and changes, anticipating further challenges that implementing partners may meet, and address them either directly, or offer tools to mitigate or solve them. Indeed challenges occurred.

The serious public health crisis driven by COVID-19, combined with the very substantial, although differing national and university measures that have been taken to try to control this crisis, has significantly interrupted the until then smooth GEP design process. With most GEP implementing partners, the institutional decision-making on the GEP has been delayed because the leadership in the organizations was heavily involved in crisis management. At this point it is hard to predict when universities will be functioning at full capacity once again, and will be ready to resume normal activities. Nevertheless, this Deliverable outlines the degree to which all partners are on track with the GEP design and the preparation of its implementation.

Research questions

In line with the D 9.1 Guidelines for Design evaluation, this evaluation is led by the following research question: What is the feasibility, the consistency, and the level of coordination in the GEP design by the GEARING-Roles implementing partners?

Moreover, as planned in the D 9.3. Impact Roadmap, we also make a start with assessing the quality of the training provided within the GEARING Roles consortium in the first 15 months, and the quality of the support within the GEARING Roles consortium in the first 15 months. The overall assessment is preliminary, based on documents produced by the project, on participant observation of meetings of the project, and on interviews with consortium members as far as they could be analysed until May 2020.

Operationalization and data collection

The operationalization of criteria for the evaluation has been given in Deliverable 9.1. We operationalize feasibility as the extent to which the targets of the GEP can be realized within the timeline, the extent to which sufficient financial instruments are available, the extent to which sufficient human resources are available, and the extent to which the relevant infrastructure is available.

For evaluating the consistency of a GEP, we examine which instruments the partners describe in their GEP and to what extent they are consistent with the KPIs, as described in the grant agreement of GEARING-Roles, or in a specific GEP.

We evaluate the level of coordination by measuring which actors are mentioned in the GEP, how tasks are divided between these actors, and what coordination is in place to oversee the implementation of tasks and activities.

The methods of data collection for the assessment and evaluation in this deliverables are observations during project meetings and online meetings, interviews with project partners, and the collection of documents from all implementing partners. We conducted participant observation during the project meetings in Oxford (June 2019) and Lisbon (November 2019) and we observed while participating in the monthly online meetings of WP leaders.

We conducted and transcribed eight online interviews and six face-to-face interviews with consortium members. We selected the leaders of all GEP implementing partners for interviews, next to the leaders of work packages responsible for training and support. We made a start with further data collection by interviewing all team members of one implementing partner, which will continue in the coming months. We collected 16 documents (institutional assessment reports, task force activity reports and draft GEPs) and analysed and interpreted all this data. A draft version of this report was sent for feedback to three of the consortium members.

Table 1 below shows that only two reports were not available at the time of this evaluation report. See the section on Oxford Brookes University for information about this justified delay.

Table 1: Overview of data used for design evaluation

	Interviews	Observations	Institutional Assessment Report	Activity report	Draft GEPs[1]
University Ljubljana	X	X	X	X	X
Deusto	X	X	X	X	X
IGOT	X	X	X	X	X
Sabanci	X	X	X	X	X
OBU	X	X	X	-	-
Estonian Research Council	X	X	X	X	X

2. Gender Equality Plan Design

Gender Equality Plan Goals and Objectives:

The GEPs are developed by the six implementing partners as the main instrument for the promotion and realisation of structural change and gender equality in academia and research. Following the GEARING Roles design, individual GEPs have as their goal the fulfilment and achievement of four main objectives:

a) Female career progression: to remove all barriers which may impede a woman's career path and subsequent success.

b) Leadership and decision making: to address gender imbalances in the representation, processes, and the promotion of women leadership in research institutions.

c) Education and research: to promote gender mainstreaming in research (especially in STEM), by including a gender perspective in research programmes, and supporting women's scientific careers.

d) Promotion of gender equality in research organisations and reinforcing the ERA: disseminate frameworks and institutional gender assessments and evaluation strategies to establish commitment to gender equality in European organisations, and build sustainable long-term gender equality networks .

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[1] As a basis for the table we used the English summaries of Gender Equality Plans that were available to us by May 15th 2020. GEPs may be further elaborated and extended upon in the period thereafter.

This section on the Gender Equality Plan design consists of three elements. First, we present a comprehensive overview of GEP designs in a systematic table (Appendix A). Second, we evaluate each institution according to the guidelines for design evaluation, as discussed in Deliverable 9.1. This includes an *ex ante* reflection on the five key objectives of the GEP designs, aiming to identify the logic and consistency between the GEP's policy instruments and the objectives it aims to meet. This reflection takes the format of a narrative. Third, each GEP will be evaluated using the developed criteria of feasibility, consistency, and coordination, and we also make some suggestions for elements that need further attention.

The guidelines for evaluation of the GEP Design as set out in Deliverable 9.1 were:

a) Respective to each partner institution, the accumulation of data on which inherent practices and protocols are seen as forming the major obstacles to gender equality:

b) Which measures for implementing and ensuring gender equality, as formulated in the GEP, are already implemented at the implementing partner institutions?

c) Which new measures to be implemented have been developed in the GEP of each implementing partner?

d) To which degree these measures relate to the aims of GEARING-Roles and overarching objectives of the GEP, considering the contextual factors of each partner institution.

e) To which degree it is expected that these measures will be able to achieve the KPIs and lead to structural or incremental change regarding gender equality at an academic and organisational level. This will include an in-depth analysis of the relevant numbers and percentages which reflect the gendered nature of each research institution.

The three specific criteria for evaluation, following D 9.1., are:

a) Feasibility: is the GEP implementation feasible within the conditions set by the GEARING-Roles project? These conditions include the timeline, as well as the financial, human resource, and infrastructure conditions at the respective partners

b) Consistency: are the instruments foreseen in the GEP consistent with the goals, objectives, and key performance indicators of the GEARING-Roles project? If applicable, which changes and adaptations are made by partner institutions and how do these changes relate to the goals and objectives of the project and potentially affect its implementation?

c) Coordination: this refers to the manner in which the various tasks have been allocated within the GEP, which can be assessed using the following criteria: upholding any agreements decided upon by the consortium; the coordination of tasks and the division of tasks between the actors involved; and the efforts necessary to reach the goals and objectives within the proposed timeline.

Evaluation of the Gender Equality Plans per institution

Ljubljana University, Slovenia (LU)

The team of the faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana (FF UL) has made a good start in developing the Gender Equality Plan. Work package leaders professor Milica Antić Gaber and dr. Živa Kos were new to the GEARING-Roles project after they took over from professor Roman Kuhar (who was involved in the preparations of the project). Prof Kuhar left the project after accepting a leadership position within the university as a dean.

The FF UL team members delivered an extensive Institutional Baseline Assessment in September 2019, explaining the national gender equality context in Slovenia, career processes and work life balance in the university, and the present gender dimensions in research and education. This institutional assessment focused on the main obstacles to gender equality within the university, and discussed gender bias and sexual harassment within the university setting. The report made it clear that while there is a substantial amount of data available in the university regarding gender, the tools to analyse and catalogue the data efficiently are subpar or absent. To ease the accessibility and usability of the data, the FF UL team aimed to create sex disaggregated databases. This may support the development and implementation of gender focused workshops and protocols. The FF UL team thus possesses the knowledge and capabilities to identify, address, and reform structural limitations in the university's approach to gender equality.

The FF UL developed a concept GEP that needs to be approved by the existing power structures to get a more definite status. The concept GEP used in this analysis focuses on three main topics. First, in line with the absence of data identified above, the GEP aims to establish a sex disaggregated database, making gender equality part of the quality assurance mechanism within LU and the collection of gender equality part of the institutional quality reports. It also aims to include the monitoring of gender equality data in the institutional mission statement. Second, the GEP aims to support the use of gender sensitive language within the university. To achieve this, it aims at establishing a taskforce and the preparation of guidelines for gender equality in teaching and learning, and in research. It also aims to develop workshops for awareness training and examples of good practice of gender equality in research and teaching. Third, the GEP aims to address sex stereotypes, and sexual harassment and discrimination within the university setting. This will be done by focusing on gender sensitive language in institutional documents, and again, by awareness raising activities. The FF UL GEP design summary does not currently include actions on female career progression and leadership and decision-making, although these are part of the four GEARING-Roles main objectives.

The FF UL team installed a core group of deans, vice deans and heads of departments to recognize existing power structures and to create organizational alliances. According to the FF UL team, involving such a large group of stakeholders was a challenge in times of austerity. The tight scheme of activities and deliverables in the first year, was another challenge. The FF UL team experienced support from academics from sister-projects that received European Commission research grants for gender equality research, from the GEARING-Roles coordinator and from Yellow Window, who is in charge of the GEARING-Roles support WP7, in particular.

Criteria to measure design objectives:

a) *Feasibility:* Based on the data we have, we assess the feasibility of the GEP implementation to be reasonable to good, since the FF UL team involved various members of the university management and faculties in partaking in the planned activities and workshops, and to develop the GEP. This extensive and thorough stakeholder involvement may strengthen commitment from the university management with the GEP implementation in later stages. The GEP's feasibility is further strengthened by the gender expertise and leadership support of Roman Kuhar, a university dean and gender activist, whose involvement may lend itself to a facilitated integration and implementation of the GEP. The GEP benefits from well-developed and practical instruments to achieve its goals, relying in participatory methods to bring about change. However, Slovenian austerity measures in combination with the COVID-19 crisis measures are a challenge, threatening to put gender equality lower on the list of priorities compared to other, more immediate challenges. The FF UL team has highlighted restrictions in the available HR resources due to austerity and the strict project timeline as possible obstacles to the successful implementation, despite initial cooperation by stakeholders.

b) *Consistency:* Based on the documents provided by FF UL, the GEP reflects two out of four GEARING-Roles main objectives, namely gender in research and education, and gender equality in research organizations.The GEP Design of the FF UL team currently does not reflect directly on the KPIs as

formulated in the GEARING-Roles grant agreement. Rather, the team has developed more specific KPIs which are in line with the expected tasks to be performed, and which resonate with the institutional context. These KPIs reflect participatory actions to be performed in the form of multiple workshops with diverse focuses, with the aim of achieving structural change. Most notably, the KPIs focused on establishing a protocol for the handling of sexual harassment within the institution, which may lead to effective efforts to combat systemic discrimination and persecution.

We suggest that the FF UL team formulates additional actions related to the objectives of female career progression and leadership and decision-making. Moreover, the team could further detail existing KPIs on how they are institutionally appropriate, aligning or diverging from the GEARING-Roles KPIs, why these specific choices were made and how they specifically serve to uphold the key objectives.

c) *Coordination:* The FF UL team have envisioned the GEP as an inclusive and multi-expertise implementation strategy, wherein members from across all levels of the university will be involved in its development and implementation. Information about coordination efforts can be found in the FF UL Taskforce activity report, showing a good level of coordination in efforts to involve multiple stakeholders across the university.

We do however suggest that these roles, actors, and division of tasks are more clearly elaborated upon in any further GEP documentation, specifically the GEP design, as this information was not mentioned in the summary provided. We also suggest the GEP to further specify who is going to monitor if these actors fulfil the tasks.

University of Deusto, Spain (UD)

The team at the University of Deusto, Spain, has made large steps in preparing its Gender Equality Plan. The Deusto core team is working in a Spanish legal context where all public organisations have to implement gender equality plans. Moreover, all Spanish universities have to promote gender equality in research and education. As a result, the Deusto team was able to design the GEP in a context were already two legally obligated GEPs had been implemented. The Deusto team built on this existing basis by evaluating the results of these earlier GEPs, developing a diagnosis regarding gender equality and designing a new GEP involving stakeholders.

Using a participatory gender audit, the Deusto team involved large groups of university stakeholders, including the gender equality commission, trade unions, directors and the leadership of the university. They used participatory techniques like the causal diagram and the lotus flower to involve stakeholders in understanding the present situation and developing directions for action. The stakeholders concluded that there is a pressing need to raise awareness regarding gender equality, and themes related to gender equality at UD at all levels. Concerning research practice, the conclusion was that gender is not a priority and not even a privileged line of research for research groups at Deusto. On teaching and education, there is scarce consciousness and expertise, leading to minimal presence of gender scholarship in teaching, and only in one of the faculties (Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. On career progression and HR management, there is a strong presence of women in almost all faculties, but not in the top ranks, and parental leave is taken up almost exclusively by women.

The Deusto team met serious challenges in the further development of the GEP. A body consisting of the leadership of institutions and trade unions articulated opposition to the plan. The team decided to use co-creation sessions to address this resistance. Using tools offered in the GEARING Roles training (see later section), they developed a 'persona', to think through the effect of policies for real persons. And they developed 'gender waves', to systemically derive measures and target groups from objectives that were initially set. They actively engaged stakeholders in selecting which set of potential measures to prioritize, simultaneously emphasizing its development as a legal and project obligation. Opposition remains a challenge, but the team has the feeling that it has now found ways to efficiently deal with it.

The present draft of the Gender Equality Plan consists of 63 actions that will be implemented during a two-year period. The plan is not public yet, and is awaiting approval by the senate. It involves actions aimed at selection, hiring and promotion, addressing the gender pay gap, developing responsible labour conditions, strengthening a gender perspective in research and education, enhancing the representation of women in leadership, addressing sexual harassment and enhancing the use of sex-neutral and inclusive language.

Criteria to measure design objectives:

a) *Feasibility:* Based on the data we have, we assess the feasibility of the GEP implementation to be good, especially since the UD team involved university stakeholders and the leadership intensively in developing the GEP. The legal infrastructure supports the awareness of the need for GEP development and evaluation. The use of participatory techniques and co-creation helped to mobilize the necessary human resources and overcome resistances. Moreover, the involvement of stakeholders potentially strengthens commitment with the GEP implementation. The GEP implementation is feasible, given the very strong attempts of the core team to address the opposition voiced by the leadership and the trade unions. But it is also to be expected that further challenges will rise during the implementation.

b) *Consistency:* The instruments foreseen in the GEP for UD are consistent with the targets and objectives set forth in the GEARING-Roles project. Although the content of the GEP is largely in line with the objectives behind the KPIs, the GEP currently does not specify specific KPIs at the institutional level.
We suggest to link the different tasks and instruments foreseen in the GEP to specific performance indicators that are adapted to the local context.

c) *Coordination:* The Deusto core team clearly took the lead in the process of diagnosing, and the design of the GEP, and has shown to be able to overcome resistances. This illustrates effective coordination. The GEP is not very explicit yet about whom is responsible for which specific tasks and what the timeline is for implementing them. We suggest the division of tasks could be more clearly elaborated upon in any further GEP documentation. We also suggest the GEP to further specify who is going to monitor if these actors fulfil the tasks.

Geographic Institute and Spatial Planning (IGOT), the University of Lisbon, Portugal

The GEP implementing team at the Geographic Institute and Spatial Planning of the University of Lisbon (IGOT) is well on track with having developed a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) that is soon to be approved.

In September 2019 the IGOT team, headed by professor Maria Lucinda Fonseca, delivered an institutional assessment report explaining the national gender equality context in Portugal, the career processes and work life balance in the university and the present gender dimensions in research and education. They also focused on gender bias and sexual harassment within the university setting. Via the General Directorate for Education and Science statistics a relatively generous amount of data was available, while also ten interviews were held with university staff and leadership, and a survey was collected among 380 people of the university staff. It showed gender gaps in most academic positions, the largest in assistant professor positions (31% women). The gender gap is largest in leadership positions, both in academic and support staff.

The interviews allowed the IGOT team to set up a task force that aims to increase the legitimacy of the project at the institutional level. It is comprised of the project team, together with fifteen stakeholders, varying in academic position from dean to PhD candidate, with an equal gender balance amongst the stakeholders. Via workshops using participatory techniques like the lotus blossom, the IGOT team involved the taskforce in the GEARING-Roles objectives and setting out strategic lines. The workshop also revealed that gender is not explicitly included in the objectives of IGOT, in its policies, programmes, projects or services, until now.

With the input from this taskforce, the IGOT team developed and designed a Gender Equality Plan. The IGOT GEP formulates the inclusion of gender equality in the IGOT mission and strategy as one of its main actions. It also aims at the integration of a gender perspective in IGOT's organizational culture, inclusion of a gender perspective in research and education, and stimulating the recruitment of female students and staff and enhancing their career progression. It aims to increase the representation of women in governing bodies, and create mechanisms to report and provide support for victims of sexual harassment.

The Gender Equality Plan is now, in Spring 2020, waiting for the approval of the newly elected academic board. They will share the content of the GEP once it has been approved, to increase potential ownership for the new leadership.

Criteria to measure design objectives:

a) *Feasibility*: With the involvement and support of organizational stakeholders, approving the GEP, and implementing this plan seems feasible. The GEP provides relatively detailed timelines for actions, and relatively detailed descriptions of the actors involved. This suggests the involvement of sufficient human resources to implement the GEP. Moreover, the presence of information and data regarding gender equality suggests that some of the necessary infrastructure for implementation is available.

b) *Consistency:* The instruments foreseen in the GEP for IGOT are consistent with the targets and objectives set forth in the GEARING-Roles project.
We suggest that the objectives formulated in the GEP to be further operationalized in terms of the main KPIs in the GEARING-Roles project, to make them even more concrete.

c) *Coordination:* The IGOT GEP is very specific regarding the various tasks and how they have been allocated to the different stakeholders.
We suggest the GEP to further specify who is going to monitor whether these actors are able to fulfil the tasks within the detailed timeframe foreseen in the GEP.

Sabanci University, Turkey

The GEP implementing partner in Istanbul, Turkey, was seriously affected by the political situation in Turkey in the first project year. In May 2019 work package leader professor Ayşe Gül Altınay faced a sentence for two years and one month in prison for signing a peace petition. This evoked a series of solidarity statements of European organizations and higher education institutions and also of the GEARING-Roles project team. The conviction is now moving up in the judicial process, and there is hope that this sentence will be revoked higher up the system. Still, the threat of the sentence affected the team and the whole GEARING-Roles consortium seriously.

Despite this unrest, the Sabanci team produced an institutional assessment report in September 2019, detailing four categories which together resulted in the institutional assessment: the national and institutional context regarding gender equality, the career processes and work life balance in the university, and the present gender dimensions in research and education. They also explained the situation regarding sexual harassment and violence within the university setting. The team collected quantitative data via a questionnaire amongst professors and qualitative data using six focus groups with 28 participants and 9 semi-structured interviews with representatives from management and decision-making bodies. The report showed a commitment with, and existing infrastructure regarding gender awareness and the aim to prevent sexual harassment and violence, but also underrepresentation of women in leadership and in specific disciplines, a gender pay gap and a need for formal mentoring and care services.

While the Sabanci team's report was underpinned by facts and figures, it was strongly influenced and strengthened by the report's focus on individuals and the experiences and daily realities faced within the four main categories as mentioned earlier, by men and in particular, women. Such an approach enabled the report to

not only effectively illustrate the current socio-cultural and academic climate regarding gender at Sabanci University, but it allowed wider political and national stances on gender, and gendered education to come to the fore. Through it focus on individuals, the report highlights how the academic landscape is inextricable from the wider national and political circumstances. The Sabanci team installed a taskforce with male and female stakeholders from academic and administrative staff of the university. Via two participatory gender audits, the Sabanci team involved the taskforce in understanding the causes of gender equality, and developing steps to address the situation. Using tools offered in the GEARING-Roles training, the team in Turkey used co-creation techniques to involve the taskforce in the development of the Gender Equality Plan. They employed the 'persona' exercise, to think through the effect of policies for real persons and developed 'lotus blossom' charts to identify support and actions to address sexual harassment. Potential topics for the design of the Gender Equality Plan are a mentorship program, guidelines for gender sensitive communication, a mandatory gender equality training for all staff and directors and the establishment of a gender equality unit.

Furthermore, together with the available gender expertise of the SU team, the prestige of GEARING-Roles being an EU funded programme was also highlighted as a key strategy in accessing people and spaces, as it is directly linked to the prestige and status of the university itself, and allows the team to enact influence where it may not have been possible before. Based on an in-depth and thorough institutional report and GEP design summary, the SU team's approach is on par with the GEARING-Roles objectives of structural change and is well-equipped to achieve the developed KPIs.

Criteria to measure design objectives:

a) *Feasibility:* based on the institutional assessment, the feasibility of the GEP implementation at Sabanci is high. As was argued in the assessment, the importance of the core team's positions of influence and positions of gender expertise and power cannot be overlooked, and should continue to be utilised as an essential strategic tool. Through the strategic design of their PGAs and the involvement of stakeholders, Sabanci aimed to not just conduct these groups, but to immediately affect processes within the university structure using the GEARING-Roles project as a starting point. However, as with the other consortium partners, the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on the design and implementation of the GEP cannot be overlooked. As result, how feasibility is viewed may need to be adjusted to fit with an altered social and academic climate in which GEARING-Role takes place.

b) *Consistency:* The SU team developed KPIs which reflect the institutional context of the university, focusing on increasing the number of women, and increasing parity in multiple faculties and levels of management of the university. These KPIs reflect the needs of the university, and are more concrete than the general KPIs set out in the grant agreement, allowing them to be better operationalized and implemented. The developed KPIs do however remain consistent with the GEARING-Roles objectives.
We suggest that the SU team continue with the developed KPIs, while detailing more how they are institutionally appropriate, aligning or diverging from the GEARING-Roles KPIs, why these specific choices were made and how they specifically serve to uphold the key objectives.

c) *Coordination:* Sabanci noted that the first project year was quite busy with deadlines and activities which needed to be coordinated across the consortium. While they experienced a collaborative partnership within their work package, the delay in the delivery of other consortium deliverables led to them experiencing a rush in the completion of their deliverables. The SU team were proactive in their approach to using the available HR and infrastructure resources and were able to successfully implement various PGAs, as well as utilise various exercises developed by Yellow Window to show the complexity of gendered structures and to develop strategies to enact change.

Given the ambitious tasks the SU team have developed, we suggest a more detailed overview of which stakeholders are directly involved in the development and implementation of tasks, as well as which

stakeholders and actors are to be the main recipients of the results. We also suggest the GEP to further specify who is going to monitor if these actors fulfil the tasks.

Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom (OBU)

It has been agreed upon that the OBU team will follow a different timeline in developing a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) than the other GEARING-Roles partners, as the university has been the recipient of various Athena SWAN awards. Taking the reputation of the Athena SWAN scheme into consideration, the OBU team made the choice to merge the GEP to be developed within the GEARING-Roles project with the Gender Equality Plan that has to be delivered for the Athena SWAN assessment later in 2020. The synergies between these plans will expectedly increase institutional support for its implementation. The design and implementation of the GEP will take place within the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice at OBU (CDPRP), and is led by Dr Anne Laure Humbert, with a number of people employed by the CDPRP working as part of the core task force on the project. The CDPRP is a veritable hub of gender expertise, and is well integrated with the university structure. The OBU team has experienced very little resistance to the GEP design and the activities that were implemented (and are being planned), which has made the incorporation of the GEP within the OBU institutional structure much easier than at other implementing partners. This success can also be attributed to the position of gender experts in various levels of the University, such as Dr Simonetta Manfredi, the Associate Dean of Research and Knowledge Exchange, who founded the CDPRP in the early 1990s. Athena SWAN has acted as a cornerstone to GEARING-Roles as it is anchored in good practices, and acts as a catalyst for institutional support as the university needs to obtain accreditation for the upcoming years.

Building on the university's well-established commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Oxford Brookes University's Institutional Assessment Report, submitted in September 2019, aims to highlight how the GEP design and development process occurred congruently with existing university-wide approaches to gender equality. The report described the current situation at OBU regarding gender figures, and the percentages and numbers illustrate that OBU is a leader amongst UK universities regarding the advancement of gender equality at the institutional level. The OBU team conducted multiple interviews with individuals across the university context, but in higher positions of power and influence, and conducted various workshops and data analysis to inform the Institutional Report and the design of the GEP. OBU also carried out a participatory gender audit in November 2019, and has delivered a number of Deliverables in accordance with the GEARING-Roles grant agreement.

Since the GEP design at OBU is foreseen at a later date, the present evaluation cannot predict to which extent the KPIs and objectives developed by the OBU team are in accordance with the KPIs and objectives set forth in the GEARING-Roles grant agreement. However, we can observe that the OBU team operates within a context whether gender equality is a priority, and where there is a strong engagement at the academic and management level towards equality change policies. This may greatly increase the chances that the measures taken by the OBU team will be able to achieve structural change and gender equality within the parameters defined by the GEP.

Criteria to measure design objectives:

a) *Feasibility:* We assess the feasibility of the implementation of the future GEP at OBU as high (even if it is not finalised yet), given the institutional measures in place which support and underscore the goals and activities of the GEP. As director of the CDPRP, Dr Humbert's position of influence and legitimacy allows for a dialogue with members of senior academic and professional staff, which would otherwise not have been possible. However, the effects of COVID-19 on the GEP design and implementation process cannot be underestimated, as the majority of staff, including the CDPRP staff, are now working remotely. This does potentially trouble the ability to effectively communicate with relevant staff and implement or conduct any proposed activities. These concerns are not limited to the OBU context, and will be felt by

the GEARING-Roles consortium as a whole, but institution-specific measures to mitigate and minimise the effects could be viewed as part of the GEP strategic design. The later deadline of OBU's GEP allows for that. Essential prerequisites such as HR and infrastructure are very good. The timeline for the GEP is different, but there is a very acceptable rationale for this .

b) *Consistency:* Due to the GEP summary not being shared until approved, this cannot be measured accurately for now, and we cannot make suggestions for improvement.

c) *Coordination:* Since a GEP summary is only available at a later date, no specific inferences regarding the coordination can be made at this time either. However, we noticed that the OBU team observed a strict timeline and large number of activities which needed to be finalised before the end of 2019. It can be observed that the OBU has been proactive in the development of their Deliverables, and in their coordinated efforts to involve key stakeholders within their institution in the GEP process. This all shows evidence of good coordination.

In the absence of a GEP, we cannot make suggestions for improvement.

Estonian Research Council, Estonia (ERC)

The Estonian Research Council (ERC) team prepared an Institutional Assessment report in September 2019 and performed a participatory gender audit in November 2019. The relatively small team faced some internal changes. Because of parental leave of Kadri Raudvere, Loone Vilumaa was appointed as replacement. Maarja Sillaste remained in place. Despite its limited size, the team has been very effective. The ERC team installed a steering committee for the GEARING-Roles project, to increase institutional support for the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and enhance commitment with its implementation. Supported by the steering committee, the team drafted a Gender Equality Plan, which in March 2020 was in the process of becoming approved.

According to the team, drafting an institutional assessment report has been helpful in learning to understand the institutional context of the Estonian Research Council. By interviewing seven managers the team developed an overview of different visions on the causes and consequences of gender inequality within the research council. The drafting of the institutional assessment report put the issue of gender equality on the organizational agenda. By getting the statistics in place, the team could show that female researchers are underrepresented in grant allocation. Despite the fact that women apply for research grants more often, they continuously get a much lower share of the research grants. Commitment among the leadership is growing that something should be done to balance the gender gap in success rates.

The GEP implementing team at the Estonian Research Council met some resistance. They proposed a gender equality training for evaluators of research proposals, but the leadership considered such training to be offensive for these evaluators. The implementing team found a solution by then integrating gender training in the general training for evaluation panels and review committees, using a gender mainstreaming strategy. Separate gender training were however also provided. The team provides role model behaviour in taking the issue serious (including during the participatory gender audit made), which they also expect will help in addressing resistance.

The GEP implementing team also met some opportunities. In Estonia considerable societal pressure exists to do something about gender equality, which helps to keep the issue on the internal agenda. The combination of societal pressure, the project context and a dedicated team suggests progress can be made. The GEP that is now, in Spring 2020, waiting for approval, addresses four main issues. It aims to ensure equal opportunities for all female and male researchers, to promote the integration of a gender dimension in research, to prevent discrimination and to apply gender aware principles in the organisation's external communication

Criteria to measure design objectives:

a) *Feasibility:* Based on the data, we assess the GEP implementation in Estonia as feasible, especially since participatory techniques have been used to look for input and approval by the organizational stakeholders. This strengthens potential ownership of crucial stakeholders. The investments so far have focused on getting the statistics in place, and of mainstreaming existing training and offering separate gender training simultaneously. The ERC team was able to adapt the timeline when necessary and to use the limited financial and human resources very efficiently.

b) *Consistency:* The instruments foreseen in the ERC GEP are consistent with the targets and objectives set forth in the GEARING-Roles project. There is no direct reference to the KPIs however.
We suggest that the objectives formulated in the GEP can be further operationalized in terms of the main KPIs in the GEARING-Roles project, to make more concrete how they contribute to the main objectives of the GEARING-Roles project.

c) *Coordination:* The GEP formulates a clear vision, but could be more concrete about how the various tasks within the ERC GEP have been allocated to the different actors, what timeline is foreseen and what monitoring mechanism is in place.
We suggest that the ERC GEP can be further strengthened by narrowing down the tasks, identifying which actors are responsible and link this to a timeframe. An additional suggestion is to plan who will monitor the implementation of tasks.

3. Training needs

GEARING-Roles has a special Work Package for Capacity Building within the consortium (WP7), especially meant to support the capacity of change agents at the respective institutions to successfully transform their institutions in the direction of more gender equality. In the period under consideration (2019 till March 2020), this has involved two real life training workshops for the consortium, one in Lisbon on 29 November 2019, and one in Oxford on 20-21 June 2019. In addition to the real life trainings, the online platform Hermione provides a wealth of material on the training that has been given until now, the results of those trainings, templates for participatory techniques, material related to webinars and online support sessions, background articles, and a COVID-19 situation survey etc.

For this first reporting period, this set of activities has been designed extremely well. The choice for participatory techniques is based on its ability to address and prevent resistance to gender equality measures, and this is indeed a sound base for the training in GEARING-Roles. Consortium members already expressed their great satisfaction with it in the interviews we conducted with each of the six implementing partners in the first period.

These trainings were largely focused on participatory techniques, co-creation and empowerment, and involved carefully set up exchanges of experiences and ideas between the six implementing partners. A set of specific techniques were transferred to the participants which to use in their own trainings throughout the implementation period. On Hermione, all materials related to the trainings can be found, as well as a visual report, and overviews in the format of power point.

From the reports received back from these six partners, we found that a total of 23 workshops were held across the partner institutions, most targeting a wide range of actors. Regarding the design and execution of the training workshops, there is nothing but praise to be heard in the interviews. While before the training in Oxford, many expressed doubts as to whether they could successfully hold such workshops, all have done so to their satisfaction. The general choice for participatory techniques is also widely supported and we observe that many of the specific techniques have been used in the workshops, and were said to have been effective and useful, delivering good ideas and suggestions for the GEPs from actors inside the university. The format offered in the training also allowed context specificity, so that partners, to some degree, could make their own strategic choices.

The overall project is set up as exchange between partners that vary in the extent of their experience. In the training, especially partners from organisations with less experience express that they benefit from the exchange with organisations with more experience (role models), as well as with organisations with less experience (recognition of similarities).

Given that GEARING-Roles design is set up so that it builds heavily on the GEAR tool, some of its challenges are linked to developments concerning this tool. At present, the GEAR tool is located and managed at EIGE. There are some challenges in using the tool that are linked to how the tool is presented at the EIGE website. One problem is that there is no index, and that it is not possible to link to specific parts of the GEAR tool, so that it is quite cumbersome for the capacity building consortium member (Yellow Window) to guide partners to the most relevant parts. Moreover, in updating the GEAR tool, there seems to be a lack of scrutiny as to the relevance and quality of newly added parts, further impacting on the potential for learning. This highlights an element of the vulnerability of the design of the project, namely that it is built on a tool that resides outside of the project, and on which the project has no say.

In the preliminary analysis of challenges and opportunities relating to capacity building and support in the GEARING-Roles project, we identified the following challenges:

- Related to the design: One problem is that capacity building is spread over the whole life of the project, whereas it is more needed in the first years. This cannot be changed at this point in time. A second problem is that consortium partners have a double role, combining a role as implementing partners for which their attention is local, with a role as Work Package leader for which their attention needs to be consortium wide. Quite unsurprisingly, the local demands are often stronger, as having a very good implemented GEP is also the core aim of the project. Supporting GEP-implementing partners in addressing this challenge required a substantial amount of time and attention from Yellow Window. A third problem is that among the implementing partners there are five universities and only one Research Funding Organization (Estonia), which negatively affects the opportunities of this last institution to learn from others in the project.
- Related to the organization of the project: Training is now organized back to back with the meetings of the consortium (to keep the budget within limits), which means that the people trained are the ones attending, and that they cannot be selected more precisely according to their core role in change processes. Moreover, this also means that the training occurs at the end of a long series of meetings and that people often have limited energy left to invest in such training.
- Related to the transferability of the outcomes of this project (longer term): Yellow Window is keeping a close eye on opportunities for strengthening the transferability of the processes and tools of this project. Unfortunately, there are no measures above the level of the project that could stimulate this (for instance joint events organised by the Commission).

We also identified several opportunities.

- Related to the existence of several similar projects funded by the Commission: Given that several partners are connected to more projects, there have been numerous opportunities for cross learning that have been actively used (for instance by bringing the one RFO in GEARING-Roles in contact with other RFO's in other projects). This is a very strong positive element, and the engagement amongst the project partners to use these opportunities is to be commended.
- Related to the quality of the consortium partners: The capacity building partner is very happy so far with the engagement and enthusiasm of implementing partners and their willingness to learn and to work hard.

- Related to the tools and techniques used: as discussed before, the participatory techniques worked remarkably well. The Hermione website used by the project provides a very good environment for sharing material, and a few initial glitches in Hermione have been solved quickly by the project coordinators.

4. Support

Support to the GEP implementing partners has been mainly provided by the coordinating team from the University of Deusto in Bilbao, and by the team of Yellow Window (WP7). The high number of activities and deliverables in the first project year, 2019, caused a need for support from all partners and the GEP implementing partners in particular. Especially project partners with a work package leader that, due to changes in position or leave of a former work package leader, has not been involved in the development of the project plan, needed support to quickly understand the ambitious timeline of the first project year. In the interviews, all partners praise the support of the coordinator and of the WP 7 team in particular. Yellow Window has been providing support by offering coaching via skype, telephone or email, disseminating good practices from earlier EU projects, offering concrete toolkits for the analysis of qualitative data and sometimes helping to formulate parts of project deliverables. Support also took place by knowledge exchange between GEP implementing partners. For example, as part of their work-package, OBU has developed and shared a gender mainstreaming checklist to be used by all consortium partners to assess to what extent gender mainstreaming has occurred within their institutions. And FECYT (WP4), provided guidelines for the preparation and implementation of the mentoring scheme.

Related to the well-functioning of the capacity building efforts, it is observed that implementing partners have a certain hesitation to ask for help or support. This has been overcome until now through the pro-active behaviour of Yellow Window, but of course this is more demanding on them. One on one support is functioning well, and further down in the project, Yellow Window intends to aggregate from these demands, and see if more collective action needs to be taken.

Related to challenges in the project, as capacity building partner, Yellow Window has used its skills and resources to enable the timely finalization of Guidelines for contextual analyses and institutional baseline assessment, and has also taken over some of the extra work due to the withdrawing of the Leadership Foundation (now called advance HE) in the Leadership Work Package that would otherwise have been endangered. (In this, also Deusto as well as FECYT took over some of the work.)

In general, the interviews and observations of meetings have shown that an atmosphere of goodwill and trust exists within the GEARING-Roles consortium. The coordinator is less satisfied by the support partners have been giving to the coordinator. A lot of communication takes place via Hermione, the online forum of GEARING-Roles. During project meetings and in the interviews, the coordinator expresses she often has to wait very long for partners to react upon requests for filling in doodles or approval of proposals posted on Hermione. During project meetings, the GEP implementing partners took note of this point and promised to better look into the online forum. In the interviews, several partners complain that the online forum misses a clear structure, offers all communication on a chronological timeline and fails to differentiate between details and main points. Other partners mention the online forum does not react well to search strategies so it is difficult to retrieve specific information. Several partners admit to have missed important communications because they were overflown by personal communications between partners or by messages that were repeated unnecessarily. In the period since these interviews the coordinator has put effort into seriously improving the organisation in the website. We suggest WP9 to evaluate next year if the communication has improved.

5. Ethics

The GEARING roles project steering committee appointed an ethical advisor to the GEARING-Roles project in the first months of 2019. In November 2019 it became clear that this ethical advisor had to withdraw because of a change in position and on the short term a new one had to be found. Indeed, thanks to common action from the coordinator and the Yellow Window team in the beginning of 2020 a new ethical advisor has been appointed, namely Dr Javier Ruiz McPherson. Cooperation with this UK based academic with a Spanish background has been smooth until now. The data management plan of GEARING-Roles has been approved and the ethical advisor has given advice about how to disseminate knowledge via social media. He for example advised about offering a form to allow withdrawal from the GEARING-Roles twitter campaign. He also helped to develop a template for registering data collection and management for the GEP implementing partners. To summarize, despite a change in the ethical advisor in the first project year, the GEARING-Roles project is on schedule regarding the ethical requirements of the project.

6. Recommendations

For the GEP implementing partners

- Cleary identify which actors are responsible for specific actions
- Develop clear timelines for the implementation of actions and attribute human and financial resources to them
- Translate GEARING-Roles KPIs to the specific institutional context, and provide rationales for the institutional KPIs
- Make the monitoring mechanism for the implementation explicit

Training

- Continue the good training efforts
- Pay attention to the chances for the one Research Funding Organization to exchange ideas with similar organizations if possible
- Organisers should reduce the density of the joint meetings to allow sufficient time for training

Support

- Continue with the supportive atmosphere within the consortium
- Project partners should be disciplined in meeting deadlines
- The evaluating partner (WP9) should evaluate the quality of the communication and the accessibility of information on Hermione halfway through the project

7. Conclusion

This evaluation first answers the question what the feasibility, consistency, and level of coordination is in the GEP design by the GEARING-Roles implementing partners. Most GEPs still have to be approved at the institutional level, and the assessment is based on the texts that are available now. Their feasibility is moderate to good, mainly thanks to the involvement of stakeholders in the diagnosis and design of the GEP. In all cases the GEP implementing teams adapted their efforts to local context.

Regarding the *feasibility* of the proposed GEPs, based on their designs and the process through which they were made, our assessment is strongly positive. This assessment is based on three elements: the strong commitment shown by all six partners, the use of participatory techniques in developing the GEPs so that potential ownership of crucial stakeholders is facilitated and GEPs are based on contextualised analysis of problems with gender

equality in each institution, and the overall flexibility of the teams to respond to specific contextual challenges and opportunities.

Regarding *consistency* with the overall objectives of the GEARING-Roles project, we show that this consistency is present in all six institutions, although contextual choices at times imply that the consistency with GEARING-Roles KPIs is not detailed. Our main suggestions for improvement here are to provide more articulation of how the institutional KPIs relate to GEARING-Roles KPIs, detailing how local KPIs are institutionally appropriate, how they are aligning or diverging from the GEARING-Roles KPIs, why specific choices were made, and how they serve to uphold (or maybe even improve on) the GEARING-Roles KPIs.

Regarding *coordination*, we see evidence of good coordination in all places. In the GEP, we suggest to further develop and improve the allocation of tasks (if this is still needed), and we recommend to include the task of monitoring implementation.

The second question addressed the quality of the training provided within the GEARING-Roles consortium in the first 15 months. The data available on the training provided in the GEARING-Roles project are consistently positive on the training provided. Not only is the overall design of the training excellent, but also all partners expressed their sincere appreciation of these trainings and the essential role that these training played in enabling them to use participatory techniques to develop GEPs of good quality and with a high chance of succeeding. Furthermore, there are some logistical issues in when best to organise the trainings.

The third question was what the quality was of the support of within the GEARING Roles consortium in the first 15 months. In general the consortium members are very satisfied with the support provided by the coordinator and the WP7 leaders. The support provided has already been essential in coping with a crisis due to the withdrawal of a partner. The coordinator calls for more support from the consortium members in fulfilling all tasks.

Appendix A: GEP Summary Tables

The tables below summarize the content of the GEPs of the implementing partners, based on the summaries of their plans. For reasons of comparability, uniform concepts are uses to describe instruments, actors, and tasks. For reasons of space, action that relate to the same instrument and task, are taken together. KPIs in Italic refer to implicit KPIs as extrapolated by WP9, from the provided documents by the partners, recognising that such an analysis is subject to interpretation.

University of Ljubljana	KPIs	Instruments	Actors	Tasks
	Sex disaggregated databases and mechanisms Certain number of workshops on gender inclusive research and curricula. Certain number of workshops on gender sensitive language. Published protocol on sexual harassment. 3 workshops on sexual discrimination and harassment	Research Workshops Project meetings Baseline assessment Facilitated workshops Facilitated roundtables Exhibitions Preparation of guidelines for gender equality in research and curricula	Ljubljana project team Academic staff Students Support staff	Establish sex disaggregated databases and mechanisms Promote a gender inclusive institutional mission statement and quality assurance mechanisms. Establish GRC taskforce Promote gendered language in institutional documents Prepare FF UL protocol for sexual harassment. Facilitate workshops on sexual harassment

University of Deusto	KPIs	Instruments	Actors	Tasks
		Research	Deusto core team	Analysis of career progress, pay gaps and overload
		Mentoring program	Trade unions	Implement mentoring program
		Training	Research staff	Development, implementation and participation in training workshops
		Improvement of labour conditions	Education staff	Negotiate labour conditions
		Gender mainstreaming of teaching	Management	Development of teaching material
		Gender mainstreaming of research	University community	Develop a manual for gender in research
		Awareness raising campaign		Implement awareness raising campaign

IGOT: University of Lisbon	KPIs	Instruments	Actors	Tasks
	Approval of gender equality dimension in mission, strategy and student manuals Number of participants in awareness raising and training activities % of documents with inclusive language Minimum of 40% women in decision making bodies Minimum of 40% women in students events Number of participants in mentoring program % of women in recruitment committees and academic events Number of research projects coordinated by women Number of calls for research grants, theses and publications including a gender dimension in evaluation criteria Ratification of research charters Number of men taking parenthood leave Presence of anti-discrimination, harassment and compliant procedures	Gender mainstreaming of mission and strategy. Awareness raising campaign Information campaign Monitoring & evaluation Research Gender mainstreaming of staff training Guidelines for inclusive language Gender mainstreaming of teaching Gender quota in decision making Gender targets in students events and recruitment committees Mentoring program Training Adaptation of grant evaluation criteria Gender mainstreaming of research Ratification of Research charters Anti-discrimination, harassment and complaint procedures	Presidency Management Works council Scientific committee Pedagogical council Commission for gender equality Teaching coordinators IGOT core team Students associations Research team coordinators	Inclusion of gender equality in mission, strategy and students manuals Implement awareness raising campaign, including visibility of female role models Provide information about IGOT GEP Monitor and evaluate GEP indicators Data collection and reporting gender data (workforce, job applications) Include gender dimension in staff training. Develop and offer guidelines for inclusive language and gender parity in academic events Implement gender quota in decision making bodies Implement gender targets in student events and recruitment committees Develop and implement mentoring program Provide training on research funding, inclusion of a gender dimension I research and soft skills Adapt grant evaluation criteria Ratify charters Include gender dimension in course programs, theses and publications Develop and encourage use of work life measures

				Develop anti-discrimination, harassment and compliant procedures

Sabanci University	KPIs	Instruments	Actors	Tasks
	Gender targets for staff 40% parity career progression and recruitment initiatives Gender balance (30% M&F) in recruitment committees. Increase the number of women in management Raise gender awareness Increase gender parity (at least 40% M&F) in decision-making and leadership Gender parity in research Introduce Gender equality module Increase modules with gender focus	Research Benchmarking Monitoring and evaluation Mentoring program Training Improvement of labour conditions Awareness campaign Provision of guidelines Gender mainstreaming in research Gender mainstreaming of teaching	Sabanci project team Research staff Education staff Students Administrative staff	Data collection and analysis of women in management, and of gender in research, and the institutionalization of gender equality Creating monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including an Ombuds office Implement mentoring program. Develop training on gender awareness, leadership and management, gender in research, and sexual harassment. Implement guidelines for gender in teaching, (as developed by Oxford Brookes University), and for the use of gender neutral language. Develop teaching modules and summer schools on gender and career programmes for students Promote the inclusiveness of policies for the LGBTI+ community

Estonia Research Agency	KPIs	Instruments	Actors	Tasks
	Gender balance in decision-making	Gender mainstreaming of research	Estonia Research Agency Core team	Give preference to candidates of underrepresented sex for decision making bodies
	Increase gender balance among reviewers	Preferential treatment of candidates of underrepresented sex for decision making bodies.	Decision makers	
	Gender awareness of Estonian Research Agency staff	Gender mainstreaming of experts training	Experts	
	Salinity in external communication	Training		
	Improve gender dimension of research	Awareness raising campaign		
	Prevention of gender discrimination	Monitoring & evaluation		
		Information		