

## **Mandate and Working Methods of the Helsinki Group on Gender in Research and Innovation**

### **1) Mandate**

- a) The HG is a group who brings together representatives from Member States and Associated Countries, to promote equality between women and men in research and innovation (R&I) and to embed the gender dimension in science, research and innovation contents and programmes.
  
- b) The group's mandate includes the following tasks:
  - To reflect and advise the Commission on the development of initiatives within the different policies and frameworks related to science, research and innovation (eg. the Innovation Union, Europe 2020 Strategy, the European Research Area, Framework Programmes, etc.) with a view to:
    - ✓ Enhance gender equality in R & I , including work/life balance issues;
    - ✓ Integrate the gender dimension in research contents and programmes,
    - ✓ Modernise research institutions;
    - ✓ Mobilizing stakeholders in order to promote gender equality
    - ✓ Facilitating the development of the gender priority in ERA
  
  - To exchange best practices on the measures and policies which have been devised and implemented at local, regional, national and European level with a view to facilitating MS and AC joint activities;
  
  - To support and advise the European Commission in the preparation of comparable European statistics and indicators on gender equality in R & I;
  
  - To create awareness at national level on European and national activities related to gender equality in R & I, through Ministries and/or the national Steering Committees (if relevant) involved in research and innovation.
  
  - To mobilise stakeholders.

### **2) Working Methods**

The group will hold biannual plenary meetings in principle in Brussels. The working methods may include:

- brainstorming and participatory seminars,
- multi-lateral exchanges using methods available to all delegates such as teleconferencing,
- written contributions on relevant topics
- preparation of joint documents (e.g. position papers etc.),
- workshops on specific issues,
- invitation of external experts or speakers to the HG meetings, seminars or workshops on an *ad-hoc* basis,

- using Sinapse website and platform.

The draft agenda of each meeting (as well as the appropriate working methods) is prepared by the HG chairpersons in collaboration with the European Commission and is approved by the HG members

Small working groups may, when appropriate, be established by the HG to work for a defined period of time, on specific issues of common interest or on priorities more relevant to some countries than others. The working groups report their results to the HG plenary which will then decide on the subsequent follow-up. The decision to establish working groups as well as their mandate is made by the HG in collaboration with the European Commission.

### **3) Composition and Roles**

- Members

The HG is composed of one delegate and one alternate per country. They are designated by research and innovation ministries from Member States and countries associated to the Framework Programme (Associated Countries). Their combined fields of competence should cover the gender equality strategy in national policies for research and innovation.

The European Commission's decision of 2000 setting a minimum of 40 % of the under-represented sex, applies also to the HG group. This should be achieved by the beginning of the next Framework Programme, Horizon 2020.

- Chairpersons

The HG is co-chaired by the European Commission and members of the HG defined as follows:

- ✓ The representative of the Member State holding the Presidency of the European Union. She/he will have a mandate for a period of 6 months. S/he will work in close collaboration with the representative of the Member State holding the previous as well as the next Presidency of the EU.
- ✓ The Head of Unit dealing with gender in research and innovation, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission.

- Secretariat

Secretariat is provided by the European Commission services.

### **4) Other Organizational Issues**

- Decision-making procedures:

Decisions on position papers are taken by consensus in a given time frame set by the chairpersons.

- Meeting documents

Delegates will receive the meeting documents ahead of each meeting, at least two weeks before the meeting.

- Travel reimbursement for the participants

Delegates will be reimbursed for their travel expenses by the European Commission through the standard reimbursement procedure for Expert Groups. Details will be given by the European Commission services in the invitation letter sent to the delegates. The reimbursement applies to one delegate/country and for a maximum of two meetings per year.

- Language regime

The working language for the HG is English.

## **ANNEX 1: HISTORY AND CURRENT STATUS OF THE GROUP**

The Helsinki Group on Women in Science was established in November 1999, as part of the action plan announced in the Communication (1999)76 "Women and Science: mobilising women to enrich European research" and confirmed in the Research Council Resolution adopted in 20 May 1999, OJ C201/1 – 16/7/1999.

On 26 June 2001, in its resolution on science and society and on women in science (2001/C 199/01), the Council invited the **Member States and the European Commission to support the Helsinki Group in continuing its work, and to deepen cooperation to promote the role of women in European research.**

In the last years, the HG has actively contributed to the publication of She Figures (in 2003, 2006, 2009 and currently for She Figures 2012) through its sub-group of national statistical correspondents.

The Group has given input on programming documents during FP5, FP6 and FP7. It has also provided feedback on a number of European publications and activities (for instance "Women in Industrial Research – WIR" and "Structural Change in research institutions: Enhancing excellence, gender equality and efficiency in research and innovation").

The Group has worked jointly on the publication of the report "National policies on women and science in Europe" published in 2002 which included a national scoreboard on existing policies and has supplied information for the Benchmarking national policies report, which is an update of the 2002 report and had been published in 2008.

On 24 November 2009, at a meeting marking 10 years of activities of the HG, a Position Paper, "Gender and research beyond 2009", was adopted.

At its last meeting on 8 and 9 March 2012, the HG decided to review its mandate (last version April 2007) and asked the European Commission to prepare a draft to be submitted to the HG for comments.