TARGET approach

TARGET aims to contribute to the advancement of gender equality in research and innovation (R&I) by supporting a reflexive gender equality policy in seven Gender Equality Innovating Institutions (GEIs). The TARGET approach goes beyond the formal adoption of a gender equality policy. It does this by emphasising an iterative and reflexive process towards equality at the institutional level, as well as establishing a community of practice (CoP) for gender equality within the institution. Effective change is the result of increased institutional willingness and capacity to identify, reflect on and address gender bias in a sustained way. The starting point and anchor of the process is a tailored Gender Equality Plan or Strategy (GEP/GES) in each GEII which will be designed, implemented, monitored, self-assessed and evaluated in the course of TARGET.

Within TARGET gender equality in R&I is defined as a three-dimensional construct which encompasses the three substantive areas defined by the European Research Area:

1) removing gender-related institutional barriers to careers
2) addressing gender imbalances in decision-making processes
3) strengthening the gender dimension in research programmes.

The TARGET approach to these areas is shown in the table below: three dimensions or areas of intervention are defined, according to related visions.

TARGET GEP Cycle

The TARGET approach is based on a cyclical and evidence based model of policy development. The process starts with an empirical assessment of the status quo of gender quality within each GEII (the Gender Equality Audit). The Gender Equality Audit analyses the procedures and practices within each GEII using qualitative and quantitative data on the three substantive areas of gender equality. This requires a reflection of existing data within each institution if the data allows for a gender analysis. In case existing data is not sufficient, data collection modes have to be adapted or new data has to be collected.

Based on this analysis GEIs develop a customised Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in order to initiate institutional change. Each GEII develops a monitoring focus on the implementation of the activities mentioned in the GEP as well as the development of the status quo of gender equality within the institution.

TARGET provides, for each step of the development and implementation, capacity building activities and specific tools (e.g. the Gender Equality Audit Tool, Guidelines for the development of GEPs, Guidelines for monitoring and self-assessment – available on www.gendertarget.eu). Each of the TARGET tools is adapted to the specific circumstances of each GEII. Supporting partners provide targeted support for this transfer process. Each of the steps also offers the possibility for a reflection of the process, the results achieved so far, as well as a possibility to adapt the GEP or make it more specific.
**Community of Practice (CoP)**

TARGET is based on the assumption that a CoP is a key element of a reflexive gender equality policy as it provides room for self-referencing of current developments regarding gender equality and supports mainstreaming gender within the organisation. It also enables distributed responsibility avoiding a situation where the responsibility for gender equality is exclusively assigned to an expert or a gender equality office. The CoP should be a group of change agents from different fields of the organisation willing to pursue gender equality goals. Consequently, TARGET aims to support the establishment of a CoP and discusses its relevance in the tools provided. For instance, within the Gender Equality Audit Tool GEIIs identify relevant stakeholders and strategies to involve them actively in institutional gender equality policies.

Experiences with the establishment of a CoP show the importance of a moderator who should bring along specific characteristics (e.g. gender equality expertise, knowledge about the institution, acceptance within the institution, social skills, strategic thinking). However, the role of the moderator is especially important in the context of a reflexive gender equality culture as s/he has to create a room for reflexivity, use empirical evidence and build alliances with other strategic goals and institutional projects. Hence we assume that the CoP as such and the moderator, in particular, are key factors for a sustainable gender equality policy.

**TARGET consortium**

TARGET supports GEIIs to develop the capacity for a reflexive gender equality policy focusing on the three substantive areas (careers, decision-making and education and research content), GEIIs cover R&I in its broadest sense, including all disciplines encompassing both basic and applied research.

TARGET consortium is made up of eleven institutions. Alongside the six GEIIs implementing Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), the network of universities has adopted a Gender Equality Strategy (GES) at the network level and aims to foster institutional change in its member universities. In addition,
TARGET aims to contribute to the advancement of gender equality in research and innovation (R&I) by supporting a reflexive gender equality policy in seven Gender Equality Innovating Institutions (GEIs) in the Mediterranean basin - including three research performing organisations (RPOs), three research funding organisations (RFOs) and a network of universities.

PROJECT PARTNERS
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PROJECT LEAD PROFILE

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