EFFECTIVE GENDER EQUALITY IN RESEARCH AND THE ACADEMIA

SP4-CAPACITIES
COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTION, SUPPORTING ACTION
FP7-SCIENCE-IN-SOCIETY-2013-1

DELIVERABLE NUMBER: D.8.1

Assessment of the kick-off phase of EGERA

Authors: **Heloísa Perista, Pedro Perista, Isabel Baptista, Eudelina Quintal
                  with contributions of all partners**

Dissemination Level: Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the
                       Commission Services)

Deliverable Status: Report

Due date of deliverable:	31/12/2014
Actual date of delivery:	31/12/2014
Start date of project:	01/01/2014
Duration:	48 months
Deliverable lead beneficiary:	CESIS

Index

Index of figures

1. Introduction

The assessment of the kick-off phase of EGERA bases on a set of tools that have been designed and implemented throughout the first year of duration of the project (2014). As laid down in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, the specific objectives regarding this first assessment included:

- Contributing for the improvement of the decision-making process concerning the design and implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAPs).

- Generating information on the Project process.

- Assessing the innovative nature of the actions proposed.

- Facilitating and enhancing institutional self-reflexivity and fostering mutual learning and experience-exchange among the participating institutions.

The activities of monitoring and evaluation developed during the kick-off phase concerned three of the four major tasks of workpackage 'Monitoring & Evaluation':

- The Gender Equality Action Plans' (GEAP) design evaluation

- The monitoring of the operationalization of the Project

- The monitoring of the implementation of the Project

The structure of this report follows closely this model and end with some conclusive remarks where strong points and potential pitfalls and deviations are identified.

It should be noted that, throughout the first year of the project and accordingly with the direction proposed both in the project proposal and in the Monitoring & Evaluation Plan, the activities of this work package have been basing on a collaborative process in which CESIS assumes the lead but where the contribution of all EGERA partners has been crucial.

Monitoring and evaluation is developed in close cooperation with partners, who are also called to discuss and provide their comments to the tools produced by the evaluating team. Additionally, reciprocity is encouraged. As such, at the request of CESIS, a specific time-slot for monitoring and evaluation has been allocated in every team meeting. During this time-slot, previous results are shared, commented and discussed, aiming to provide the basis for on-going improvement of EGERA.

2. Operationalization and implementation of EGERA

The assessment of the operationalization and implementation of the projects bases on regular on-going monitoring. The monitoring of the operationalization of the Project covers:

- Management procedures and the decision-making process in the consortium.
- Dissemination strategies of the Project.
- Dissemination strategies of each Plan.
- Partnership building for the design and implementation of each Plan.
- Support from the highest management structures of the entities concerned.

As for the monitoring of the implementation of the Project it assesses the:

- Degree of implementation of the activities foreseen in the different workpackages.
- Degree of implementation of the activities foreseen in the different Plans.
- Number and characteristics of the recipients of the actions implemented (comparison with initial targets, possible deviations and respective causes).
- Adhesion of the recipients to the actions implemented.
- Participation of the different categories of actors and institutional agents involved in each Plan.
- Hindering factors to the development of the Project.
- Success factors to the development of the Project.
- Hindering factors to the development of each Plan.
- Success factors to the development of each Plan.

So far, the monitoring activities focused on three main procedures. One regards the evaluation of the steering committee meetings; the second regards specific evaluation forms for EGERA events; and the third regards the monitoring and assessment of the project's development and implementation.

Analysis of meetings is two folded. Besides participant observation, a questionnaire with quantitative and qualitative questions is filled-in by all participants. The kick-off phase assessment includes two steering committee meetings: Paris (month 3) and Barcelona (month 7).

Scheduled to coincide, in most cases, with steering committee meetings, EGERA events were organised, regarding which specific evaluation forms were produced and filled-in by participants:

- Start-up conference (Paris, M3);

- Workshop on HR & gender culture Indicators; Seminar on gender training standards and plans; Group model building session (Nijmegen, M5);

- Workshop on gender-sensitive research in international projects (Barcelona, M7);

- Conference on gender equality and organisational culture (Ankara, M11).

Thus far, the project's development and implementation consists of a monitoring and assessment instrument to be filled-in in a six-month period basis. The first semester to be covered was the period from March to August 2014 and the second will cover the period from September 2014 to February 2015. Thus, only the results regarding the first period are included in this report.

2.1. Steering committee meetings

2.1.1. Paris (M3 – March 2014)

Management of the meeting

Overall, the different aspects regarding the management of the meeting were evaluated quite positively. It should be stressed that even though individual aspects were assessed less positively – even if only by a few participants – the assessment of the overall functioning did not register any negative assessments.

Figure 1 - Management of the meeting (%)
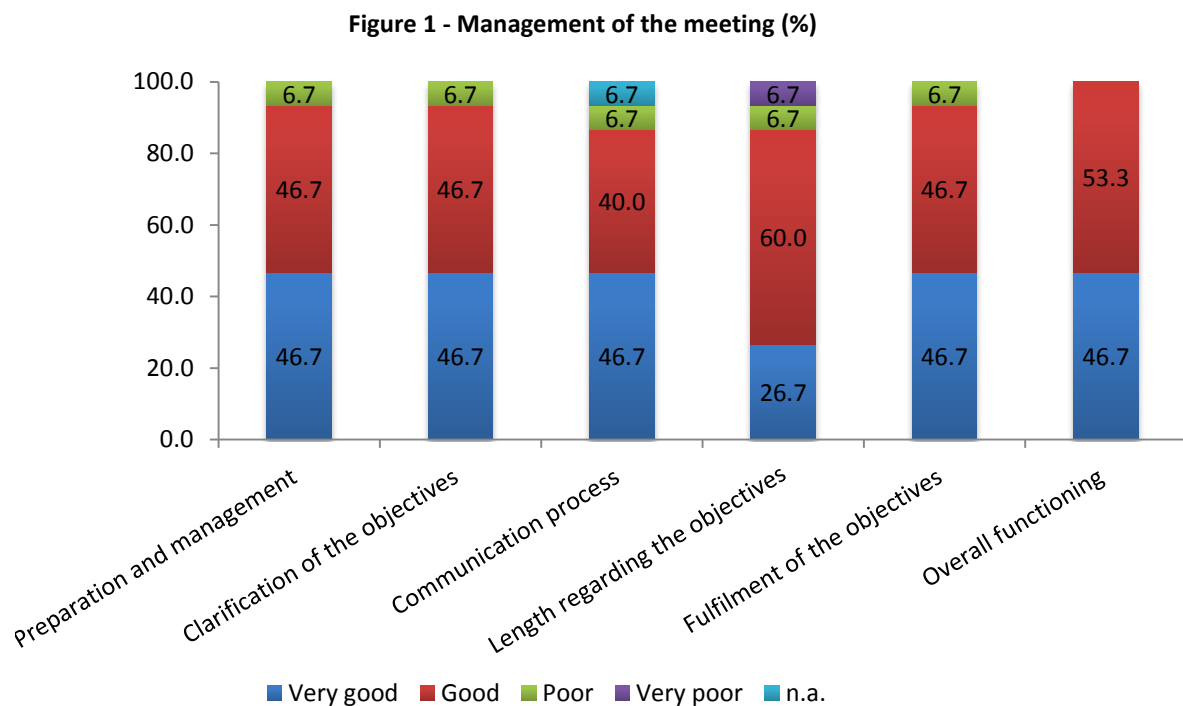
The length of the meeting regarding its objectives was the least positive aspect. It was felt that, considering it as the first meeting and given the comprehensiveness, complexity and ambition of EGERA, it would have been useful to have had a longer meeting.

> "So much information to share about all the WP's, we could have used more time. On the other hand the time allocated to every WP was already extensive. In this stage of the project it would have been useful to have all the researchers who will be working on the project at the meeting".

> "The time for presenting and discussing the workpackages was very limited".

> "There was way too little time to discuss all the matters necessary, to sort out things and to come to commonly accepted decisions; I went home still having no clue of how we are going to work, how we are functioning as a group, of what to do and of what will come up the next six months; and it would have been much better if we had been seated in a circle so as to be able to discuss all together".

Other aspects highlighted by partners regarded organisational procedures:

"During the meeting I would prefer tables (for better writing my notes etc.). I would appreciate to organise the meetings in the middle of the working week. For the kick-off meeting I had to miss my family on Saturday since I had to travel to my home from Paris".

"I'd prefer having met the group before the official congress started on Thursday".

"I wasn't really sure what to expect till I arrived at the meeting. For day 1, I was not given my brief on what was expected until the day before and this was amended at the meeting".

Functioning of the partnership

The functioning of the partnership was also positively assessed overall. Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that especially the aforementioned lack of time led some partners to consider that different aspects regarding the partnership were hampered.

Figure 2 - The functioning of the partnership
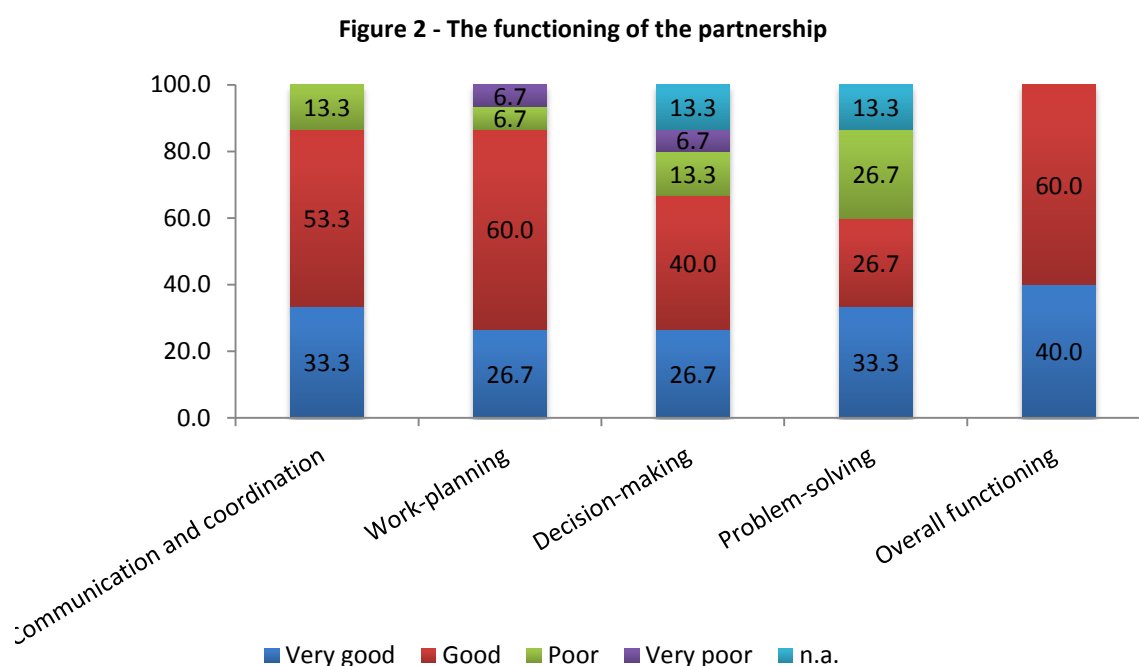
Besides the time constraints also the fact that, due to logistic reasons, the meeting was preceded by the start-up conference became a source of dissatisfaction to some of the participants.

"There was way too little time to discuss all the matters necessary, to sort out things and to come to commonly accepted decisions; I went home still having no clue of how we are going to work, how we are functioning as a group, of what to do and of what will come up the next six months; and it would have been much better if we had been seated in a circle so as to be able to discuss all together".

"Too many topics for little time. It would have been better if we had known each other before".

In any case, once again, it should be stressed that overall assessment does not seem to reflect such considerations. In fact, the analysis of the functioning of the partnership using mean values unveils that this is the parameter reaching the highest score (1.6). None of the aspects considered reaches a mean figure over 2

Figure 3 - The functioning of the partnership (mean values)

Overall functioning	**1,6**
Communication and coordination	**1,8**
Work-planning	**1,9**
Problem-solving	**1,9**
Decision-making	**2,0**

Note: from 1=very good to 4=very poor

Performance of the partners

Also individual performance of the partners was widely positively assessed. Sciences-Po, as coordinating entity taking the lead of the meeting was the partner organisation with the best individual assessment.

Figure 4 - The partners

Legend: ■ Very good ■ Good ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ n.a.
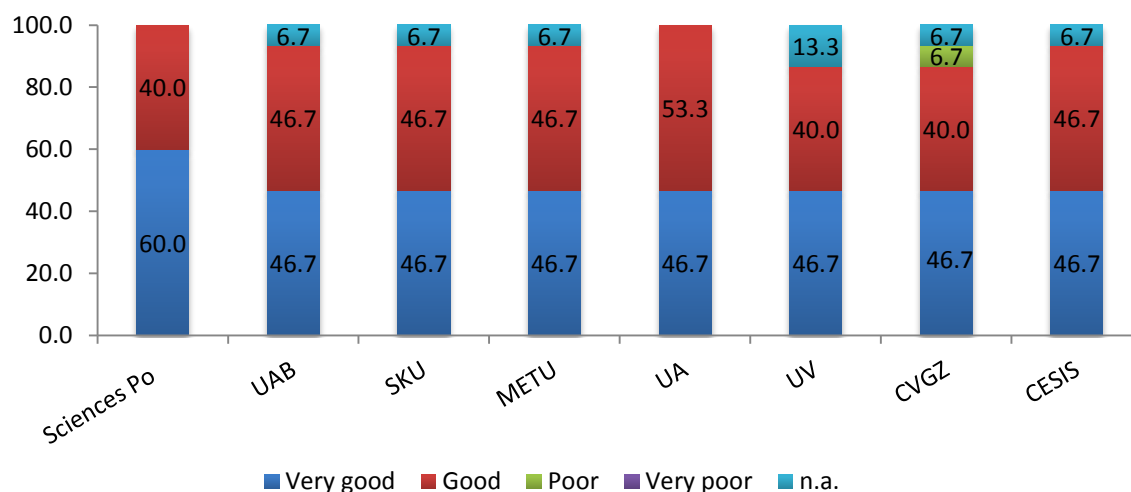
Administrative and financial arrangements

The meeting included a specific time-slot for the discussion of administrative and financial arrangements. This is deemed crucial, especially in a kick-off meeting and, accordingly, it seems to have been much appreciated by participants. As they have put it, "*I think these were explained very well to partners*" and "*it is very good to have these important issues discussed in so much detail*".

Figure 5 - Administrative and financial arrangements
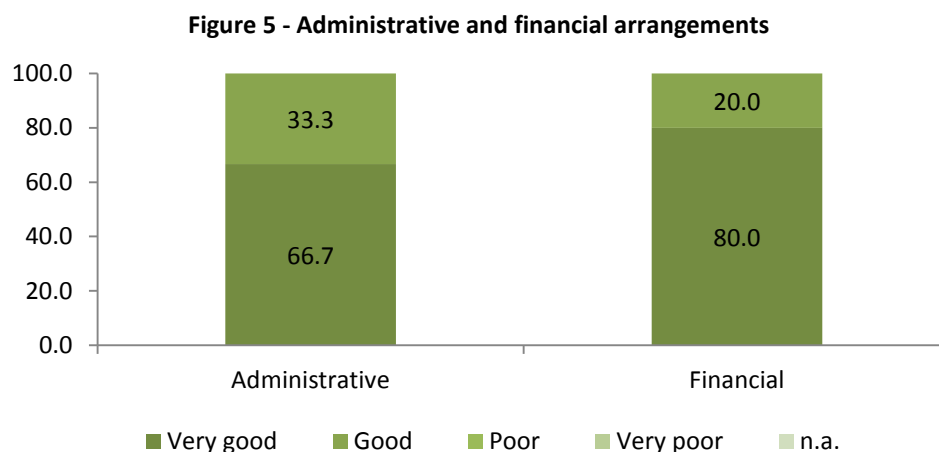
Expectations regarding EGERA and anticipated challenges

In the kick-off meeting of the project it was deemed essential to grasp the expectations of the different partners regarding EGERA. Some expectations were clearly identified straight to the main objectives of the project such as gender training, the mainstreaming of gender into curricula and regulation, etc. within the overall aim of achieving structural change.

> "*My expectations are to develop certain training programs and the introduction of gender perspective into curricula. Having a regulation on sexual harassment and further gender equality regulations are specific outcomes that we expect to receive at the end of this project*".

> "*The participation in the project is an opportunity to improve the tools for gender equality of my university. In this sense I expect the project be able to provide the participating institutions the effective and good tools aimed to improve gender inequality (indicators, training, good practices and other resources)*".

> "*To create structural changes regarding the different university contexts, and crossing the dimensions of the project: diagnosis, teaching, research, community, governance, and so on and so forth*".

However, for many participants, there was still a significant indefinition at this stage. In most cases, it seems to have been the expression of caution since the project runs for a long time and as, aforementioned, is rather ambitious and complex.

"Good but we have to start with this complex project".

"I have no clear expectations; I hope it will have a positive effect on gender equality in all the institutions".

"I would like to re-read the description of work first before I can comment on this".

"We have 45 months to go. It is difficult to estimate from now on. But I hope it will be challenging to implement".

Other participants provided just overall expectations of success, highlighting the need for good coordination and cooperation in order to achieve proposed objectives.

"If the implementation of the project objectives will run smoothly we might get very good results".

"If we succeed to coordinate the contribution of the partners to the different work packages, we can have very good results. There is also the risk of many partners coordinating too many things".

"When tasks and activities will be coordinated well, the expected results will be achieved".

"Despite the rather ' shaky' and ' ambiguous' start of the project, I expect that significant progress will be achieved in the participating institutions along the lines of the project's goals. Good reputation and significant experience of most partners in the project indicates overall superior human resources of these institutions as well as their apparent commitment to the merits of 'gender equality' in the academia. My overall expectation regarding the results of the project is therefore, rather optimistic".

Thus, it is not surprising that communication and coordination issues are mentioned as one of the major challenges anticipated regarding the successful accomplishment of the project.

"Communication between the partners".

"The main challenges are to coordinate the efforts and streamline communications between partners, to prevent doing double work".

"A way better exchange and communication among partners in a setting suited for discussion".

"The coordination of so many institutions, which have attained different degrees of gender equality already, and that operate in very different contexts. This will have to be done under extremely tight deadlines, and I would be afraid that some precious information/possibilities for action can be forgone in order to achieve deadlines and produce the expected materials. I would be afraid of losing on the substance of the project for the sake of producing results. Gender issues are complex to explore and difficult to change, and it is easy to remain on the surface, whereas the problems and answers are buried down deep and require time".

Also the accomplishing of the significant number of tasks foreseen and the close deadlines associated to it were matters of concern expressed by many participants.

"Adhering to all the deadlines; coordinating everything in such a way that no double work is being done and complex tasks are performed in collaboration with various partners instead of by a single partner; making clear what are the exact expectations of every partner, what input do we need from each other to reach our goals"?

"I think the number of partners with overlapping timescales and meetings will be the main issue. While I think each partner has ideas on how to proceed on their own work package, coordination of this will be complex and challenging. Also, one needs to not lose sight of the overall aim of the project and focus on outcomes - it can be easy just to focus on delivering just on the work package without considering the overall interplay of the work".

"I think the project is quite ambitious in terms of the actions that we must carry out. For this reason I think in the implementation of these actions, the planning and the assessment of the available resources and to adapt the results to both aspects is essential for a successful of the project. The good coordination and the effective communication between the partners as well as to design good guidelines for the collection of the information are important too".

"Too many tasks are in the row and there seems an ambiguity on the setting of the limits/guidelines on these tasks. But I suppose things will improve in the future".

Besides these intrinsic factors, also an extrinsic challenge was identified: the very resistances to the subjects dealt with by the project and that it aims at analysing in institutional frameworks.

"The resistances that the project tries to analyse, mainly socio-political, organisational and cultural resistances".

"To overcome resistance in the institutions".

"It will be very important to find agreeable directors at the universities that will let us collect the necessary data that we want to collect and to implement the procedures that we will finalize. The project is multidisciplinary and I think one of the most important points is to be able to gather data from other institutions on time in the desired scope".

Finally, another challenge identified regards the need to achieve a holistic framework within which comparative analysis may be produced, which raises the responsibility for individual implementing partners but more specifically to the coordination, monitoring and evaluation and to the partnership as a whole.

"In my view, the main challenges to the successful accomplishment of the project's goals may arise from difficulties of building a holistic framework in which the advances and / or changes in different institutional and cultural contexts can be comparatively evaluated. In other words, how to assess the impact and/or meaning of the specific steps taken, resistances met and negotiations made in different contexts vis-a-vis one another, so as to be able have a meaningful, comparative analysis and make sense of them in terms of the overall goals of EGERA, may be very difficult".

Overall assessment

Bearing in mind previous assessments, overall impressions regarding the project management and the partnership were quite positive. Still largely positive but not so much for some participants was the assessment of the knowledge of the role and of what was expected from the partner entity at that stage.

Figure 6 - Overall impressions
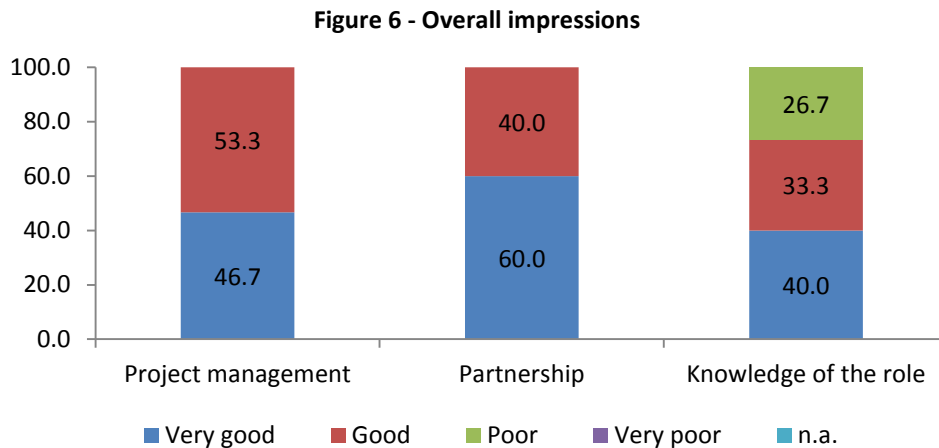
This seems to connect to the challenges, as well as to the time constraints identified above.

"I think the number of partners with overlapping timescales and meetings will be the main issue. While I think each partner has ideas on how to proceed on their own work package, coordination of this will be complex and challenging. Also, one needs to not lose sight of the overall aim of the project and focus on outcomes - it can be easy just to focus on delivering just on the work package without considering the overall interplay of the work".

"In the few presentations I attended, I was surprised to see that the partners had important doubts concerning their role in the project and about what exactly was expected for them. I think this could have been clarified first between the management and each partner, so that some fundamental issues would be clear already for them before their presentations. This, I feel, would have allowed them to transmit their expectations and to organise the work, given that this will be the only meeting where almost all members of the project are present. A general overview of the "deliverables" in the form of a timeline would have been useful too. This might be a partial view because I did not attend the whole meeting".

2.1.2. Barcelona (M7 – July 2014)

Management of the meeting

As for the kick-off meeting, overall assessment of the meeting was very positive. However, some individual aspects were not evaluated so positively by some participants.

Figure 7 - Management of the meeting
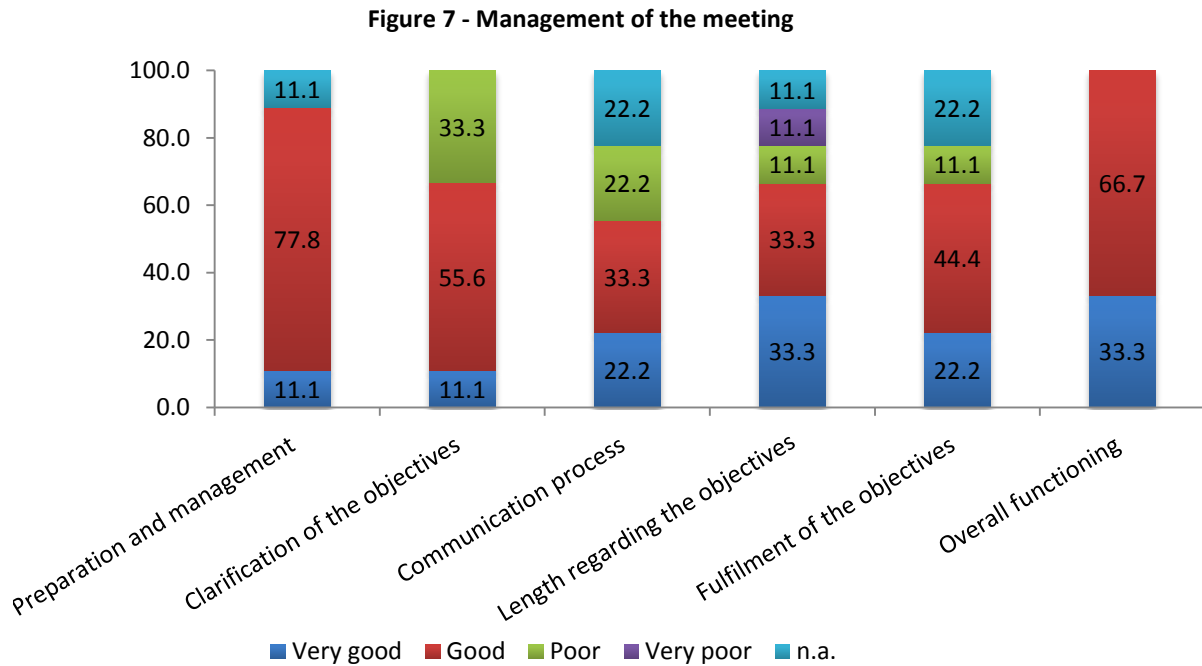
The scheduling of the steering committee meeting along with a specific EGERA event and the need to comply with time and budget constraints led the meeting to become reduced to only one afternoon. In a crucial initial stage of implementation this was deemed as a frailty, at least by some participants.

"Too little time to discuss. I would appreciate a more balanced turn taking by partners (this was not made clear). Discussions not structured well".

"More time for discussing important logistic and content related issues of the WP's".

A crucial aspect explaining the results regarding the 'clarification of objectives' regards the fact that the agenda was not distributed before the meeting.

"It would be useful to send around the agenda for the meeting and provide the opportunity to add agenda points".

"Need of a concrete agenda beforehand so that we can amend it".

Functioning of the partnership

On the contrary, the functioning of the partnership during the meeting was very positively assessed.

Figure 8 – The functioning of the partnership
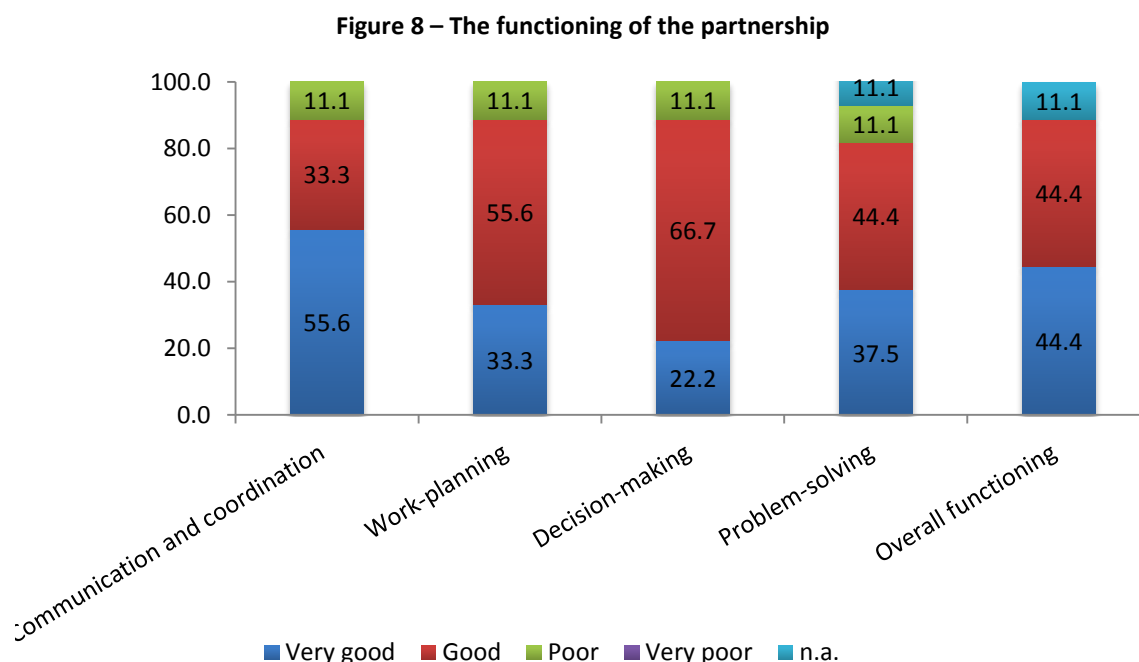
Good communication and the common sharing of the first experiences of implementation were deemed as very useful and as contributing for good functioning.

> *"Communication with partners is very good and supportive. Good atmosphere, fruitful and constructive".*

> *"Very interesting to share experiences and difficulties among partners. Really necessary to meet regularly to discuss these issues and learn from each other. I appreciate the pragmatic approach of the coordinator".*

In any case, there was one suggestion to take these procedures into a different level.

> *It is extremely useful to share information on the implementation and steps made at the institutional level. I would therefore appreciate if the discussions were not ordered only around WP management but also issues such as overcoming resistances, mobilising support, etc. Most importantly, how are the teams individually structured. It would be great if there were more time for structured discussion.*

The aforementioned difficulties regarding the clarification of the objectives led to increased challenges for the functioning of the partnership.

"Due to lack of clear agenda/objective, it was often chaotic, so maybe not effective for decisions, problem-solving. Of course linked to complexity - everything is connected".

"Input of the partners on the agenda is advisable; in the future we need to be able to put pressing problems on the agenda".

Performance of the partners

Despite any difficulties registered it should be highlighted that no negative assessment of individual partners was made which is undoubtedly positive. There seems to be the general feeling that there are issues that need to be dealt with in order to boost the performance of the project but that no individual responsibilities for underperformance may be allocated to one or more partners.

Figure 9 - The partners

Legend: Very good, Good, Poor, Very poor, n.a.
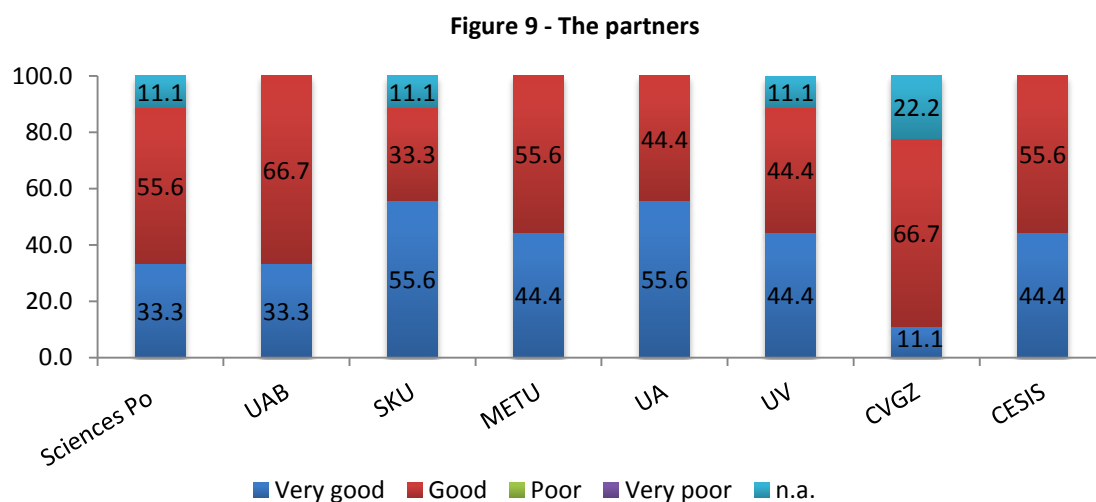
Administrative and financial arrangements

Unlike the start-up meeting, there was no specific time-slot for administrative and financial arrangements. The only specific administrative aspect mentioned regarded the date for the meeting that *"should have been announced earlier as to save money. Also the locations e.g. for dinner, that could impact the choice of hotel".*

Figure 10 - Administrative and financial arrangements

Administrative: Very good 11.1, Good 77.8, n.a. 11.1
Financial: Very good 11.1, Good 33.3, Poor 11.1, n.a. 33.3

Legend: ■ Very good ■ Good ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ n.a.
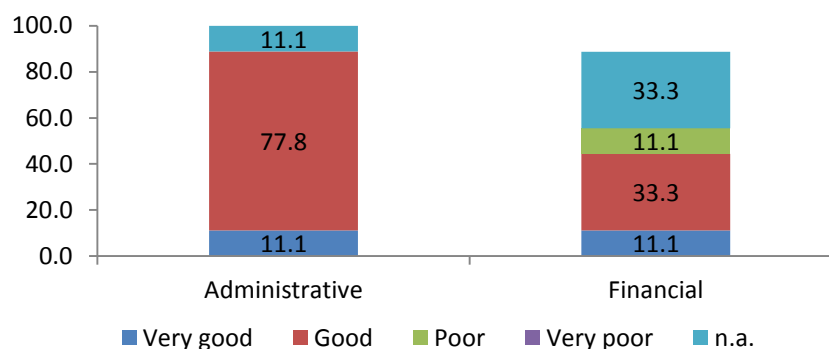
Overall assessment

The overall assessment regarding the project management, the partnership and the knowledge of the role and of what was expected from the partner entity was largely positive. The latter aspect registers a significant improvement regarding the results of the kick-off meeting. Even if full knowledge is still to be achieved, none of the participants now reported to have a poor knowledge which is probably revealing of a path that is being taken.

Figure 11 - Overall impressions

Project management: Very good 44.4, Good 33.3, Poor 11.1, n.a. 11.1
Partnership: Very good 66.7, Good 33.3
Knowledge of the role: Very good 11.1, Good 88.9

Legend: ■ Very good ■ Good ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ n.a.
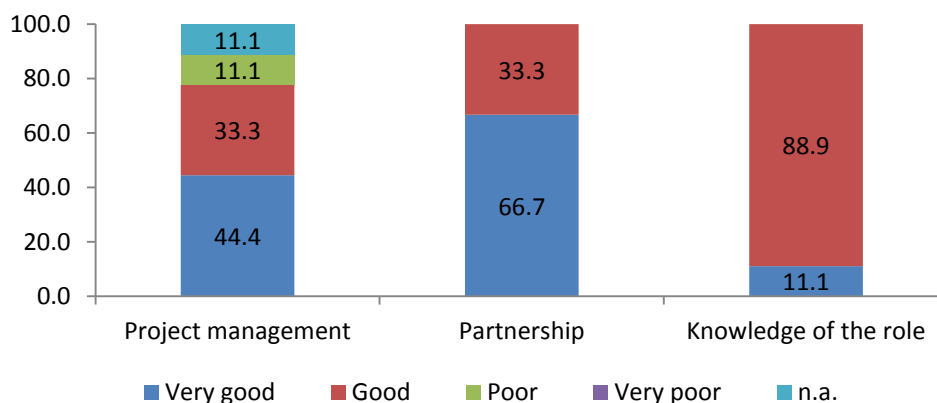
However, there is still room for improvement and the wish to go further as expressed in some of the suggestions shared by partners.

> *"Yesterday, the interconnection and links between some WPs became clearer. However, I still think that more info/discussion on how WPs will roll out and complement one another is needed".*

> *"More time for discussion and solving problems".*

Some improvements were already suggested and welcomed by participants.

"There are still some issues of overview management but I've read there will be a EGERA management handbook. Maybe it would be useful a meeting report (not extensive) shortly afterwards with decisions taken and agreed to do's".

"We look forward to the encompassing project planning, in which interdependencies between workpackages are clarified".

2.2. EGERA events

EGERA events were organised and scheduled to coincide, in most cases, with project meetings. Specific evaluation forms regarding these events were produced and filled-in by participants. Over the first year of the project the events were the following:

- Start-up conference (Paris, M3);

- Workshop on HR & gender culture Indicators; Seminar on gender training standards and plans; Group model building session (Nijmegen, M5);

- Workshop on gender-sensitive research in international projects (Barcelona, M7);

- Conference on gender equality and organisational culture (Ankara, M11).

Given the date of realisation of the conference on gender equality and organisational culture in Ankara in the end of November 2014, it could not be included in this report. It will nonetheless be included in the next monitoring and evaluation report and its results will be shared within the partnership in the next steering committee meeting, to be held in Paris in February 2015.

2.2.1. Start-up conference: Paris (M3 – March 2014)

The start-up conference took place in Paris on the 20th March 2014. 28 participants delivered their evaluation questionnaires. The results of the conference have been shared within the partnership during the second steering committee meeting, held in Barcelona in July 2014.

Generally speaking, the start-up conference was evaluated positively by the participants who delivered the assessment form. However, there were clear differences between different aspects of the conference.

No negative assessments were made regarding the interest of the contents and the effectiveness of the speakers. However, approximately 18% of the participants did not perceive the duration has having been the most appropriate while 21.5% considered that the objectives were not clearly and adequately stated and 25% would have cherished a higher level of interactivity.

Figure 12 - Assessment of the conference
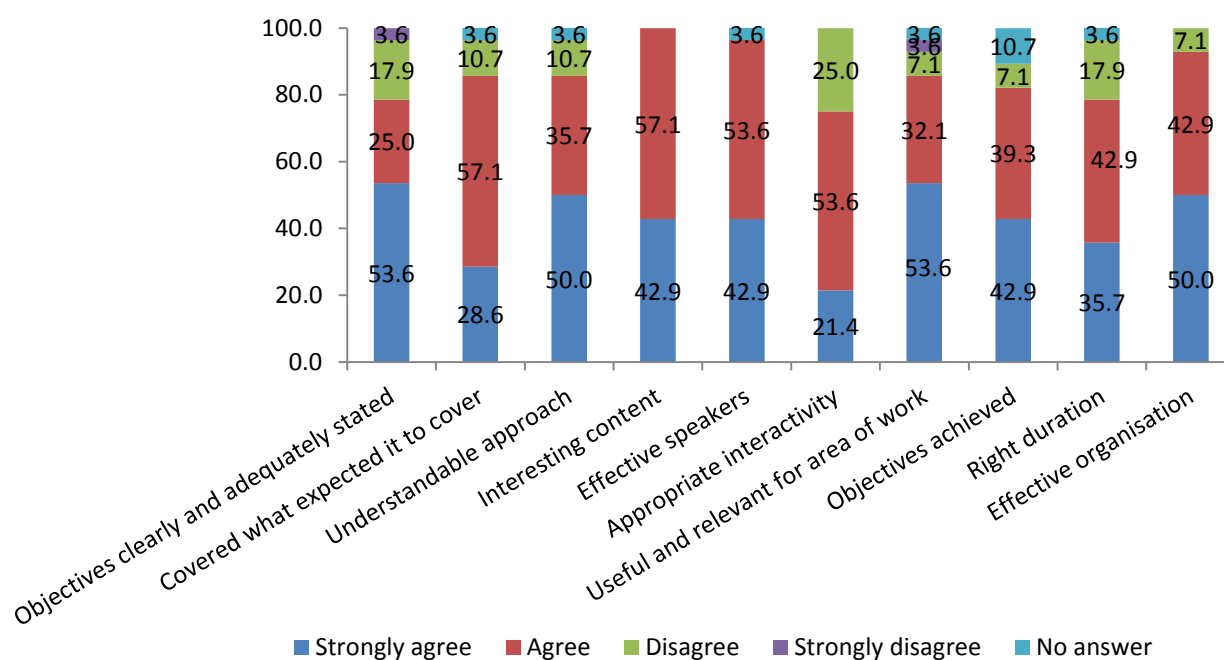
The analysis of these issues resorting to mean figures highlights that this was the aspect evaluated less positively. Even so, in average it stood at the mark of 2.

Figure 13 - Assessment of the conference (mean values)

Objectives were clearly and adequately stated	1.7
The meeting covered what I expected it to cover	1.8
Understandable approach	1.6
Interesting content	1.6
The speakers were effective	1.6
The level of interactivity was appropriate	2.0
The themes and the discussion were useful and relevant for my area of work	1.6
Objectives were achieved	1.6
The duration of the meeting was right for me	1.8
The overall organisation of the meeting was effective	1.6

Note: from 1=strongly agree to 4=strongly disagree

Participants were also asked to express what they have liked best and the least about the conference. Among the former, three main aspects were mentioned. The first regards the level of political commitment guaranteed towards the project, not only from partner institutions at

the management level, via consortium partner declarations but also from French ministers[1] who issued video declarations that were broadcasted during the event.

A second aspect highlighted by participants regarded the possibility to hear about the experiences of different countries, different entities and disciplines within the scope of an international/European approach.

The third regarded the contents. Gender equality in research was mentioned by participants as an important issue which has been interestingly discussed. The division into two roundtables with two different angles and a wrap-up table was mentioned as positive and especially the second round table, in which *"original ideas were developed",* was appreciated. According to some participants, the conference allowed them to form a clearer idea of EGERA's content.

As for the least positive aspects, these regarded, most of all, the lack of interaction between speakers and with the audience and some organisational aspects such as the inexistence of breaks and the coexistence of too many speakers in each panel which not only created logistic difficulties as it reduced the time for presentations.

2.2.2. Workshop on HR & gender culture Indicators; Seminar on gender training standards and plans; Group model building session: Nijmegen (M5 – May 2014)

The workshop on HR & gender culture Indicators, as well as the seminar on gender training standards and plans and the group model building session took place in Nijmegen on the 22nd and 23rd May 2014. Its results have been shared within the partnership during the second steering committee, held in Barcelona in July 2014.

Built to be very practical-oriented, all the sessions of the event in Nijmegen were very positively evaluated. The Workshop on HR & Gender Culture Indicators registered the least positive figures but it should be highlighted that these stood at 1.6 on a scale of 1 of 4 where 1 represents the most positive figure.

Figure 14 - Assessment of the event overall (mean values)

Overall meeting	
The meeting's objectives were clearly and adequately stated	1,4
The meeting covered what I expected it to cover	1.3
The duration of the meeting was right for me	1,3
The meeting contributed for a better understanding of the project and of its approach	1,3
The meeting's objectives were achieved	1,5
The overall organisation of the meeting was effective	1,2
Workshop on HR & Gender Culture Indicators	

---

[1] EGERA is coordinated by the French university Sciences-Po.

The speakers were effective	1,6
The level of interactivity was appropriate	1,6
The themes and the discussion were useful and relevant for my area of work	1,6
The session's objectives were achieved	1,6
Gender Training Standards and Plans	
The speakers were effective	1,1
The level of interactivity was appropriate	1,1
The themes and the discussion were useful and relevant for my area of work	1,6
The session's objectives were achieved	1,4
Group model building session	
The facilitators were effective	1,0
The level of interactivity was appropriate	1,1
The themes and the discussion were useful and relevant for my area of work	1,6
The session's objectives were achieved	1,2

Note: from 1=strongly agree to 4=strongly disagree

The qualitative information regarding which specific aspects did participants liked best about the event is particularly helpful for grasping the reasons behind such a positive assessment.

"Good ambience, everybody was involved, enthusiastic and ready to work to improve altogether".

"Combination of experience, the method and working on it".

"Interactivity. Facilitators. Organisation and rhythm".

"Exercise - group model building session; opportunity to clarify tasks and actions in the project ("face-to-face")".

"Organisation and the group model building session".

"Sharing experience and knowledge".

"The cooperative way of working. The high expertise of the coordinators and facilitators. The will and action of sharing technical aspects of knowledge. The specificity of the objectives and methodology to achieve them".

"The level of interactivity was great".

"The organisation was perfect. The "climate" was really open-minded".

"We had the chance of sharing our ideas and discussing. The workshop was effective in terms of interaction and communication. The management was also quite effective. Amazing organisation: content, time, place, logistics".

As for the aspects participants liked the least, no major minuses were identified.

"Friday programme was very intensive".

"Maybe more time for project issues outside handled WPs. For example, now WP2 and WP4 but other WP leaders could discuss further tasks now we are together".

"The discussion about the template for WP2 - too long".

2.2.3. Workshop on gender-sensitive research in international projects: Barcelona (M7 – July 2014)

The workshop on gender-sensitive research in international projects took place in Barcelona on the 11th July 2014. Its results have been shared within the partnership during the team meeting held in Ankara in November 2014.

Compared to the previous event, in Nijmegen, the sessions of this workshop were evaluated less positively but even so within a very positive context. The lowest mean figure, once again on the same scale of 1 to 4 was 2.3.

Figure 15- Assessment of the Workshop on gender-sensitive research in international projects, per session (mean values)

	Session 1 Key lecture Thinking outside the box	Session 2 Mapping of tools and critical assessment	Session 3 Gender-sensitive research in international projects
The session's objectives were clearly and adequately stated	1.7	1.9	1.7
The session covered what I expected it to cover	2.0	2.0	2.0
The duration of the session was right for me	1.9	1.9	1.7
The session contributed for a better understanding of the project and of its approach	2.1	1.8	2.0
The level of interactivity was appropriate	1.8	1.9	1.6
The themes and the discussion are/will be useful and relevant for my area of work	2.2	---	2.1
The speaker/facilitator was effective	1.8	1.7	1.4
The session's objectives were achieved	1.9	1.8	2.0
The session was important in terms of sharing knowledge between the participants	---	2.2	1.8

The session was important in terms of creating connections and links between the participants	---	2.3	1.9
The concepts explored in the session are/will be useful and relevant for my area of work	---	2.2	2.2
The tools explored in the session are/will be useful and relevant for my area of work	---	1.9	2.2
The resources explored in the session are/will be useful and relevant for my area of work	---	2.1	2.2
The overall organisation of the session was effective	---	---	1.7

Note: from 1=strongly agree to 4=strongly disagree

Participants in the workshop were specifically asked regarding the extent to which their views and reflections regarding gender-sensitive research were better informed by the sessions. Naturally, assessments depended on the different standpoints of participants. Some have probably been faced with knowledge that they already possessed.

"There wasn't enlightenment but it was good to hear organized thoughts and share knowledge".

"Not very much useful".

"To no extent. I think the session just strengthened what people already all know and are convinced about".

For other, however, specific aspects contributed to enhanced views and reflection even if, in some cases, it was felt that it should have been taken further.

"I think that the distinction between gender-sensitive research and feminist research is important. But it would have been better if it was more elaborated".

"Comprehensive overview of needs, resistances".

"I encountered gender blindness in real life and I realize even more than before how important it is to reach researchers in terms they can understand".

"I would have liked to deepen the question of the appropriate tools for researchers who are already gender sensitive and for those who are not yet".

"I got more insight into the meaning of gender-sensitive research for people not working on gender topics, and also on their lack of knowledge".

"I have been informed about resources that were unknown to me".

"Increased sensitivity on these issues and ways to address gender".

Participants were also asked regarding the factors that need to be addressed in order to incorporate a gender-sensitive perspective into research. These integrated a wide array of suggestions from which the following are only a selection.

"Awareness on the gendered nature of knowledge. Feminist vision on research and science".

"Methodology. Interpretation of the research results".

"A method (test) on gender bias to open the debate, so researchers are confronted with their bias".

"More exchange gender practices".

"What obstructing elements can be foreseen and how to deal with these".

"Networks of gender studies specialists all over disciplines. Gender mainstreaming in all types of grants in order to value gender perspective".

"Training for professionals in order to incorporate a gender perspective. Recommendations, tools and good practices for inclusion the gender perspective in research in all academic discipline".

"Exemplary studies in every field, dissemination in early teaching".

"Methods and group formations to produce gendered analysis. To measure gendered results".

"More training at different levels".

"Politicians that make decisions about grants and scholarships must be informed and conscious about gender issues".

"Tailor made approach".

"Training, information, criteria journals, funding".

Finally, two types of comments and suggestions were made. On the one hand, some participants felt that there were time constraints with impacts for the presentations and for discussion.

"Issue of timing, being realistic about the time for the presentations".

"Room too small: noisy during discussions; no time for discussion".

"The discussed questions were very general not thought for provoking. The discussion was among the persons who have similar or same opinions".

On the other, there were comments by some participants made, most probably, by project partners, given their nature. These seem to link to the lack of an agenda circulated beforehand which prevented partners from having full awareness of the programme as well as to the aforementioned fact that the steering committee meeting ended up reduced to one afternoon given the conjugation with the workshop.

"I thought that today's programme would be the same like the second day in Nijmegen: discussing how we can move on with gender in our own work".

"I did not know that this workshop served as training for UAB people. I wanted to learn something here and did not. I need particular consultations for my work, not

general answers on a workshop serving for students and researchers from completely different fields".

"I expected this day to be about how to realise the WP or training in our institution, not on participating in a public awareness raising and knowledge exchange group. We spent two days of which merely 4 hours on project related matters! We don't need to meet more often but to plan meetings differently. I think it is useful to contribute to such events as the one that took place this afternoon, but we could easily have skipped this morning session".

2.3. Periodic monitoring and assessment

2.3.1. First period: March 2014 (M3) to August 2014 (M8)

The main tool for the monitoring and assessment of the project's operationalization and implementation is an online questionnaire that is made available for all partners. The questionnaire was built using Limesurvey and specific tokens were created. Each partner is provided with a unique password for acceding the forms. The results of the first six-month period have been shared within the partnership during the team meeting held in Ankara in November 2014.

Degree of implementation

Overall, partners consider the implementation of the EGERA activities assigned to their respective organisations in the period of March to August 2014 to have been accomplished. Three of the partners considered the activities to have been fully implemented while three others considered that only some small gaps prevented full implementation[2].

Gaps identified regarded different workpackages. Regarding WP1 – Project management & technical coordination - there was critic regarding the lack of effectiveness and interactiveness in the use of the AGORA (Sarah), as well as the plea for a more advanced level of planning and coordination that would contribute to the efficiency of the project.

As for WP2 – Assessing gender inequalities and bias – difficulties regarded the discussion Forum 2 and particularly the timing of forums that coincided with summer time making it difficult for partners to organize and submit reports on them.

Regarding WP4 - Training academic communities - the issue mentioned was the arrangement of a group for the target group due to time constraints while WP6 - Strengthening a gender perspective in research – some partners were in the process of developing internal norms and materials and there was some difficulty regarding the implementation of awareness-raising actions targeted at research projects' managers.

---

[2] One partner organisation did not fill-in the monitoring and evaluation instrument.

Within WP7 – Dissemination - there were some gaps regarding the production of the EGERA Flyer the feeling that, in some contexts, more dissemination activities were needed. It should be highlighted, though, that this gaps had already been addressed and that such activities were planned to take place in the partner entity starting from September 2014.

Hindering factors

Five out of six partner entities faced hindering factors in the progress of work within EGERA. Out of those five, the situation was overcome in three cases. In one case late communication of tasks to do for other work packages which left less time for internal organisation and the confusion and lack of coordination of specifics of respective WP tasks was ultimately overcome by further discussion on timely communication during the meeting in Barcelona and by an overview of the tasks to accomplish.

The start of the project's activities in March 2014 and the coincidence of the preparation of a workshop with the first deliverable in May 2014 led to high levels of stress in conducting the conference and to unequal involvement of the team, as it could have impacted in the quality of the deliverable D.3.1. However, it was stressed that the team became to know better the project and that further deliverables had a higher time-lapse between them. Additionally, performing practices to join the team were implemented under the form of monthly meetings and distribution of work.

A third case regarded the long time needed to build up the core team and to update it with the relevant documents and tasks. However, the implementation of regular meetings and time for discussion proved to be very effective.

In two cases, the identified hindering factor had not yet been overcome. One situation also regarded the long time needed for the stabilisation of the national EGERA team, something that the partner entity hoped to be achieved briefly. The difficulty arose from the lack of internal gender expertise and from the long travel distance between the partner entity and the respective national EGERA partner providing such expertise.

The other case regarded practical problems such as the difficulty of organizing forums between May and September, as well as of arranging the (desired) group for pilot training due to time constraints and of arranging workload due to coordination issues. In any case it should be stressed that the partner entity felt that these did not have a significant impact on the work and that EGERA is an in-progress implementation project, which means that practical problems which could not have been foreseen at the beginning and should be solved throughout the process are to be expected.

Facilitating factors

All six partner entities reported facilitating factors for the progress of their work within EGERA. These included intrinsic factors such as the helpful coordination and very good communication with EGERA partners; the meetings considered to facilitate the personal relationships between

partners; and the consistency of the templates giving clear directions on how to proceed and the existing knowledge from previous projects and literature which further own work.

They also included external factors such as the creation of synergies with other major European gender projects which facilitates attention for the gender subject and contributes to an institutional structure (e.g. a Women's network); and the priority given to the issue of gender (in)equality and support granted by top management.

Additionally, also having senior Faculty members in the core team is identified as a facilitating factor as they have administrative roles within the institution thus are more able to guide in assessing and overcoming problems and assessing and promoting opportunities for the effective implementation of the project.

Functioning of the transnational partnership

Overall, the functioning of the transnational partnership has been positively. Nonetheless, there should be extra-effort from the partnership in order to addressing the difficulties behind the negative evaluations especially regarding functioning in terms of decision-making and problem-solving.

Figure 16 - Functioning of the transnational partnership in the period of March to August 2014
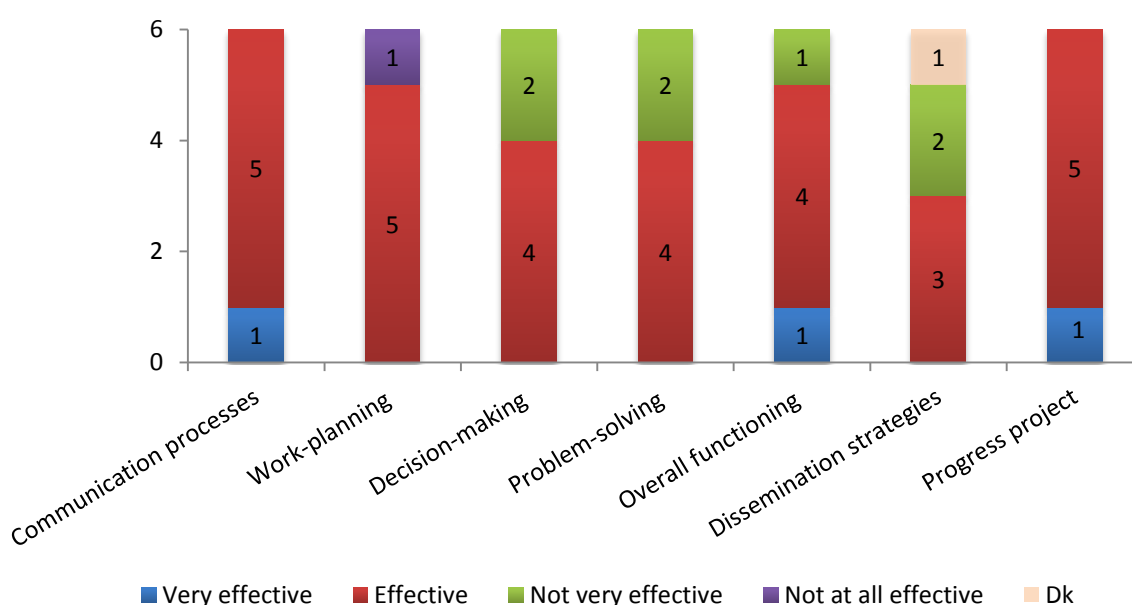
Qualitative information provides useful insights regarding the reasoning behind quantitative assessments.

> *"Considering some of the practical problems we have faced so far we evaluated the Communication processes, Process of work-planning, Process of decision-making, Process of problem-solving, Progress of the Project as a whole as effective. We hope*

that there will be more progress, planning and decision making in the future. We rated the question on Dissemination strategies of the Project "not very effective" not because there was something wrong with the project but because during the initial phase (of the first 6 month) of the project we did not find too much chance for dissemination activities and the project does not seem to be focusing on this aspect yet".

"So far the project progresses well. For the second deliverable of WP4 we needed input from the project partners. The communication went smoothly, problems were solved in an effective way. Communication about and during the three project meetings was efficient. No serious problems so far".

"The communication runs through e-mail and SARAH. First there were too many messages but this has been discussed and adjusted. However for an interactive CoP SARAH is not an effective tool. - There is too little overall coordination. Also the timing of tasks is often not logical and so not at all effective. E.g. pilot study WP3 needs to be finished and reported M12, while discussions of indicators (WP2) run until M14. - Decision-making and problem-solving have to go through e-mail or meetings but meetings are too short and don't have a previous discussed agenda. Afterwards there are no meeting notes on decisions to remind everyone. - Overall functioning runs through internal cooperation. - Progress could be more effective, cf. work-planning, decision-making and problem-solving - Dissemination is effective, good website".

"We don't know if we have a presence on social networks and twitter. We have little time in the meetings to talk about the project and deliverables".

"We still miss the ex post evaluation from Barcelona meeting (we were quite critical about the agenda setting and the purpose of this meeting). And there has not been yet any feedback how to improve the EGERA events in the future".

Development of EGERA in partner organisations

The development of the project within each partner organisation was also evaluated positively in general. Dissemination

Figure 17 - Development of EGERA in partner organisations in the period of March to August 2014
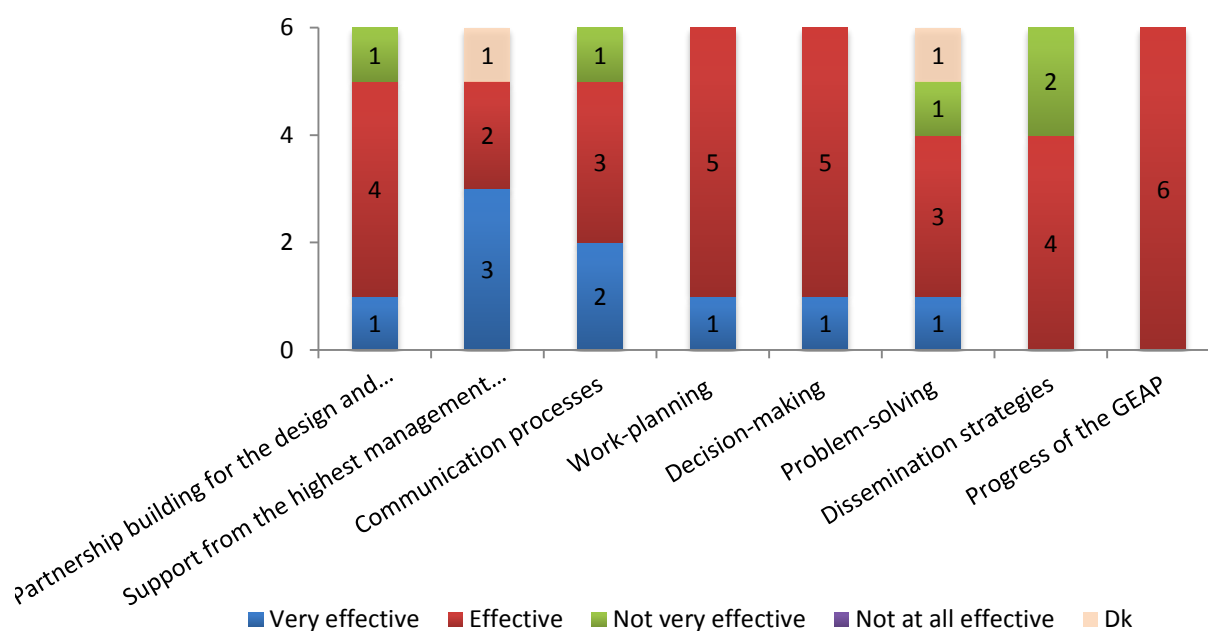
Once again, qualitative information is crucial for grasping the motivations behind quantitative assessments.

> "The EGERA project is supported by top management; however there is a lot resistance in the middle management level (head of teams). Concerning the rest of the staff, there is variable intensity of interest (depending on the particular topic). Internal communication is hindered in middle management level due to fear of change and prejudices".

> "The GEAP is approved by the Governing Council and we have the direct support of politic responsible and the press department. The main obstacle is that it is more difficult to implement actions that do not depend directly on the Observatory for Equality".

> "The communication within the project team runs very smoothly and efficient. Within the organisation there a lot of attention is paid to the issue of gender inequality. Support from the management is very good".

> "There has been a partnership with the Equal Opportunities staff member and HR-members from the start. Steps as planning, decisions are taken together with them or within EGERA core team. - There hasn't been any contact with the highest managers since the start. - Dissemination is still to be done. At the start of academic year there will be a first presentation".

"We evaluated all aspects of the project implementation for the last 6 months as effective at the institutional level because we believe we have an effective communication channel with the administration, received support for EGERA, made EGERA known by different groups and we have been trying to make the implementation of the project more effective. Considering some constraints we have faced until so far we did not consider our performance very effective-which would be an unrealistic assessment".

Suggestions

Most partners chose to share their suggestions regarding the overall development of the Project which must be highlighted as very positive. Even if this should be considered, to a large extent, a 'duty' of partners in order to achieve excellence in a collaborative process, experience shows that often this is a disregarded component. Thus the highlight. Most suggestions regarded the improvement of processes and the continuing process of creating better common basic for understanding:

"More planning would be better. Improvement on SARAH may be necessary. More experience sharing among partners might be better".

"More time at meetings to discuss issues within workpackages and take decisions together. - An actual exchange through AGORA (interesting literature, reports, ...) - A clear work-planning overview across WPs ahead of time".

"We need more time for discussion of the tasks within EGERA".

"Creating a good and strong on-line platform to share materials and literature on the project, facilitating the real collaborative work (and not only compulsory for the deliverables). Providing time in meetings for each workpackage to discuss among researchers internal planning with long term for deliverables to the partners".

However, one suggestion regarded a different subject and connects to the need to be aware of different characteristics of organisations within the partnership, in order to maximise the results of EGERA in every context within the partnership:

"Concerning the gender mainstreaming in science content we fear that we might not utilise the EGERA activities in full extent. The main reason is that we are mainly focusing on research in pure natural sciences (no people, no animals, no gender aspects at all e.g. atmospheric physics, carbon cycles, soil science, and meteorology). Current EGERA information and provided recommendations are not mostly applicable for us".

3. Gender Equality Action Plans

The evaluation of the design of the Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAP) comprised the assessment of:

- The relevance/pertinence of the Plans.
- The adequacy of the implemented and planned actions to the obstacles identified.
- The internal coherence - articulation between the priorities, issues/problems and the actions engaged in each Plan.
- The external coherence (relationship with EU and domestic gender equality policies).
- The innovative content of the proposals, measures implemented, and of the processes and strategies.

For the purposes of this report, the evaluating team used the versions of the GEAPs laid down in the EGERA Grant Agreement. Except for a few minor changes, these correspond to the versions delivered together with the Project's proposal.

Each plan was specifically analysed and assessed, from which specific recommendations were derived. Additionally, the overall design of the plans was also analysed and assessed, also within the comparative framework of the EGERA GEAPs and of the principles, goals and priority areas set out at the EU level regarding equality between women and men and the promotion of gender equality in research institutions in particular. This report focuses on the latter dimension. For deeper insights of each of the seven GEAP we recommend the reading of the Report 'Gender Equality Action Plans' Design Evaluation'.

Sharing a common design, the GEAPs of partner entities reflect the different standpoints of organisations, as assumed by the Project.

Figure 18 – Number of priorities, sub-priorities, issues/problems, actions, obstacles/resistances/planned actions and targets/indicators laid down in the GEAPs, by partner organisation

	Priorities	Axes/Sub-priorities	Issue/problem	Actions	Obstacles/resistances	Planned actions	Targets/indicators
Sciences Po	4	(1) 3	12	7	12	14	14
UA Barcelona	4	(4) 8	13	20	16	17+ mentioned on 2nd Plan	16+ mentioned on 2nd Plan
SKU Radboud	4	(1) 2	6	3	7	8	8
METU	3	(1) 3	7	3	5	10	10
U Antwerp	4	(1) 2	10	6	4	10	9
U Vechta	4	(1) 2	9	5	8	9	10
CVGZ	4	(1) 2	8	8	10	18	19

All the GEAPs are currently addressing the four priorities defined for the Project, except for the Plan for METU which postponed the definition of the outstanding priority for a later stage. All GEAPs propose axes/sub-priorities. UAB provides axes/sub-priorities for all four priorities, which corresponds to the attempt of matching the GEAP with the University's overall Plan.

In the remaining cases, only one priority is divided into axes/sub-priorities, i.e. priority 'Building gender-friendly work environments'. In four GEAPs, two axes/sub-priorities were added: 1) 'Recruiting, promoting & retaining women in research' and 2) 'Promoting work/private life conciliation'. Sciences Po and METU added a third axis/sub-priority: 'Fighting sexual harassment and sexist offences'.

The number of issues/problems to address ranges from six to thirteen in the different GEAPs. The number of actions already developed reflects well the level of development of the Plans, ranging from three in SKU and METU to twenty in UAB. UAB, along with Sciences-Po and CVGZ, are the partner entities proposing the highest number of new actions.

Only one issue/problem is addressed by all seven GEAPs: the lack of (systematic) gender training. The need for sex-disaggregated data, the lack of women in leadership positions/biased recruiting, the need for conciliation and flexibility/work-life balance, the need to mainstream gender knowledge, and the access to research & gender thematic calls and funding are also issues/problems addressed by almost all partner entities.

Figure 19 - Issues/problems identified per priority and partner

Priority	Issue/problem	Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
Enhancing gender (in)equality monitoring instruments	General framework				X			
	Sex-disaggregated data	X	X	X		X	X	X
	Intersectorial analysis (gender+age, race, ethnicity)		X					
	Lack of analysis, monitoring and benchmarking					X	X	X
	Co-option as a problem		X					
Building gender friendly work environments	Carers dependent people		X					
	Participation (inter)national conferences and meetings		X					
	Reproduction of patriarchal modes		X					
	Lack of women in leadership positions / Biased recruiting	X		X	X	X	X	X
	Lack of awareness gender inequalities	X						
	Conciliation and flexibility / work-life balance	X		X	X	X	X	X
	Lack of resources regarding the fight against sexual harassment and sexist offences	X			X			

Priority	Issue/problem	Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
Mainstreaming Gender in Research content & curricula	Lack of a gender and science cluster		X					
	Mainstream gender knowledge (assume research as gender-neutral)	X	X	X		X	X	X
	Access to research & gender thematic calls and funding	X	X	X		X	X	X
	Biased standards of research excellence assessment		X					
	Lack of visibility/valorisation of gender knowledge	X						
Training Academic & Research	Lack of a gender equality scientific culture		X			X	X	X
	No (systematic) gender training	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Lack of PhDs and supervisors on gender issues		X					

The shared design of the GEAPs reveals some flaws that hinder not only its coherence but also future evaluation of the degree of accomplishment.

Under each priority, a set of issues/problems is defined. These are deemed to result from diagnosis and this is an appropriate way to identify the concrete needs for action. However, in what regards this field, it would be advisable that identification was made either through 'issues' or through 'problems' but not by both simultaneously.

In its current shape, this field is identifying, for instance, and using an example of UAB's Plan (priority 'Building gender friendly working environments'), the 'participation of female researchers to (inter)national conferences and project meetings)' and the 'reproduction of patriarchal modes of relations and knowledge at university'. This should be avoided and it should not be left for the reader to identify which one is an issue and which one is a problem.

In fact, it would seem sensible to divide the issue/problem field in two. One would regard the problems identified which require action; and the other – the issues – would correspond to the objectives such a Plan must have and which clear definition is essential for future evaluation purposes.

An additional suggestion would be to, whenever possible, introduce measurability into objectives. This would release the Plan from the need for a specific field regarding targets. It would allow dedicating the field now allocated to 'targets/indicators' just to indicators as these are two rather different aspects and clear measurable indicators are crucial for good evaluation. The merge of both targets and indicators into one single field is also hindering the Plans' coherence and future evaluation purposes.

Further suggestions of fields deemed to enhance the quality of the GEAP's design and to improve the quality of future assessment purposes regard the definition of the stakeholder(s) responsible for the implementation of the action, other stakeholders to involve in the implementation of the action and a calendar for such implementation. This calendar can also be useful to clearly identify if any and which of the implemented actions have ceased and which will have continuity.

Another difficulty that should be mentioned is that the Plans' design makes it hard to distinguish what is the link between the different columns, i.e. understanding exactly, for instance, which actions intend to be contributing to addressing which issues/problems. As such, it is highly recommended that the Plan makes clear correspondence between issues/problems, actions and targets/indicators, which can be achieved e.g. through the usage of one same row. If there is the case that one action is contributing for more than one issue/problem, then that action should be replicated as many times as needed.

This would also tackle possible misunderstandings regarding the link between the elements. Resorting, once again, to an example of UAB's Plan (priority 'Enhancing gender (in)equality monitoring instruments'), the placement of action 'Including sex-disaggregated data regarding on-the-job training to GE reports & other monitoring instruments' as the last of the planned actions is misleading. Coming after an action that is clearly addressing the second issue/problem one would not assume, at least instantly, that this regarded the first issue/problem identified.

Another aspect that should be dealt with regards field 'obstacles'. This represents a valuable element. However, it should be made clear how will these obstacles be considered. If it regards an element of diagnosis, then it should be integrated in the definition of the problems the Plan

intends to address. If it regards an obstacle to the implementation of actions, then this should be clearly highlighted and planned actions must identify how they propose to overcome the obstacle, either through the action itself or through the definition of appropriate methodologies and/or instruments.

Despite the room for improvement identified in the paragraphs above, the common structure adopted by the EGERA implementing partners for the design of the GEAPs, regarding the definition of priorities in particular, ensures a strong coherence with the principles, goals and priority areas set out at the EU level regarding equality between women and men, and the promotion of gender equality in research institutions in particular.

Equality between women and men is a fundamental right, enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and in Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It is one of the five common values on which the European Union is founded. The Union is bound to strive for equality between women and men, mainstreaming this principle in all its activities.

The European's Commission commitment to equality between women and men has been reaffirmed and renewed in a set of relevant communications and documents, such as the Women's Charter (dated March 2010) and the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 (adopted in September 2010).

This Strategy, in force until the term of office of this European Commission, represents the work programme of the European Commission on gender equality, aiming additionally to stimulate developments at national level.

The Strategy acknowledges that 'Inequalities between women and men violate fundamental rights. They also impose a heavy toll on the economy and result in underutilisation of talent. On the other hand, economic and business benefits can be gained from enhancing gender equality. In order to achieve the objectives of Europe 2020, namely smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the potential and the talent pool of women need to be used more extensively and more efficiently" (European Commission, 2010: 4).[3]

Europe 2020 states that policies to promote gender equality will be needed to increase labour force participation thus adding to growth and social cohesion. And under Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative 'An Agenda for new skills and jobs', Member States are urged to promote new forms of work-life balance and active ageing policies and to increase gender equality.

The Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015, in line with the 2006 first European Pact for Gender Equality, reaffirms the dual approach of specific actions and gender mainstreaming in five priority areas and one area addressing cross-cutting issues (gender roles, legislation, and the governance and tools of gender equality).

The five priority areas of the Strategy are:

- equal economic independence for women and men;
- equal pay for work of equal value;

---

[3] Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/strategy_equality_women_men_en.pdf

- equality in decision-making;

- dignity, integrity and ending gender violence;

- promoting gender equality beyond the EU.

The Council of the European Union adopted the European Pact for Gender Equality for the period 2011-2020. The Council urges action at Member State and, as appropriate, Union level in the following fields:

- Measures to close gender gaps and combat gender segregation in the labour market:

a) promote women's employment in all age brackets and close gender gaps in employment, including by combating all forms of discrimination;

b) eliminate gender stereotypes and promote gender equality at all levels of education and training, as well as in working life, in order to reduce gender segregation in the labour market;

c) ensure equal pay for equal work and work of equal value;

d) promote women's empowerment in political and economic life and advance women's entrepreneurship;

e) encourage the social partners and enterprises to develop and effectively implement initiatives in favour of gender equality and promote gender equality plans at the workplace; and

f) promote the equal participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels and in all fields, in order to make full use of all talents.

- Measures to promote better work-life balance for women and men:

a) improve the supply of adequate, affordable, high-quality childcare services for children under the mandatory school age with a view to achieving the objectives set at the European Council in Barcelona in March 2002, taking into account the demand for childcare services and in line with national patterns of childcare provision;

b) improve the provision of care facilities for other dependants; and

c) promote flexible working arrangements and various forms of leave for both women and men.

- Measures to tackle all forms of violence against women:

a) adopt, implement and monitor strategies at national and Union level with a view to eliminating violence against women;

b) strengthen the prevention of violence against women and the protection of victims and potential victims, including women from all disadvantaged groups; and

c) emphasise the role and responsibility of men and boys in the process of eradicating violence against women.

Specific objectives have been set out at the EU level regarding the promotion of gender equality in scientific research and in scientific decision-making bodies, and structural change in research institutions in particular. These objectives are in line with the Commission's Strategy on Gender Equality as well as with the goals set out in the July 2012 Communication on completing the European Research Area (ERA).

The fact sheet 'Gender Equality in Horizon 2020', issued by the European Commission on 9 December 2013, affirms a renewed commitment with the promotion of gender equality in research and innovation. This commitment is enshrined in the core documents establishing Horizon 2020, with the following objectives:

- Gender balance in research teams;

- Gender balance in decision-making;

- Integrating gender/sex analysis in R&I content;

- A specific focus on gender training.

Another relevant assessment dimension of the GEAPs is innovation. It is always difficult to define precisely what innovation is and what it is not. What is innovative in a country or in a region may not be so in another place. One example of such relativity is translated in the very text of the call for proposals of the "2013 Science in Society Work Programme" launched by the European Commission: the innovative nature of the actions is one of the elements to be taken into consideration in the process of evaluation of the proposals to be presented under Action Line 2, Activity 5.2.1 Gender and Research. This innovative nature may be translated into the setting up of new gender equality plans but also in the reinforcement or the extension of existing gender equality plans.

From this standpoint, all the GEAPs developed under the scope of EGERA may be considered as innovative. For most partner institutions of EGERA, the GEAP represents the first systematic effort to develop a gender equality plan. Conversely, in UAB, the GEAP comes within the context of the development of three action plans for equality between men and women.

In any case, in the last few years, experiments have been developed within the scope of innovation; most of all have tried to identify what may be the best practices in order to achieve innovation. Such is the case of the report 'Structural change in research institutions: Enhancing excellence, gender equality and efficiency in research and innovation', developed for the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation,[4] and the Project 'Gendered Innovations',[5] developed by the University of Stanford (United States), which sets, as

---

[4] EC (2012), Structural change in research institutions: Enhancing excellence, gender equality and efficiency in research and innovation, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, available.
[5] http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu.

one of its objectives, to provide case studies as concrete illustrations of how sex and gender analysis leads to innovation and excellence in research.

The following table presents a list of the aspects deemed as crucial, based primarily on the above-mentioned report, and situates every partner institution regarding the aspects covered.

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
Knowing the institution	Statistical data on recruitment, retention, promotion and pay	X	X	X		X	X	X
	Gender count of photographs in prospectuses and in marketing materials and who appears in portraits of esteemed colleagues hanging on walls							
	Views of women and men in the organisation about whether they are working in a positive environment, free of harassment and bullying, where talent is encouraged and supported.					X		O
	Statistics developed into equality indicators,	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	New policies need to have a gender impact assessment							
	Morale or climate surveys of staff	X						
	Ensure that there is sufficient expertise, from awareness-	X	X				X	X

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
	raising to training to hiring experts							
Generating effective management practices	Understanding how processes critical to recruitment and advancement may disadvantage women	X	X			X		X
	Supporting the development of opportunities for peer-learning, particularly among department chairs	X	X	X		X	X	O
Making decision-making transparent	Making in-house women more visible	O	X					
	Gender-balancing committees		X			X		X
	Making nomination and election to committees and boards more transparent							
	Regular review of processes and gender audits of such bodies							
Rem oving unco	Training (up-skilling) the decision makers	X	X	X	X	O	X	O

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
	Funding comprehensive structural change efforts designed to create models for effective practice							
	Rewarding effective practices and providing recognition, such as awards for research institutions that demonstrate effective leadership on gender equity							
	Creating accountability measures such as periodic reporting on key indicators	X	X	O	X	O	O	X
Promoting excellence through diversity	Enhanced cognitive creativity and more effective capacity in collaborative working and problem-solving in research teams and project consortia	X	X	X			X	
	Enhanced scientific human capital for knowledge production and utilization	X	X	X		O	X	
	Improved scientific cultures (by diversifying the values of the participants in scientific	X	X	X	X	O	X	X

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
	discourse and diluting prevailing implicit stereotypes)							
Improving research by integrating a gender perspective	Developing, communicating and implementing standards for the incorporation of sex and gender analysis into basic and applied sciences	X	X	X		X	X	
	Specify whether, and in what sense sex and gender are relevant in the objectives and methodology of their project	O	X	X		X	X	
	Articles proposing that the declaration of sex and gender analysis should become a requirement when selecting papers for publication							
	Integrating gender into the whole process of knowledge transfer, thereby introducing different perspectives for more innovation potential	O	X	O		O	O	
	Supporting specific research on gender and women to feed into	X	X	X		X	X	

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
	all disciplines and research subjects							
	Actions to overcome the lack of knowledge about the needs and interests of this segment of research users from a gender perspective	X	X					
	Research should be funded to create specific knowledge on gender issues and women in the context of innovation, and research results transferred into all other disciplines and research subjects, as well as integrated into the funding process							
Modernising human resources management and the	Pay-gap audits							
	Parental leave	X	X				O	X
	Reconciliation of work and family life	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Strategies for dual career couples	O						X

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
	Child-care services		X	X	X	X	O	X
	Suitable flexible work schedules for working parents	O	X			X	O	X
	Monitoring. The role of 'observatories' or 'independent committees' should be strengthened	X	X		X	X	X	X
	Wider availability of inter-sector mobility for both early stage and established researchers							
	Gender sensitive advertising of vacancy positions and providing access to researchers' industry relevant expertise online	X				X		X
	Adequate evaluation criteria, and a fair and transparent career evaluation process	X	X					
	Gender aware, trained evaluators and researchers from both sectors in the evaluation committees.							

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
Recommendations	Ensure that the gender dimension is integrated into the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula, across the university	X	X				X	N.A.
	Include audit results (gender disaggregated statistics) in annual reports	X	X	O	X	X	O	X
	Gender proofing of important policy documents		X					
	Gender impact assessment of policies and practices							
	Train staff on gender dimension in research and introduce regular staff assessment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Mentoring, networking, role models	X	X	X	X			X
	Code of Conduct for developing early researcher standards							
	Set up gender equality unit	X	X				X	

		Sciences Po	UA Barcelona	SKU Radboud	METU	U Antwerp	U Vechta	CVGZ
	Gender balance in committees		X			X		X
	Train men to understand the issue; leadership development in implementing gender awareness	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Work-life balance for both women and men	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Positive work environment: dignity for all, no harassment or bullying, ombudsman, training	X			X	O		
	Fair and transparent workload balance							
	Fair recognition of work							
	Mobility and contract funding conditions							
	Carry out climate surveys in departments (diagnosis)	O						
	Provide up-skilling – for careers, and on the content of research	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes:

X: aspect covered in the GEAP

O: aspect only partially covered in the GEAP

4. Concluding remarks: strong points, pitfalls and deviations

The monitoring and assessment of the operationalization and implementation of EGERA thus far allowed for the identification of both strong points and weaknesses. Among the latter, the cooperation and collaborative work that seems to have been established within the partnership is undoubtedly very relevant. Along with the accumulated expertise regarding the subjects EGERA deals with and the increased knowledge regarding the project and the different work packages that seems to be progressively guaranteed over time provide an overarching framework ideal for the successful accomplishment of the project.

However, the partnership should be aware that there are different standpoints regarding gender mainstreaming and gender action and that even expertise is not evenly distributed between partners. This should constantly be born in mind in order to minimise potential pitfalls and deviations especially also considering that the project is, in itself, very ambitious and complex thus increasing the difficulties in securing, at all time, comprehensive viewpoints over the project, its work packages, tasks and deadlines from all partners.

The partnership and all partner organisations should also be constantly aware of external threats for the successful accomplishment of the project from which the prevailing resistances in each partner organisation/country are the most immediate and may pose considerable – even decisive – obstacles.

Thus, it is of utmost interest to establish links and create synergies with other projects, actions and activities at the national and international levels (e.g. project STAGES, with which a co-event will be organised in March 2015), also profiting from the commitments regarding gender equality and gender mainstreaming at the EU (international) level.

On-going improvements in terms of management (e.g. creation of specific documents, concrete formal responses to solicitations made by partners), communication, work-planning, etc. have been appreciated and seems to have contributed for smoother communication and collaborative work. Other aspects such as the boosting SARAH as an effective CoP tool still seem to be in progress.

Figure 20 - SWOT analysis regarding the operationalization and implementation of EGERA

		Helpful to achieving the objectives	Harmful to achieving the objectives	
Internal origin	Strengths	🡇 Accumulated expertise within the partnership. 🡇 Cooperative/collaborative way of working. 🡇 Increased knowledge regarding the project and the different workpackages.	🡇 Uneven expertise within the partners. 🡇 Intrinsic complexity of the project. 🡇 Different standpoints regarding gender mainstreaming and gender action between partners. 🡇 Difficulty in securing a comprehensive viewpoint over the project and the different work packages.	Weaknesses
External origin	Opportunities	🡇 Commitments regarding gender equality and gender mainstreaming at the EU (international) level. 🡇 Creation of synergies with other projects, actions and activities at the national and international levels.	🡇 Resistances within partner organisations. 🡇 Gender equality does not generally rank high in the political agenda at the national level, as well as at European level.	Threats

As regards project meetings, it seems crucial to ensure that:

- The dates are scheduled with enough advance in order to maximise the possibilities of attendance and try and reduce the costs associated to travelling and accommodation. Such endeavour is particularly recommended regarding meetings including the consortium board and/or the advisory committee;
- They are preferably scheduled in a way that does not imply for partners to use the weekend for travelling;
- The agenda is agreed between all partners and circulated beforehand;
- There is the necessary time for discussion on the project operationalization and implementation;
- There is the necessary time for specific discussion on tasks, deliverables and deadlines;
- A specific time-slot for management purposes is considered;
- A specific time-slot for monitoring and evaluation is considered;
- There is wide agreement on decisions taken;
- Minutes are produced summarising the main points, tasks, deadlines and decisions.

Regarding other EGERA events such as workshops and conferences, it should be guaranteed that:

- Even if coinciding in the same period of time for reasons of efficient travelling/spending they do not restrict the time needed for partnership meetings;
- Partners are informed beforehand regarding its objectives, target-groups and methodologies;
- When they are to include participants from the steering committee, the objectives are clearly defined as project-relevant and not only as relevant for the individual partner within the context of its GEAP.

As for the GEAPs, they reflect the different standpoints of organisations, as assumed by the Project. In any case, all the GEAPs are currently addressing the four priorities defined for the Project, except for the Plan for METU which is something that must be dealt with urgently.

The common structure adopted by the EGERA implementing partners for the design of the GEAPs, regarding the definition of priorities in particular, ensures a strong coherence with the principles, goals and priority areas set out at the EU level regarding equality between women and men, and the promotion of gender equality in research institutions in particular.

Nonetheless, the shared design of the GEAPs reveals some flaws that hinder not only its coherence but also future evaluation of the degree of accomplishment. It would be advisable that identification of core aspects was made either through 'issues' or through 'problems' but not by both simultaneously. It should not be left for the reader to identify which one is an issue and which one is a problem. Divide the field in two along with the clear definition of the problems requiring action and of the objectives of the Plan is essential for future evaluation purposes.

It is also essential to, whenever possible, introduce measurability into objectives. This would allow dedicating the field now allocated to 'targets/indicators' just to indicators as these are two rather different aspects and clear measurable indicators are crucial for good evaluation. The merge of both targets and indicators into one single field is also hindering the Plans' coherence and future evaluation purposes.

Further suggestions of fields deemed to enhance the quality of the GEAP's design and to improve the quality of future assessment purposes regard the definition of the stakeholder(s) responsible for the implementation of the action, other stakeholders to involve in the implementation of the action and a calendar for such implementation. This calendar can also be useful to clearly identify if any and which of the implemented actions have ceased and which will have continuity.

It should also be mentioned is that the Plans' design makes it hard to distinguish what is the link between the different columns, i.e. understanding exactly, for instance, which actions intend to be contributing to addressing which issues/problems. As such, it is highly recommended that the Plan makes clear correspondence between issues/problems, actions and targets/indicators, which can be achieved e.g. through the usage of one same row. If there is the case that one action is contributing for more than one issue/problem, then that action should be replicated as many times as needed.

Additionally, it should be made clear how will obstacles be considered. If it regards an element of diagnosis, then it should be integrated in the definition of the problems the Plan intends to address. If it regards an obstacle to the implementation of actions, then this should be clearly highlighted and planned actions must identify how they propose to overcome the obstacle.