

Equality Diversity and Inclusion for
Research Enhancement in Bosnia Herzegovina

EDiRE

Project full title: Equality Diversity and Inclusion for Research Enhancement in Bosnia Herzegovina

Project acronym: EDIRE

Call: HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02

Type of action: HORIZON Coordination and Support Actions

Start date: 1 September 2022 End date: 31 August 2025

Project number: 101060145

Deliverable 2.2 Preliminary guidelines and recommendation on EDI

Work Package: WP2

Due Date: 31.03.2023

Submission Date: 14.04.2023

Lead Beneficiary: TU Dublin

Version: 1.0

Status: Final

Author(s): Sara Clavero and Caitriona Delaney

Reviewed by: Zahia Guessoum, Jasminka Hasić Telalović, Olga Kolotouchkina, Liisa Hänninen,
Cinzia Leone, Rita Bencivenga

Deliverable Type: R — Document, report

Dissemination Level: PU-Public

EDiRE



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe program for widening participation and spreading excellence under Grant Agreement number 101060145.

Version history

Version	Date	Author(s)	Comments
0.1	06.04.2023.	Sara Clavero and Caitriona Delaney (TU Dublin)	Document structure decided and first draft made
0.2	11.04.2023.	Zahia Guessoum (URCA)	Review
0.3	10.04.2023.	Jasminka Hasic Telalovic (SSST)	Document reviewed and revised
0.4	13.04.2023	Olga Kolotouchkina and Liisa Hänninen (UCM)	Document reviewed and revised
0.5	13.04.2023	Cinzia Leone (UNiGe)	Document reviewed and revised
0.6	13.04.2023	Rita Bencivenga (UniGE)	Document reviewed and revised
0.7	14.04.2023	Amina Katica (SSST)	Deliverable prepared for submission

Deliverable abstract

The Deliverable will build on the preliminary research findings (D2.1) validated and refined following the consultation process envisaged in T2.2.

Copyright and legal notice

The views expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or position of the European Commission. Neither the authors nor the EDIRE Consortium are responsible for the use which might be made of the information contained in here.

EDiRE



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe program for widening participation and spreading excellence under Grant Agreement number 101060145.

Table of contents

1. Presentation	5
2. Summary of key issues emerging from the research	5
3. National consultation	5
3.1 Introduction.....	5
3.2 Key issues	6
4. Recommendations	7
4.1 For further research	7
4.2 For policy action	10

1. Presentation

D2.2 provides a set of preliminary guidelines and recommendations on EDI in SSST specifically and, more generally, in the BiH research and innovation ecosystem. These guidelines and recommendations are based on initial findings from both quantitative and qualitative research on the EDI situation in SSST carried in the first phase of the project (presented D2.1). These findings have subsequently been refined and validated following a national consultation meeting on EDI matters with relevant stakeholders. Del 2.2, therefore, summarises the main findings presented in Del 2.1 and reports on the main outcomes of the national consultation meeting, providing a set of recommendations based on both the research findings and the national consultation event.

2. Summary of key issues emerging from the research

Research findings are based on an analysis of secondary gender-disaggregated institutional data already available, in addition to the analysis of primary data collected through a survey questionnaire and 2 focus groups carried out between January-March 2023.

Overall, staff and students at SSST expressed satisfaction with their university as a place to work and study and with the institutional commitment to EDI. The main EDI-related issues emerging from the research can be summarised as follows:

- Experiences of support from superiors in career advancement and caring-related needs are more satisfactory among male than female respondents. Such experiences of lack of support also extends to colleagues.
- Experiences of unfair treatment/discrimination are more prevalent among women and they feel far less comfortable to report when they have been treated unfairly.
- Women have less access to informal networks, which points to the existence of an “old boys” networking culture.
- Lack of confidence emerged as an issue for women as there were significant gender differences in respondents’ perception of the role this factor played in advancing one’s career.
This may be related to experiences, again reported mostly by women, of not being sufficiently valued by both superiors and colleagues.
- Experiences of discrimination regarding task allocation as well as job interviews and evaluations were only reported by women respondents.
- Gender pay gaps may be an issue that will require further investigation, as there are significant gender differences with regards to feelings of discrimination regarding salaries.

3. National consultation

3.1 Introduction

A national consultation meeting took place at Igman, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 27th March 2023 with major stakeholders in the BiH R&I ecosystem. The main objectives of this meeting were: on 27th March 2023. The main objectives of this meeting were:

- To introduce the EDIRE project to a community of stakeholders in EDI in Academia and Research in BiH.
- To share the methodology and preliminary results of the research on EDI in SSST (available statistics, survey and focus groups) carried out in the context of EDIRE.
- To discuss these results with a view to refinement, exploring their validity and applicability on the wider national context.
- To identify the focus of future research and policy action, and to draw a series of preliminary guidelines and recommendations on EDI in academia and research in BiH.

A total of 15 participants were present at this meeting, which was Chaired by Jasminka Hasic (SSST) and conducted by Sara Clavero (TUD). After introducing the EDIRE project and presenting the preliminary results from the research, the discussion centred around the following questions:

- What are the equality grounds and/or their intersections that would require priority attention in policy for the promotion of inclusive research in BiH?
- What are the main legal gaps and constraints (if any) for taking action in the EDI area?
- What are the main data/knowledge gaps for taking action in the EDI area?
- What are the main resistances at an organisational/societal level that would need to be overcome for action towards EDI in research in BiH to be effective?
- If you were asked to propose just one recommendation for improving EDI in research in your country/institution, what would this be?

3.2 Key issues

Two main issues were highlighted and discussed at length in response to the presentation of research findings: 1) lack of access to research funding in SSST and BiH more generally to advance researchers' careers; 2) lack of disaggregated data (in general) and, more specifically, in relation to the research funding application and selection process.

With regards to the issue of lack of access to research funding in SSST it was noted that, as SSST is a private university, researchers are not eligible to apply for all the public funding opportunities that are available. There are small grants made available annually for SSST, but lack of access to national funding means that researchers at this university cannot engage in collaborative research with other (public) universities in BiH.

On the other hand, access to EU funding is extremely limited, both to participate as coordinators (due to lack of competitiveness) or as project partners (due to lack of professional networks necessary to be invited to join a consortium). The lack of professional networks was especially emphasised as a problem, which is related to the lack of funding at SSST for participation at conferences and similar networking events. This limitation to create and expand professional networks has significant implications for access to wider research opportunities and, more generally, for career advancement. There is some funding for conferences available, yet this is usually provided on a discretionary basis (i.e., asking the 'right' person) which has important EDI implications as this leads to inequalities and unfair distribution of opportunities among staff and students. Lack of funding was also mentioned as a barrier in relation to building a publication record, which is essential for securing funding applications and getting promoted. Thus, while there is an increasing trend towards publishing in open-access journals, which are expensive, there is often an expectation on researchers to pay this for themselves. This also has clear EDI implications.

Secondly, lack of gender-disaggregated data was flagged as an important issue deserving attention. Higher education institutions in BiH have to submit gender-disaggregated information on students and staff, yet

there is very little gender-disaggregated information in relation to research funding in BiH (mainly the cantons' ministries and entity institutions have a role in funding dispersal to universities throughout the country). That is, there is no data on who applies to research funding opportunities and who succeeds in obtaining those funds. Furthermore, the little information that is available points to the existence of gender gaps in this respect. Thus, for example, a gendered analysis of successful applications from the canton of Sarajevo showed a higher percentage of women applying for this funding in the role of principle investigator (PI) than women successfully obtaining it. Despite funding organisations in BiH stating that they have an interest in producing disaggregated data, this data has not been made public so far.

4. Recommendations

This section provides a set of preliminary guidelines/recommendations for further research and policy action based on key findings so far. Each recommendation is contextualised, specifying the source(s) of data it draws upon, as well as providing a justification for it.

4.1 For further research

- To identify and analyse gender pay gaps at SSST (by, e.g., launching a gender pay audit).
- To explore the exact grounds for unfair treatment/discrimination experienced by survey respondents.
- To create gender-disaggregated data on the types of contracts at the university (temporary/permanent, part-time/full-time).
- To explore in more depth the intersections between gender and ethnicity in relation to unfair treatment and discrimination in the areas covered by the survey (career advancement, work-life balance, and EDI in organisational culture).
- To examine relevant actors/ stakeholders' attitudes in the BiH R&I ecosystem towards GEPs
- To identify the main blocks in attracting more postgraduate students to SSST, and set up clear targets and strategies required to achieve these. [Click here to enter text.](#)
- To analyse barriers to introducing flexible work practices at SSST and their EDI impacts
- To explore gender bias and discrimination in relation to career advancement in SSST and within the wider BIH context considering the multiplicity of factors involved (e.g., selection and promotion processes, access to research funding, networking opportunities and publications)

	Recommendation	Source	Justification
1	Identify and analyse gender pay gaps at SSST by, e.g., launching a gender pay audit	Survey and national consultation	Launching a pay audit to identify and analyse gender pay gaps at SSST will provide data that will go towards providing a framework to ensure parity in pay at the university. Survey results reveal that only 32% of women agree that their salary is fair (compared to 53% of men). On the other hand, participants at the national consultation noted that many of the issues that impede research careers relate to money e.g., funding, and salary. Therefore,

			collecting data on this issue will go towards improving this situation.
2	Explore the exact grounds for unfair treatment/discrimination experienced by survey respondents and focus group participants	Survey, focus groups and national consultation	Being able to understand and trace the exact grounds underpinning unfair treatment/discrimination as experienced by some survey and focus group participants will allow SSST to put structures in place to ensure unfair treatment/discrimination does not happen. Further knowledge gathered will help inform how to proceed in a fair manner should unfair/treatment discrimination occur. Connected with this is the need for clear structured processes as was discussed in great detail during the focus groups. For example, transparent processes governing promotion, flexible working etc will inevitably improve the work culture at SSST and provide an increasingly equitable work environment while warding against unfair treatment/discrimination.
3	Create gender-disaggregated data on the types of contracts at the university (temporary/permanent, part-time/full-time)	Institutional statistics and national consultation	Institutional statistics reveal that a significant proportion of contracts at the university are temporary (61%). This high prevalence of temporary contracts can have negative long-term effects on staff, including their well-being, and career prospects within academia and research and financial security. It can also have negative effects on the Higher Education sector because a great pool of valuable talent might be lost if temporary staff leave the sector in search for more secure jobs in other sectors/institutions. A high proportion of casualised research staff also contributes to the introduction of important power imbalances within the organisation. More importantly, the EDI dimensions of this phenomenon must be further explored, as suggested by participants at the national consultation.
4	Explore the intersections between gender and ethnicity in relation to unfair treatment and discrimination in the areas covered by the survey	National consultation	Participants at the national consultation meeting agreed that ethnicity and religion are important issues in BiH, noting that efforts are already in place to ensure parity of participation across the different/ethnic and religious groups in the R&I ecosystem. However, the need for intersectional analyses was strongly emphasised, as it was suggested that current efforts in this regard are gender-blind. Therefore, more attention should be placed on the interaction between these two

			grounds, to make sure that women (as well as men) from different ethnic groups/religious backgrounds are properly included and, therefore, visibilised.
5	Examine relevant actors/ stakeholders' attitudes in the BiH R&I ecosystem towards GEPs	National consultation	The effectiveness of GEP implementation can be hampered by a lack of commitment to EDI principles and easily revert into a mere "box ticking" exercise. A belief that gender equality is not really a problem anymore, compounded with the prevalence of implicit bias and stereotyping can lead to resistances that obstruct the attainment of GEP objectives. Identifying the attitudes toward, the presence and implementation of GEPs in the BiH R&I ecosystem will provide essential information regarding gender equity in academia and relation to research and the identification of key obstacles and resistances that must be overcome, particularly regarding working towards and ensuring gender parity in research funding, entrance to esteemed academy's etc.
6	Identify the main blocks in attracting postgraduate students to SSST; set up targets and strategies required to achieve these.	Institutional statistics and focus groups	A vibrant and diverse postgraduate community contributes significantly to enhancing the research culture, research capacity, and research excellence of the university while also reducing the current heavy workloads reported by both senior and junior researchers during the focus groups. SSST statistics reveal a scant number of postgraduate students. Furthermore, there is good gender parity overall, yet male students are a majority in MA programmes (64%) while the majority of Ph.D. students are female (72%). The reasons explaining this phenomenon should be further explored in order to ensure a balanced gender representation across all postgraduate research programmes.
7	Analyse barriers to introducing flexible work practices at SSST and their EDI impacts	Survey and focus groups	Being able to maintain a good work-life balance is an important factor in career advancement for the majority of people surveyed, although more for women (82%) than men (59%). Flexible working hours can contribute to achieving this, yet in the focus groups rigid working hours (clocking in and out) was highlighted as a major block in this respect.
8	Explore gender bias and discrimination in relation to career advancement in SSST and within the wider BiH context, taking into account the multiplicity	Survey and national consultation	Gender differences in survey responses point to the existence of gender-based bias that permeates all the EDI dimensions examined in the research (career advancement, work-life balance and organisational culture). However, as gender bias is usually implicit, it goes unrecognised, manifesting itself often in subtle ways (micro-aggressions in everyday working

of factors involved (e.g., selection and promotion processes, access to research funding, networking opportunities and publications)		practices etc). Regarding gender bias and discrimination in relation to career advancement in SSST and within the wider BiH context, the general consensus during the national consultation was that there is a need for greater education and awareness-raising in the wider BiH context regarding gender bias and gender blindness to improve the situation in BiH in general. Building guidelines/a framework regarding gender bias will ensure both clarity and parity moving forwards regarding career advancement not only at SSST but also more widely in BiH.
--	--	---

4.2 For policy action

- To set up awareness-raising programmes on EDI issues in academia and research and targeted training programmes on gender-based bias
- To promote gender mainstreaming in research funding through a variety of tools, including the introduction of GEPs in research funding organisations, as well as learned academies in BiH
- To give more visibility to women in research and their role in the development of research excellence.
- To set clear management structures and improve the transparency of information regarding all institutional procedures (e.g., recruitment and promotion, access to rights and benefits, etc).

	Recommendation	Source	Justification
1	Set up awareness-raising programmes on EDI issues in academia and research and targeted training programmes on gender-based bias	Survey, national consultation	Gender bias was not identified as a problem at SSST during the focus groups. On the contrary, participants praised the university in this regard when compared to other HE institutions in the country. However, the survey results reveal that female students and staff at SSST feel less valued and supported by their superiors (i.e., line managers and supervisors) than their male counterparts and that about 1/5 of all female survey respondents (but no men) reported to always experience discrimination in job interviews and evaluations. These results deserve closer scrutiny, as they point to the existence of implicit (non-recognised) bias which can hamper women's career advancement in academia and research. More specifically, this recommendation was suggested by participants at the national consultation, who noted the patriarchal nature of BiH society in general and

			<p>the prevailing idea that women need to organise their work around family responsibilities. Furthermore, there is a need to go “beyond numbers” since the general perception is that gender equality is not really a problem, as figures show gender parity, or near parity, representation across different decision-making bodies. Training and awareness raising can be very valuable in ensuring that the “equality” and “inclusive” components of EDI are paid proper attention and bringing home that “diversity” alone is not enough.</p>
2	Promote gender mainstreaming in research funding through a variety of tools, including the introduction of GEPs in research funding organisations, as well as learned academies in BiH		<p>The lack of gender-disaggregated data and gender analysis in relation to research funding – an issue particularly emphasised during the national consultation - could be tackled with the introduction of gender mainstreaming principles and tools in those processes. Funding bodies should provide public gender-disaggregated data both on overall applications and on those which are successful, as well as introducing gender-sensitive analysis in evaluations of excellence.</p>
3	Give more visibility of women in research and their role in the development of research excellence	Survey, focus groups, and national consultation	<p>This is a specific recommendation suggested at the national consultation meeting. Boosting equality in research excellence requires that the role of women in advancing research in BiH is made more visible. There were a number of obstacles highlighted during the research, such as difficulties in participating at conferences, accessing research funding or publishing results in OA peer-reviewed journals. Visibility has great symbolic power. An important outcome of more visibility is that it will help to break existing gender bias as well as encouraging more women to pursue a career in research. Visibility will also help to tackle the lack of confidence, which emerged as an issue for women during the survey, with significant gender differences in respondents’ perception of the role this factor played in advancing one’s career. This may be related to experiences, again reported mostly by women in the survey, of not being sufficiently valued by both superiors and colleagues. SSST institutional statistics show that the university observes parity principles when inviting external researchers to keynotes and similar events, yet additional avenues to increase women’s visibility in research should be explored.</p>

4	Set up awareness-raising programs on EDI issues in academia and research and targeted training programmes on gender-based bias	Focus groups	This was an issue discussed at great length during both focus groups. Lack of transparency, the informal nature of procedures, and the discretionary character of decisions were identified as one of the root problems at the basis of discrimination (e.g. promotion opportunities) while also acting as an obstacle to reporting discrimination, as management structures (e.g. how to report and to whom) remain clear.
---	--	--------------	---