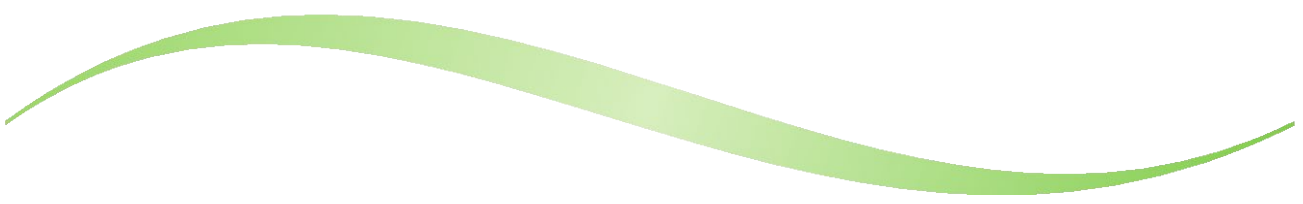




GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICY



Story of Changes		
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gender Mainstreaming Policy of EIT InnoEnergy is part of the overall Diversity initiative for the company, and in compliance with EU and other requirements. The Policy affects all employees and all operations and includes leadership at the highest level.

Although the energy sector overall in Europe and worldwide has been highly male- dominated, EIT InnoEnergy is well-positioned to reach its goals for the participation of women at all levels.

The Policy is based on recognition of both the incentive and requirements for gender mainstreaming.

- compliance with national and EU regulations,
- economic performance,
- well-being at work,
- attracting and retaining talent,
- excellence and quality, effectiveness and efficiency of innovations and technology and as a leverage for organisational change.

The top-level Goals include:

- Demonstrating leadership in gender mainstreaming in the sustainable energy industry
- Building capacity and raising awareness including appointment of a Diversity Manager
- Achieving a gender balanced representation in staff and management
- Promote gender equality/women's participation in education, recognizing the historical under-representation of women in engineering education,
- Promote gender equality/women's participation in entrepreneurship and innovation

Implementation of the goals of the Policy include a 3-year Gender Mainstreaming Plan. Based on the assessment of the EIT InnoEnergy and relevant benchmarks in the sector, actions underway will be documented, enhanced, and strengthened.

2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

UNDERLYING LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in innovation and



technology. This commitment is part of the European Commission Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025¹ which sets out the European Commission's broader commitment to equality across all EU policies.

In addition, the EU has a well-established regulatory framework on gender equality, including binding directives, which apply widely across the labour market including the innovation and technology sector.

In Horizon Europe, the European Commission reaffirms its commitment to gender equality in innovation, technology and research. The legal base sets gender equality as a crosscutting priority and introduces strengthened provisions.

Integrating the gender dimension into innovation, technology and research content is a requirement. Gender action plans will also gradually become part of the selection criteria for public bodies, research organizations and higher education establishments applying to the programme².

Specific funding will be dedicated to gender and intersectional research, innovation and technology, developing inclusive gender equality policies in support of the new European Research Area, and empowering women innovators³.

The goal is to improve the European research and innovation system, create gender-equal working environments where all talents can thrive and better integrate the gender dimension in projects to improve the quality of innovation, technology and research as well as the relevance to society of the knowledge, technologies and innovations produced.

The European Innovation and Technology Institute (the EIT), as a body of the European Union and integral part of Horizon Europe, plays a vital role in supporting the EU's objectives of creating sustainable economic growth and jobs by enabling entrepreneurs and innovators to turn their best ideas into products and services for Europe. Consequently, the gender requirements in Horizon Europe are of significant importance for all EIT supported and funded activities, including the EIT Headquarter (HQ) as well as the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) such as EIT InnoEnergy.

In 2020, the EIT HQ adopted the EIT Gender Mainstreaming Policy⁴. The overarching objectives are a gender responsive portfolio (encompassing education, entrepreneurship and innovation activities) and a gender balanced representation in staff and decision-making positions.

The EIT Gender Mainstreaming Policy and its overarching objectives are applicable to the HQ, the KICs as well as to EIT Alumni.

¹ European Commission (2020) [A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#)

² European Commission (2021) [Gender equality: a strengthened commitment in Horizon Europe](#)

³ European Commission (2021) [Gender equality: a strengthened commitment in Horizon Europe](#)

⁴ EIT (2020) [EIT Gender Mainstreaming Policy](#)

RATIONALE: WHY CHANGE IS NECESSARY AND NEEDED⁵

There are many benefits to promoting diversity and gender equality in innovation and technology which can help build the case for gender equality policies. It is widely acknowledged that promoting gender equality in organizations brings positive impact with respect to:

- compliance with national and EU regulations,
- economic performance,
- well-being at work,
- attracting and retaining talent,
- excellence and quality, effectiveness and efficiency of innovations and technology and as a leverage for organisational change.

Compliance with domestic and EU regulations

EIT InnoEnergy respects legal obligations related to non-discrimination and gender equality. These regulations may vary across countries, and there is a cost for breaching them. This cost can consist of fines, legal prosecution and liability, damaged reputation, loss of attractiveness of the company or internal conflicts.

Complying with the rules requires resources and know-how, which are often more easily secured when a gender mainstreaming policy is in place. Investing in gender equality and diversity (for instance, by collecting sex-disaggregated data or establishing monitoring instruments) helps organisations to comply with legal provisions more comprehensively and proactively. EIT InnoEnergy will provide its data to its internal legal and administrative offices to ensure its ability to comply with legal provisions.

Economic performance

The business case for gender equality, diversity, and inclusion is strong and growing stronger. Evidence points to companies being more successful if they are able to harness the innovation and creativity of women as well as men. As evidenced by multiple recent studies⁶, women's upwards advancement in the private sector brings benefits in terms of business economic results, as companies with higher gender diversity (including the composition of top management and boards) are more likely to have higher financial returns compared to national industry medians in their

⁵ This section is based on EIGE (2016) [Gender Equality in Academia and Research. GEAR Tool](#) and adapted to fit the reality and context of the EIT KICs.

⁶ McKinsey & Company (2018) [Delivering through Diversity](#); McKinsey & Company (2015) [Diversity Matters](#)



sector.

While social justice, legal compliance, or maintaining industry standard employee environment protocols is typically the initial impetus, EIT InnoEnergy regards gender and diversity as a source of competitive advantage, and specifically as a key enabler of growth. In addition to the greater diversity in perspectives for problem solving and other corporate activities, the greater inclusion of women in staff and leadership positions brings the expected advantage of more complete insight to the voice of the customer. Women play a major role in decision-making, investment decisions, and procurement of energy products as consumers and corporate buyers.

Creating better work environments

The EIT KICs are also work environments in which all staff should be able to freely develop their skills and fulfil their expectations. Since these work environments are made up of women and men, adopting a gender sensitive perspective in this regard is sensible.

Beyond mere compliance with existing rules, preventing verbal, psychological and physical gender-based offenses is a basic requirement for a safe, all gender-friendly work environment. Enabling work-life balance in the organisation, distribution, and planning of work, brings benefits for all. These benefits are relevant both to the individuals, in terms of well-being and motivation, and to the organisation, in terms of effectiveness. Balanced work environments contribute to retaining and attracting talents. They are part of a more sustainable management of human resources.

Attracting and retaining talent

Increasing Europe's ability to innovate relies on human capital. Finding and training qualified and creative people is costly, and bringing them up to their full potential takes time. As business, education and research organisations are involved in an intense competition for talent, it is necessary to address the full pool of talents, including women – even when those are under-represented.

Making full use of human capital also requires retaining staff over time and giving them the opportunity to achieve their personal and professional objectives and potential. It has been shown that women encounter barriers that keep them in lower positions in the hierarchy and militate against women's access to top decision-making and managerial positions in an organization (so called "sticky floor" and "glass ceiling" phenomena). This can lead to a "leaky pipeline" where women are more likely to abandon their career in an organisation. Besides the impact on individual employees, this can have a considerable impact on the organization: a loss of knowledge, disruption to teams, groups, and a reduced and limited perspective in the organisation.

Excellence and quality

The quest for excellence and quality has become a major issue for business, education and research organisations. It is driven by an intense competition for skills, funding and innovations. Bringing a



gender dimension in innovation and technology improves the overall quality of design, protocols and outputs in an ample variety of fields.

As innovation and technology are increasingly framed as working for/with society, reflecting the diversity of final users from the early research stage has become an absolute must. ‘Gender blindness’ (understood as the lack of consideration for gender-related aspects) often goes with neglecting other relevant social or experiential parameters. Challenging this blindness, on the contrary, creates awareness for a broader set of variables than the sole sex and/or gender.

While ‘excellence’ is often cited as reason to resist gendering business, education and research organisations, in reality it is the other way round: taking into account the gender dimension is vital for the (societal) relevance and quality of innovation and technology. Integrating sex and gender-based analysis is a matter of producing excellent innovations and technology to the benefit of all European citizens⁷.

Effectiveness and efficiency

Building gender diverse teams helps to secure a broader set of viewpoints, contributing to enhanced creativity and innovation – and thus also enhance the quality of innovation and technology. Such teams promote inclusiveness, experiment more and share and create knowledge.

In addition, teams with a balanced number of women and men tend to perform better and exhibit superior dynamics and productivity. Ensuring diversity in working teams (in terms of gender, race, nationalities, age, etc.) helps create an inclusive organisation, which improves its reputation, and contributes to retaining and attracting (new) talent.

A leverage for organisational change

The changes needed to achieve gender equality also bring benefits in terms of transparency and accountability, decision-making, career management and evaluation procedures. These benefit all staff as well as the organisation as a whole. Last but not least, addressing gender(in)equality can be part of a broader strategic process aimed at enhancing the competitive edge and (inter)national profile.

KEY CONCEPTS

Gender mainstreaming

Gender Mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated into all policies at all levels and all

⁷ European Commission (2020) [Gendered Innovations 2: How Inclusive Analysis Contributes to Research and Innovation](#)



stages, by the actors normally involved in policymaking⁸.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming is a complementary strategy and not a substitute for targeted, women-centred policies and programmes, gender equality legislation, institutional mechanisms for gender equality, and specific interventions that aim to close the gender gap⁹.

Gender equality

Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born female or male. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, thereby recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

Gender balance

In a scenario of gender equality, women and men are expected to participate proportionally to their share of the population. In many areas, however, women participate less than what would be expected based on the sex distribution in the population (underrepresentation of women), while men participate more than expected (overrepresentation of men).

3 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

Strengthening the lead role of EIT InnoEnergy in the community.

EIT InnoEnergy has the goal of demonstrating its leadership in gender mainstreaming in the sustainable energy industry and in the innovation and entrepreneurial community more generally. It is leading by example and in the broader world, via benchmarking, is participating in effective international organizations and sharing its learnings etc.

⁸ Council of Europe (1998) [Gender Mainstreaming: Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Presentation of Good Practices. Final Report of Activities of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming](#)

⁹ EIGE (2021) [Gender Equality Glossary & Thesaurus](#)



Communications include highlighted sections of such publications as the EIT InnoEnergy Annual Report (beginning with 2020 report release in Q2/2021)

Building capacity and increasing awareness in the internal organisation.

EIT InnoEnergy is designating a Diversity Manager and coordinating and promoting opportunities for training, awareness within the organization, especially using existing communications tools such as website, newsletters, reports and meetings. Representation and topics are considered as a regular enhancement for each modality.

Achieving a gender balanced representation in staff and management, including a human resources policy that supports this goal.

EIT InnoEnergy is monitoring and evaluating gender balance at both junior and senior employee levels, as well as executive and supervisory board levels. EIT InnoEnergy is setting long-term goals and intermediate goals to guide its progress, using each recruitment as an opportunity to make progress. HR policy is being revised to include guidance to include women candidates and women interviewers for all new recruitments to facilitate the goals of balanced representation.

Promote gender equality/women's participation in education.

EIT InnoEnergy recognizes the historical under-representation of women in engineering education and is focusing on female recruitment for its various M.S./M.Eng. programs with the goal of meeting or exceeding the proportion of women available in the undergraduate pool.

Promote gender equality/women's participation in entrepreneurship

EIT InnoEnergy's goal is for its portfolio companies to meet or exceed the representation of women who start companies or become CEO's in start-ups in the energy field. EIT InnoEnergy supports its female start-up founders and CEO's, tracking applicants and successful ventures entering its portfolio.

Promote gender equality/women's participation in innovation

EIT InnoEnergy's goal is to move towards gender balance in participation in its innovation activities, for example by meeting or exceeding the participation generally found in energy companies, and academia.