



5.

Fostering the talents
and knowledge of women scientists
from the Enwise countries
Recommendations

The mandate of the Enwise Expert Group was to put forward recommendations on how to **enhance the role and place of women scientists from the Enwise countries in the European Research Area (ERA)**, and obviously since FP6 is meant to be the main tool for focusing and integrating research activities in ERA, as well as structuring and strengthening its foundations in the EU Member States, one other very relevant objective of this report is also to put forward recommendations on how to **increase the participation of women scientists from the Enwise countries in FP6**. Additionally, since a strong emphasis was put by the EU on the **3% *Barcelona objective*** of March 2002, the members of the Enwise Expert Group found it relevant to include in their recommendations some steps to ensure that women scientists from the Enwise countries, and in particular the younger generation of them, would take an active part in this collective European endeavour.

The recommendations are clustered around the various partners, without whom no progress can be made in improving the situation facing women scientists in the 10 Enwise countries:

- Council of Ministers and European Parliament,
 - European Commission,
 - R&D national policy makers,
 - Universities and scientific institutions,
 - Business enterprises,
 - Media,
 - Women scientists and women's associations.
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- **Council of Ministers and European Parliament**
 - First and most important of all, the promotion of women and science in the Enwise countries needs **ongoing political support** from the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament.
 - Support is needed from the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament in order to ensure that **adequate** and **modern** research infrastructures (including the up-grading of IT ones) can be available in the Enwise countries, – as expressed by the ITRE Committee in October 2002 (European Parliament, 2002) – as a prerequisite for deriving optimal benefits from the FP.
 - Support is needed from the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament for **upgrading gender equality** and gender mainstreaming in EU R&D policies, with a special attention to the Enwise countries.
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- **European Commission**

The recommendations to the European Commission can be clustered under four headings: data collection, information, special action to encourage women's participation in FP, and, last but not least, sustained support to women and science at EU level.
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- **Data collection**

The European Commission should ensure **access to data** about panels and all other groups involved in FP6 implementation, proposals and contracts.

These data should be broken down by sex and by country. They should be **reliable**, frequently **updated** and delivered within **reasonable delays**. This is a prerequisite for monitoring progress of women's participation in FP6. In the course of its work, the Group noticed discrepancies between data available in DG Research and those displayed on Cordis.

■ Information

- NCPs of the Enwise countries should be **trained on gender issues and gender dimension** in FP6.
- They should provide wide dissemination of information about EU funding opportunities and projects at national level, including through interviews in daily newspapers and other national media. They should ensure a **significant participation of women in all FP6 information events**.
- **Helpdesks** should be established to support women scientists in taking part in FP6 projects (e.g., pre-screening of proposals, English proof-reading, etc.).
- Given the current **IT weaknesses** in the Enwise countries (with the exception of Slovenia), NCPs should ensure access to the relevant FP6 information for the scientists who are not well equipped.
- The Commission should improve the **visibility of calls for proposals** in the area of women and science/gender related topics in FP6, with special attention to the Enwise countries.
- The Commission should disseminate **best practices** references by publishing achievements of projects co-ordinated by women or having a significant number of women as partners.
- The Commission should ensure that women scientists are properly informed of **EC organised events**, such as IST-2002. It should ensure a fair balance between men and women among speakers and participants. Special sessions for women scientists should be organised to allow them to network. Childcare facilities should be provided on site by the Commission to allow scientists with young children to attend. Special funds to promote the participation of women and young scientists coming from the Enwise countries and the Western Balkans should be made available.

■ Special action to encourage women's participation in FP

- Special funding should be provided for **training** women scientists from the Enwise countries in the field of proposal preparation and project management.
- **Mentoring schemes** should be developed, where experienced women researchers help their younger colleagues in preparing FP6 proposals, getting fellowships, etc.
- Special attention should be paid to **equal opportunity** when deciding on **grants** related to FP6 participation.
- Guidance and training should be provided to scientific institutions in developing the **Gender Action Plans** of the Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence.
- Systematic **advance payments** to experts from the Enwise countries and the Western Balkans should become common practice.

- The Commission should ensure a **stronger representation** of women scientists from the Enwise countries in **FP6 Advisory Groups**.
- The pool of women scientists from the Enwise countries, registered in the evaluators database, should be scrutinised by nationality and field of science, so that their **participation in the evaluation panels can be optimised**.
- **Continued support to women and science at EU level**
 - The Commission should continue to **support the Helsinki Group**, with a special attention to the follow-up of the Enwise report. Helsinki delegates should be asked to submit regular reports with up-to-date information on the situation of women scientists in their respective countries.
 - The Commission should facilitate **connections** between national women and science-related networks of the Enwise countries and other European networks, in particular the planned European Platform of Women Scientists.
 - The Commission should support **regional co-ordination centres** for women and science (using national co-financing).
- **R&D national policy makers**
 - Special attention should be paid to implementing a **gender mainstreaming approach in the national education policies**, from elementary schools to higher education institutions; it should point to equal rights of both men and women, and show clearly *positive differences of the two sexes*, necessary for a balanced development of society.
 - Summer schools and mentoring programs for high school children should be organised in order to **attract girls in science**; young women scientists should be mobilised in these schemes to present some of their own experiences as women scientists.
 - **Separate programmes** should be provided for girls and for boys in different scientific disciplines (e.g. for girls to promote technical disciplines).
 - There is a need to deepen the **knowledge base on the restructuring** of R&D systems in the Enwise countries; research in this field should be supported.
 - **Structural funds** should be mobilised to **improve ICT** and other working technical facilities so that valuable brainpower is not lost due to poor equipment.
 - A **department** and/or a person in the responsible ministry for research (e.g. the Ministry of Education or the Governmental Office of Equal Opportunities in Hungary) should be established or appointed with the responsibility of **promoting women in science and gender equality in research**.
 - **Steering Committees on Women and Science** should be established in all Enwise countries with a formal mandate, ensuring co-operation between all stakeholders involved in promoting women and science.
 - The **representation of the Enwise countries in the Helsinki Group** should be revisited in order to maximise the added value of the Helsinki Group activities in the national contexts.

- **Family-friendly policies** at University, HE and public and private R&D institutions should be stimulated by national authorities in order to improve the social and working conditions of women scientists in the Enwise countries.
- A careful long-term national policy, which could be supported by EU funds, should be developed in order to **support the younger generation** of scientists: promoting fellowships and mobility opportunities with the overall information databases at a large scale, creating a Network of European Young Scientists in order to follow up their career after the fellowship period, developing re-integration programmes for young people returning back to their home country.
- Re-qualification programmes for **senior scientists**, who have built their career during communist times or in the poor economic conditions during the transitional period, should be developed to enhance their scientific potential, in order to overcome existing weaknesses (updating knowledge, language courses and IT skills).
- **Contact Centres for women scientists** should be set up in order to:
 - encourage women to participate in scientific research,
 - promote programmes aiming at enhancing women's participation in scientific research and to increase numbers of scholarships for women,
 - increase participation of women in FP6,
 - organise seminars for women scientists to highlight the situation of women in different scientific disciplines in their own country and all over Europe, as well as to exchange best practices references on women and science adopted by other countries (e.g. in the UK or in Germany),
 - to support the dissemination of the Enwise report at grass-root level to give follow up to its recommendations,
 - to develop web-pages with information on how to apply for different national and EU activities and programmes.
- **Progress** towards gender equality in science should be **monitored** and presented in national reports, taking into account the economic perspective, i.e. add the *Honeypot* indicator to the list of Benchmarking indicators.
- It is necessary to examine the **pay gap** in view of the sharp vertical segregation that exists between the sexes in scientific systems. This information will also enable a comparison with other knowledge-intensive fields, so that the attractiveness of scientific careers in the Enwise countries and beyond can be monitored.
- Research on women scientists, their **careers and life strategies** should be supported.
- **Programmes for scientific co-operation** between the scientific communities and scientists issued from the diaspora of the respective Enwise countries should be developed.

■ Universities and scientific institutions

- Universities and scientific institutions should establish a **department**, or appoint a person, responsible for developing actions **promoting women and/in science issues**, and for implementing an **Equal Opportunities employment policy**.
- Equal opportunity in **recruitment** and **promotion** procedures of scientists in the Enwise countries should be ensured.
- **Scientific evaluation** should be based on more objective criteria, instead of a referral system (which is an extremely cliquish, unfair and traditional system!!!), or dependent on physical presence (conferences, for example).
- Research institutions should ensure **family-friendly working environments**, including re-training after maternity leave to prevent breaks in careers and tele-working facilities. It is very important for men to be included in these innovative schemes, to legitimise new behavioural models. Men should be targeted in special campaigns.
- Universities and scientific institutions should develop **gender sensitive indicators** to monitor the development of the gendered structure of their science staff.
- A **new post-doc system** for young scientists should be introduced. In these new schemes, women should be encouraged to apply. Special funding for female graduate students and post-doctoral researchers ought to be provided.
- Given the importance of the international dimension in building a scientific career, women researchers should receive **financial support to participate in international events and actions**.
- **Women's and gender studies**, as well as **gender research** should be supported. Gender research should investigate, in particular, both qualitative and quantitative research connecting the communist and post-communist times, in order to learn not only about women's subjective perception of their lives and their everyday strategies, but also about the diversity of their lives and strategies. Over-generalisation and stereotypes of *a woman* (or *a man*) in the Enwise countries must be avoided.

■ Business enterprises

- Business enterprises should encourage women's participation, through adopting **family-friendly working environment**.
- Further analytical research into the working lives of women in **market-led research** in the Enwise countries is needed.

■ Media

- Media should **improve the image of science** and develop awareness campaigns in the Enwise countries. This image should be more attractive to women and the younger generation, revealing the creative character of scientific and research work, its imaginative power, its adventurous potential and a unique enchantment of discovering mysteries of the world.
- **Training** should be provided to **journalists** to raise their awareness about gender stereotypes, in particular in science.

- Brochures, books, TV-programmes and CDs – DVDs on women and science should be produced.
- Meetings and workshops between **journalists** and **scientists** should be organised to open the dialogue and raise the awareness about the need to promote gender equality in science.

- **Women scientists and women's associations**
- **Professional organisations** and **networks** of women in science should be established in the Enwise countries, including women scientists returning from abroad, and women brain-drainers. The **diaspora** of women scientists should be targeted too.
- These organisations and networks should **empower** women scientists and monitor the **follow-up of the Enwise report**.
- These organisations and networks should ensure **strategic co-operation** with EU-15 women scientists and women scientists from the Balkans.
- Strategic links between gender experts from **Eastern and Western Europe** should be developed.