



Terms of Reference

High Level STRATA-ETAN Expert Group

to promote Women
in Research in the Private Sector
in the European Research Area (ERA)

Definitions and references regarding the Task

A high level STRATA-ETAN expert group is to be constituted to prepare a report on options for industry and innovation policy to increase the participation of women in research in the private sector, including activities that might be implemented in the next Research Framework Programme (2002-2006). The terms of reference describe the background, objectives, scope and issues for the report, and the group's working methods. The terms of reference aim at guiding the group rather than committing it to particular approaches. With the consent of the Commission, the Terms of Reference can be adapted according to relevant developments in related European policy fields.

1 Background:

The issue of women and science is at the core of the European Research Area. Indeed the under-representation of women in science prevents its full realisation. First, because this represents an unacceptable and unaffordable waste of human resources. And second, because the under-representation of women in science compared with their representation in society reflects a distortion between science and society.

Based on the Communication (COM (1999)76) "*Women and Science*" *Mobilising women to enrich European research*¹ adopted by the Commission in February 1999, backed by the Council Resolution on 'Women and Science' of May 1999² and supported by the resolution of the European Parliament in February 2000³ the Commission acknowledges the severe under-representation of women in science and sets out an action plan to promote gender equality in science. Two main areas of activities have been implemented:

- the development of a Policy Forum in co-operation with the Member States, scientists and networks concentrating on the development of a collective strategic capacity and the production of gender indicators on women and science and
- establishing the Gender Watch System in the Fifth Framework Programme (FP 5).

The ETAN report 'Science policies in the European Union: Promoting excellence through mainstreaming gender equality' delivered to the Commission in November 1999 has provided a solid common basis for policy dialogue. It describes the current situation of female scientists in universities, research institutes and academies. It points out the scarcity of information available on women in industry research. This has not changed in the meantime.

¹ Communication COM(1999) 76 final, 17.2.1999

² Council Resolution 8565/99, 1.6.1999

³ European Parliament (PE 284.656) adopted 3.2.2000

1.1. The broader context: the Lisbon Strategy and the European Research Area

The strategic positioning of EU RTDI policy has been highlighted in March 2000, when the Heads of State or Government and the European Commission named it as one of the main instruments for implementing their common vision for economic and social development in Europe, *the Lisbon Strategy*. This strategy aims to make the European Union by 2010 “*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*”. It also sets the target to realise a 60 percent employment participation of women in the labour market.

1.2. Mobilising human potential and strengthening the strategic basis of the European Research Area

Societies are increasingly “knowledge-driven”, markets have become essentially globalised, and market opportunities appear and disappear more rapidly than in the past. In all European countries the participation of women in higher education is exploding, women constitute more than half of undergraduates and, in most countries, already the majority of graduates are women. But in public and private research women are still under-represented and hardly visible. In the European countries women “Full Professorships” account only for 11 percent on average and reach nowhere 20 percent. On the whole, the share of female researchers in Higher Education in Europe is only about 26 percent.¹

In the US the distribution of SET(Science-Engineering-Technology) workforce by sex and sector of employment indicates the prominent position of industry employment for scientists regardless of gender. 71 percent of all researchers (scientists) are employed by industry, 73.2 percent of all male and 61.9 percent of all female scientists.² No comparable gender differentiated statistics are available for the European Union, however it is known that employment of scientists in industry research (also) clearly outnumbers employment in universities and research institutions.

In order to enrich quality and increase European research, it is necessary to overcome existing barriers, which keep women from responsible positions in science, impede their career development, and prevents higher participation of women in research.

1.3. The “Women and Science” document and the proposal for the next Research Framework programme.

The need for a coherent supportive strategy and framework is taken up by “*Women and Science*” *the gender dimension as a leverage for reforming science*, the working document published by the Commission in May 2001, by underlining the importance of women in science for the ERA.³

In particular, in order to systematically provide improved policy relevant information for the method of “open co-ordination” of national and EU research policies related to research in the private sector. Thus, programmes, initiatives and institutions might be better interconnected and geared towards European policies and issues, at transnational,

¹ Eurostat: Women in public research and higher education in Europe, Statistics in focus 9/2001

² Land of Plenty: Diversity as America’s Competitive Edge in Science, Engineering and Technology

Report of the Congressional Commission on the Advancement of Women and Minorities in Science,

Engineering and Technology Development, September 2000

³ SEC(2001) 771, 15.5.2001, Council Resolution 10357/01, 3.7.2001

interregional or European level, through new voluntary co-operation and benchmarking mechanisms. The need is emphasised to move further ahead to systematically strengthen the strategic basis of ERA.

Promotion of gender equality in research, as outlined in the proposal of the multiannual Framework Programme 2002-2006⁴ will be pursued by a reinforced Policy Forum, an enriched Gender Watch System and an improved understanding of the “gender and science” issue. In this context the Commission will set up an expert group on women in research in the private sector before the end of 2001.

2 The high level expert group: Analysing the situation of women in research in the private sector and exploring strategies for promoting gender equality

The DG Research Directorate C has already started to launch activities for developing more stable and regular mechanisms of exchange and debate on women in science and research in the EU. Currently, a common work programme is being elaborated defining future activities. As part of this work programme, a STRATA-ETAN expert group is suggested, which should contribute to the analysis of the situation of women in research in the private sector and explore options for strategies to strengthen the role of women.

The need to establish such an expert group has been emphasised in the ETAN-Report: “Promoting excellence through mainstreaming gender equality”, and has been recommended in the conclusions of the conference “Making change happen” in April 2000.⁵ It has further been an action envisaged in the proposal of the multiannual Framework Programme 2002-2006.

2.1. Tasks of the expert group

Based on the aforementioned considerations, the expert group will have the task to prepare a report which will

- highlight availability and shortages of data and information on women in research in industry;
- analyse the situation in the European Union, the Member States and the US, and in selected industries (e.g., chemicals, pharmaceuticals, IT, communications(media), environment), to the extent possible;
- in particular, representation of women, recruitment practices, career-development, mentoring, mobility, forms of work organisation (flexi-time, tele-working, etc.), supporting infrastructure (e.g., childcare facilities), etc.
- outside of industry employment, attention shall be paid to female entrepreneurship in this area and supporting policies and programmes;
- industry-science relations, such as mobility of researchers between university and industry, training, etc.;
- identify existing networks, best practices in industry and strategies as applied by industry and innovation policies;
- consolidate and synthesise this knowledge focusing on its specific value for strengthening the role of women in research in the private sector, in a structured dialogue with selected EU and external persons to analyse and explain best practice;
- provide strategic guidance to the Commission, the Member States, and industry by outlining options for supporting measures, new co-operation schemes, and their connection to existing network structures and on-going activities, and by discussing the impacts and benefits of the different options suggested with respect to the European goals of sustainable development, economic competitiveness, and European identity.

⁴ COM (2001) 94 Final - 21.2.2001

⁵ Women and Science “Making change happen” Proceedings of the conference, EC, Luxembourg 2001

2.2. Participants and responsibilities

The group will consist of about 15 members, a rapporteur and a chairperson. Participants are selected and invited on the merit of their experience and knowledge and will represent

- different branches of industry and different scientific disciplines
- business organisations in Europe, relevant for research in the private sector, including SMEs
- policy concerned with research in industry.

Participants will have a sound background and ample experience in some or all of the fields concerned. Participants will make use of their networks, specific knowledge and draw from the results of their earlier synthesising work.

All participants will contribute to the work of the expert group with an issue paper, reflecting their specific knowledge, and will add to the work and results of the group.

The overall co-ordination of the activities of the expert group and the preparation of the final report will be carried out by the chairperson and the rapporteur. The chairperson will act as the main contact point for the Commission and will chair the plenary sessions.

In addition to her contributions to the final report, the rapporteur carries out the necessary administrative tasks (preparation of agendas, minutes, evaluation of issue papers etc.) supported by her counterpart at the Commission.

3 Organisation of the expert group

The expert group will be supported by **four sub-groups** consisting of experts proposed and selected by the group-members and the Commission. Each group (consisting of about 5 members) will provide additional input-papers to the following subject areas:

- young scientists,
- female entrepreneurs,
- best practices, and
- women in research in industry as related to EU-programmes.

3.1. Workplan

Phase 1: Preparation of the first meeting

In order to ensure real added-value of the first plenary session for all participants, and to progress efficiently and substantially on the subjects to be dealt with, participants are expected to prepare short issue papers prior to the first meeting, which is planned to take place on January 22nd, 2002.

The short “issue papers” (3 pages) by the participants should outline their interests and refer to possible contributions to the expert group’s work.

The paper of the chairperson and the rapporteur as well as the issue papers should be available until January 10th, 2002. They will be put into context, structured, and sent to all participants prior to the first plenary session.

The chairperson, supported by the rapporteur and the Commission, will prepare an overview of the state of the art, of what can realistically be expected from the activities of the group, and outline some options for improvement, in particular relating to the following items:

- Women in research in the private sector,
- Actual situation, available data,

- Issues and challenges.

Phase 2: First meeting, January 22nd, 2002

First plenary session in Brussels (January 22nd, 2002). Results will be:

- common agreement on the group's objectives, general time schedule, areas of work (chapter (working) headlines of the report);
- discussion how work or parts thereof could feed into or make use of other ongoing activities;
- brainstorming on main issues,
- discussion on the composition and issues of the planned sub-groups, and defining the targets of the subgroups.

After the plenary session: Group members individually propose tasks/questions for the sub-groups and recommend experts for the sub-groups.

Participants further develop their issue papers, also integrating the results of the first plenary session.

A password protected Internet forum will be established making use of the available infrastructure (CIRCA-network).

All papers, reports and minutes will be made available on the net and group members will be alerted to any new additions. This will give group members the possibility to inform themselves on any new or updated papers and comment on them immediately between plenary sessions.

Phase 3: January till May 2002

Working sessions of the sub-groups (2x 1-2 days) will be arranged according to the specific needs and decisions of the expert group and the sub-groups themselves: Based on the available input, participants in the subgroups will discuss and assess the issue papers, add to them on the basis of their experience and available data and research in the area concerned, and work towards a "synthesis paper" of the particular subgroup

- young scientists
- entrepreneurship
- best practices
- connection to EU-programmes

Issue papers are refined for presentation and exchanged in sub-groups, synthesis papers are prepared.

Phase 4: Second meeting of the expert group May 29/30th, 2002

Second plenary session (May 29/30th):

- Hearing of additional experts from abroad on research, networks, strategies,
- report from sub-groups,
- discussion of synthesis papers and issue papers,
- definition of final output,
- elaboration of dissemination schedule, establishing connection to other activities to harness synergies, (if deemed useful and necessary: hearing of external experts).

After the plenary session: Issue papers are finalised, related to each other and fed into an overall report. Rapporteur and chairperson prepare and circulate draft final report.

Phase 5: June – August 2002

Third plenary session (September 19/20th) in Brussels:

- developing the report
- integration of all contributions
- collection of best practices
- discussing final report and further dissemination events.

Report is finalised integrating the results of the last plenary session and layouted (ready for printing) end of October 2002.

Phase 6: 19/20th September

Presentation and delivery of the report to the Commission.

3.2 Identification and selection of the members of the group

According to its special composition, some of the suggested members are high-level policy makers that will be invited according to the relevant procedures in place. Others are identified from a list, continually updated by an open-ended call for applications (http://www.cordis.lu/improving/calls/strata_eap_199901.htm; OJ 1999/C 120 A/01), for the constitution of STRATA-ETAN (STRATegic Analysis – Expert Thematic Analysis) expert groups working on S&T policy issues. The members of the group are selected on the basis of their competence and the requirements of the different aspects of each topic, with an emphasis on different professional, institutional and regional viewpoints.

3.3. External inputs

Commission officials and policy makers interested in the topic are invited and encouraged to follow the work of the group and participate in its meetings.

Appropriate external experts from US, Canada, Australia will also be invited to participate in a meeting in May 2002. In particular, this activity should include outside consultation with stakeholders to broaden the available input during the meetings, including invited experts from the Commission, member states, universities, research groups and industry.

The expert group could take advantage of meetings, workshops, etc. being organised at the same time on relevant subjects.

3.4. Expert Group outputs

The group will prepare:

- (inception) paper of rapporteur and chairperson as basis for the expert group work,
- issue papers of the other participants,
- minutes of the plenary sessions,
- (4) synthesising reports by the sub-groups,
- overview, collection and description of best practices identified,
- draft final report,
- final report.

Progress reports on the work of the group will be prepared by the Commission in accordance with the chairperson and rapporteur of the group.

The final report will deliver observations, orientations and policy recommendations. It should be to the point, providing only the necessary analysis and synthesis to elucidate the implications of the topics and the relevant policy options, and represent the collective view of the working group. Disagreements could give important additional information, they can be recorded as such, or as different options leading to different consequences. The report will be disseminated by the Commission and presented to appropriate organisations.

3.5. Credits

The report is the sole responsibility of the working group and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission. It will be the property of the Commission.

3.6. Work schedule

The timetable envisaged is as follows:

Issue papers by participants: January 10th, 2002

Preparation meeting chairperson, rapporteur, Commission – December 2001

First plenary session, January 22nd, 2002

Sub-group meetings, February till April 2002

Second plenary session, May 29/30th, 2002

Third plenary session, September 19/20th, 2002

Final report, October 2002