



WHY A GENDER EQUALITY PLAN?

ROMANIAN
AGENCY FOR
QUALITY ASSURANCE
IN HIGHER
EDUCATION (ARACIS)

TARGET } Taking a Reflexive approach
to Gender Equality for
institutional Transformation

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Introduction

ARACIS (Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) was established in 2005 as a consequence of Romania's participation in the Bologna process, in compliance with Government Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 approved with modifications by Law no. 87/2006. It took the patrimony and all rights and obligations, logistic infrastructure, technical staff and database of the National Council for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation, which was functioning since 1993. It is an autonomous public institution, of national interest, having a legal personality and its own income and expenditure budget, financed by governmental funds.

Our mission is to carry out the quality external evaluation of education provided by higher education institutions and by other organizations providing higher education study programs, which operate in Romania.

Concerning gender equality policies, the point which made a difference was the participation of ARACIS in the project "Taking a Reflexive Approach to Gender Equality for Institutional Transformation" (TARGET) funded under the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme¹. One of the main aims of TARGET was the design and implementation of tailored gender equality plans in six research performing and research funding organisations as part of a sustained, reflexive and participatory structural change process towards enhanced gender equality in the institutions. Key initial aspects were the establishment of a community of practice for gender equality within each institution and the implementation of a comprehensive gender equality audit. As a result of this process, the first ARACIS Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was adopted.

¹ <http://www.gendertarget.eu>

1. Why do we need a Gender Equality Plan?

The scope of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was to offer us a detailed image of the gender balance within our institution. An ongoing dialogue between ARACIS and the partnered Romanian universities was set up to modify the methodology, guides and standards for the quality evaluation process. In terms of institutional structure, the GEP aimed to analyse the main gender-disaggregated data available in the organisation, looking at the structure of ARACIS – men and women involved at all levels of activity. The aim of this development was to include gender on the list of criteria for the evaluation of the universities. Representatives from the universities were asked to provide ARACIS with a comprehensive course on gender policies that would be disseminated throughout the entire higher educational system in Romania. This action states the important role that ARACIS assumes in promoting gender equality within the research environment and it influences GEP implementation in the long run.

The main objectives of the GEP were to:

1. Foster gender equality in recruitment practices
2. Promote the integration of gender equality in recruitment and selection practices
3. Foster gender balance in decision making (Council and Executive Office)
4. Raise awareness of gender equality by addressing to the gender academia in Romania
5. Integrate gender equality in the curricula of the universities that provide gender related courses
6. Promote gender equality in pre-university education

2. Designing and Approving a Gender Equality Plan

Several quantitative and qualitative indicators were developed in order to monitor the implementation of the GEP at ARACIS. These are grouped into four main categories: 1) human resource management, 2) decision making, 3) gender dimension in research content and 4) transversal measures.

The main indicators included in the GEP implementation process are: sex-disaggregated data in recruitment; total applicants, applicants selected, and details of the committees making the selection; gender-disaggregated data from universities as part of quality external evaluation; share of job advertisements and accompanying documents formulated in a gender sensitive language; share of women/men out of total applicants/total employees/members of permanent commissions (sex-disaggregated data); and share of women/men in decision-making bodies (Council and Executive Office).

All the quantitative indicators that we formulated for drawing this monitoring report are SMART – they are specific (precise and focused on the gender structure at ARACIS), measurable (they are a practical and undisputed means of measuring the change in terms of gender balance at ARACIS), achievable (they do not refer to something that is beyond the means of achievement), realistic (they make sense and are very precise because they are expressed in numbers and figures) and they are time bound (they address the gender balance situation over a definite period of time, more precisely, six years).

Designing and approving a GEP at ARACIS also meant the creation of a community of practice. This comprised of representatives from all staff levels of our institution; thus, it included the President of ARACIS, one Vice-president, the Director of Organisation, Human Resources, IT and Public Acquisitions, the Director of International Relations, Projects and Cooperation, representatives from the Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Department, specialist inspectors, members of the ARACIS Council and Commissions, experts in gender equality, and students' representatives. The CoP was built strategically to utilise the existing gender expertise in our institution and to build up institutional capacity for a reflexive gender equality policy. The CoP will be continuously developed based on our results, recommendations and future steps to be followed (an iterative process to be continued throughout the project life cycle). Since the majority of the CoP are also members of ARACIS in different areas of expertise, the participation in CoP is rather stable. There are frequent meetings of the CoP, usually every month, which ARACIS, as the official counsel, joins. The ongoing activities are part of everyone's working agenda and extensive discussions take place in order to continue their implementation.

The institutional workshops organised within the framework of TARGET were useful for strengthening participation in the CoP. The institutional workshop in Bucharest, that took place on 3 May 2018, was a great opportunity to hear key people's recommendations, aimed at improving the gender equality audit for ARACIS and thus at creating an adequate GEP. This meeting of the CoP further validated their work and opened up the possibility of the involvement of other members – for instance, it was suggested that members from ARACIP should also be part of the CoP (ARACIP is a similar agency – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education). As values are developed many years before preparing for a bachelor's degree, it is clear that ARACIS has to consider an extension to the CoP to the pre-university education network. The third institutional workshop, held at ARACIS on 11 July 2019, was a great opportunity for assessing the state of the

TARGET project and to undertake the first evaluation and implementation of GEP as well as the systemic evaluation of the gender policies, as outlined by this project. The fourth institutional workshop, held at ARACIS on 24 February 2020, gave us the opportunity to include the Romanian universities in the CoP, as instruments for the promotion and dissemination of gender related activities. The motivation to participate in CoPs is influenced by several factors:

- » The possibility and opportunity to access European funds through the gender equality dimension – Romanian universities can develop new research and innovation programmes dedicated to gender equality, generate specialists and influence the higher educational system by promoting a gender-related curricula.
- » ARACIS is motivated to participate in the CoP due to the interest in launching an optional course in gender equality as part of the official evaluation standards, especially in the fields of social sciences and humanities.
- » The universities are motivated to become a part of the CoP due to the possibility to develop a new study domain – namely, gender studies – and to extend their area of specialisation.

3. Main Activities Implemented

Special attention was given to collecting gender data within the institution, drafting the GEP, looking at ways it could be updated, changing recruitment policies by adding gender criteria and self-assessing the implementation of TARGET. We looked at specific data including human resources, personnel, technical staff, the decision-making body and the evaluation commissions. The main focus was to underline the changes that were made within our institution in terms of gender – the proportion of women working at different levels. We also dedicated time and resources to exploring the structure of the evaluation commissions working at ARACIS, as they represent one of the most important parts of our CoP. Another activity that was undertaken within the project was an extended study about the state of the art of gender studies within the higher education system in Romania. It comprises relevant information, such as statistics, university curricula – in order to see how many gender-dedicated study programmes there are in Romania, at what level, when they were introduced in the educational landscape, the level training of academic staff, what disciplines are taught there, what the routes taken by the graduates of these programmes are, and the number of programmes that are no longer on offer at these universities. We also researched past studies written on the same theme in order to underline the progress (or regress) of gender studies programmes in the Romanian higher educational system. This is one of the most important disseminating materials and it represents our contribution to the final TARGET publication.

Preparing and organising the 4th Institutional Workshop at ARACIS was another major activity that our institution carried out within the project. For the first time since the implementation of TARGET, we decided to invite the main Romanian universities to attend this event for promoting TARGET tools and objectives. Our main goal was to expand the CoP, to send a strong signal to the higher education system that gender equality is an important quality criterion, that ARACIS is promoting gender related policies and that we want to work closely with the academic community to modify evaluation methodology by adding gender-related criteria. We prepared a list of possible questions to present to the representatives of these universities, addressing issues such as the existence of gender policies within their institution, how issues relating to gender discrimination and harassment are handled, if there exists an official gender equality plan, if there are specific gender studies programmes promoted in their curricula, and how ARACIS can help the universities when it comes to addressing gender as a quality criterion. Official invitations were sent to the Rectors of these universities, contacts were established in order to identify the specific staff that were involved in managing or teaching gender studies programmes, and a working group was established at the capacity building event in Bucharest. Another activity undertaken during this event was conducting interviews with the main stakeholders involved in implementing TARGET. We identified these stakeholders, informed them about the need to answer a series of questions, briefed them about the content of these questions and made detailed appointments for conducting the interviews at ARACIS headquarters. The answers to these questions were introduced in the 2020 interim TARGET evaluation report.

Special attention was given to promoting gender within internal documents and recruitment practices. The GEP was updated in 2020 at ARACIS by adding a gender statement to all internal documents. We had meetings with the decision-making body of ARACIS, discussing each document that needed to be modified in order to add a gender equality statement, with the purpose of updating the GEP. Our team also attended several online meetings with the TARGET partners

to assess the current situation at ARACIS and the difficulties generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Continuous dialogue was maintained with the universities as we advanced with the quality methodology. We also kept in close contact with all the evaluation commissions at ARACIS, with the purpose of changing the doctoral evaluation criteria, by adding gender to it. We ensured a flow of information from all the research domains within the higher education system in Romania, making sure that all the viewpoints were taken into consideration when it came to introducing new evaluation criteria for the doctoral programmes.

One of the most important activities carried out by ARACIS within TARGET was the application of the methodology to the quality evaluation of doctoral studies in the Romanian higher education system. This was one of the milestones of TARGET because we were the first to introduce gender equality as a criterion for assessing the quality of doctoral studies. In April 2021, the Ministry of Education passed an order approving the evaluation methodology for doctoral studies. The order included the criteria, standards and performance indicators for the accreditation and periodical evaluation of institutions organising doctoral study programmes (IOSUD). These documents contain all relevant information about the evaluation procedure of doctoral studies in Romania and related tasks of collecting gender-related data as part of the quality evaluation process².

² Further information about these official documents can be accessed at: https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021-and-Annex-1_Methodology-evaluation-of-university-doctoral-studies.pdf and: https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021_Annex-3-IOSUD.pdf

4. Main Changes in the Status Quo of Gender Equality at ARACIS

The status quo of gender equality at institutional level remained unchanged in terms of female representation at the Council level or in the decision-making bodies at ARACIS. There were no significant improvements when it comes to the Council at ARACIS. A possible explanation for the imbalance (a larger ratio of women in the technical staff, but a significantly lower one in the decision-making bodies) is a cultural one. There were no formal gender equality policies or monitoring with regard to gender equality in the Council, but there is no discrimination in terms of salary policies or resource allocation as these are governed by the law. The same gender proportions were maintained within the Commission of Permanent Experts that carry out the evaluation activities performed by ARACIS. The recruitment procedure of these experts is established by law and there is a gender equality specification in their recruitment. However, it is not clear how this is applied in the recruitment process. The staff turnover is generally low for both women and men, as the contracts are permanent. Salaries for staff (men and women), social benefits (maternity leave, childcare, etc.), annual training and promotions are awarded equally as is enshrined in the law.

There is no requirement for the evaluation of the existence or implementation of gender equality policies in the research programmes; however, there is a legal requirement that there cannot be any discrimination in the acceptance of students. There are no dedicated personnel in charge of gender equality at ARACIS, but informally some steps have been implemented. Since June 2019, a new gender expert has been hired by ARACIS to conduct all the specific activities of the TARGET project. There are very few instances in which ARACIS has official gender equality policies. The work of the institution (human resources, decision making and evaluations) is mostly done on the principle of non-discrimination, rather than gender equality. The fact that the institution receives public funding, and is thus governed by law in all its areas of work, helps to promote gender equality in an indirect way, as it ensures equal pay for people in equivalent positions, equal access to information (for members in the decision-making body), equal access to training and equal access to the social benefits established by law. During the last year, ARACIS has become actively involved in promoting ideas of gender equality within the institution and all the activities that it coordinates.

The gender expert at ARACIS and the team working on the TARGET project recently commenced a study exploring the situation of gender studies as a research topic within the Romanian university system. This study aims to provide a meaningful picture of how gender studies have become part of the higher education system in Romania, what challenges have been met on the way and what their future in the educational landscape is. Several aspects were taken into consideration in this study: the political factors and their influence on gender, the initial goals of gender studies in Romania, the degree of their theoretical development, the connection between gender studies academics and activists, the current state of empirical research and the main obstacles, and resistance to the integration of gender studies in the field of research. Discussing these aspects helped us outline a state of the art of gender studies in higher education in Romania, identifying the strength and weaknesses of gender studies and the possible solutions for upgrading the status of gender studies from an annex of social sciences and humanities to a field of research in its own right. This study became part of the official

TARGET publication as the contribution of ARACIS.

A key outcome of TARGET is the creation of a permanent research position within the technical apparatus. The person who was hired for this position will also address any gender equality issue that arises within the institution. The creation of this position is part of the future efforts that our institution will make to continue to implement and update the GEP.

5. Looking forward

The fact that ARACIS is a public institution, governed by national laws in all areas of its activity, makes it rather difficult for us to influence the external environment. Even so, we take notice of the informal power that our organisation has in terms of influencing the political actors involved in passing laws and regulations for the higher educational system. ARACIS also took significant steps for the inclusion of gender related issues in the curricula of the participating Romanian universities. During the 4th Institutional Workshop held at ARACIS in February 2020, several developments were made.

A fluent dialogue between ARACIS and the Romanian universities was set up in order to modify the methodology for evaluation with the aim of including gender on the list of evaluation criteria of the universities. ARACIS asked the representatives of the universities to develop an umbrella course on gender policies that will be disseminated throughout the entire higher educational system of Romania. These actions evidence the important role that ARACIS assumes in promoting gender equality within the research environment and its influence on GEP implementation on the long run. When this modification of the evaluation criteria and official methodology comes into effect, the composition of the permanent commissions at ARACIS will also have to change. This will require the presence of gender experts within the commissions, with the specific task of evaluating the gender-related criteria provided by each university.

A working group was set up at ARACIS which includes members of the TARGET project and professors from the participating Romanian universities who were invited to the 4th Institutional Workshop. The main task of this group is to formulate a course on gender policies and a plan on how this can be introduced into the curriculum. The group is comprised of the following people:

- » Alina TĂRICEANU – ARACIS gender expert
- » Daniela Mihaela ISPAS – ARACIS
- » Laura GRUNBERG – University of Bucharest
- » Măriuca CONSTANTIN – National University of Political Studies and Public Administration of Bucharest
- » Ioana DODI – National University of Political Studies and Public Administration of Bucharest
- » Florica PAȘOL – Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest
- » Lia Lucia IONESCU – Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest
- » Éva LÁSZLÓ – “Babeș-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca
- » Maria Nicoleta TURLIUC – “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași
- » Romanita JUMANCA – West University of Timișoara
- » Tamara CIOBANU student – “Babeș-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca,

- » Ana DUPLAVA student - "Babeş-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca,
- » Valentina VASILE student - "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu.

The most important institutional strategy that ARACIS is currently working on addresses the drafting, implementation and dissemination of a new evaluation methodology. The current Romanian Law of Education, which covers both ARACIS and the universities, does not yet stipulate the necessity of a GEP. Therefore, it is an appropriate time for ARACIS to modify their evaluation methodology and criteria and ask the universities to implement their own GEP. The fact that Romanian universities will have to periodically report gender data as part of the quality evaluation process will encourage them to outline and implement their own GEPs. The aforementioned working group dedicated to the specific task of maintaining a permanent dialogue between ARACIS and the universities, in order to come up with the best ideas for the gender policy paper and GEPs that will be implemented by the wider higher education system. During the last year, ARACIS has become actively involved in promoting ideas of gender equality within the institution and all the activities that it coordinates. Therefore, ARACIS gathered relevant data about gender study programmes that are available in the Romanian higher education system. An institutional workshop was organised with the professors and staff involved in these programmes, in order to discuss the opportunities provided by a dedicated gender studies education programme and the main threats and disadvantages that are found within the Romanian society in terms of gender studies topics. The conclusions and recommendations of these meetings will become part of the GEP advanced by ARACIS. Moreover, ARACIS has assumed its role in changing and improving the evaluation criteria for the universities, promoting gender equality as a necessity when providing a quality educational. Through these types of activities, ARACIS is reaffirming its role in the promotion of gender equality in higher education institutions in Romania.

Annex I – List of publications, workshops and other events

Scientific publications

Tăriceanu, Alina (forthcoming). Promoting Gender Studies in Romania – Working in a Difficult Context, in: Wroblewski, Angela; Palmén, Rachel (eds.). Overcoming the challenge of structural change in research organisations. A reflexive approach to gender equality. Bingley: Emerald.

Workshops and events

- » 1st Institutional Workshop: 3 May 2018, Bucharest
- » 2nd Institutional Workshop: 13 July 2018, Bucharest
- » 3rd Institutional Workshop: 11 July 2019, Bucharest
- » TARGET Capacity building meeting: 26-27 September 2019, Athens
- » 4th Institutional Workshop: 24 February 2020, Bucharest
- » TARGET-GEECCO Conference: 11 March 2021, online
- » TARGET Co-creation workshop on gender in context and in curricula: 21-22 July 2021, online
- » Study visit on gender equality policies in Austrian RFOs: 28 September-1 October 2021, online
- » TARGET Co-creation Workshop – Work-life balance in context of Gender Equality & Gender in Accreditation: 24 November 2021, online
- » TARGET final meeting: 2-3 December 2021, online
- » ARACIS TARGET final national conference: 15 December 2021, online

Annex II – ARACIS data on staff

Table 1. Gender balance at ARACIS – Permanent Staff

Team	Number of people		%	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Technical apparatus (permanent staff)	24	9	73%	27%
Executive Office (decision-making body)	2	3	40%	60%
Council (decision-making body)	4	16 (out of which 2 are students)	20%	80%
Advisory Board	0	17	0%	100%
Commission of Institutional Assessment of Managerial and Financial Activities	2	12	14%	86%
Commission of Ethics	1	4	20%	80%

Table 2. Gender balance at ARACIS – Specialty commissions

Team	Number of people		%	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
C1: Exact Sciences and Natural Sciences	3	5 (out of which 1 is student)	38%	63%
C2: Humanist Sciences and Theology	1	8 (out of which 1 is student)	11%	89%
C3: Judicial Sciences	3	3 (out of which 1 is student)	50%	50%
C4: Social and Political Sciences	5	13 (out of which 1 is student)	38%	62%
C5: Administrative and Educational Sciences and Psychology	5 (out of which 1 is student)	7	42%	58%
C6: Economic Sciences I	7 (out of which 1 is student)	3	70%	30%
C7: Economic Sciences II	3	7 (out of which 1 is student)	30%	70%

C8: Arts, Architecture, Town Planning, Physical Education and Sport	4	5 (out of which 1 is student)	44%	56%
C9: Agricultural and Forest Sciences and Veterinary Medicine	3 (out of which 1 is student)	7	30%	70%
C10: Engineering Sciences I	2 (out of which 1 is student)	3	40%	60%
C11: Engineering Sciences II	2 (out of which 1 is student)	7	22%	78%
C12: Health	8	3 (out of which 1 is student)	73%	27%
C13: Distance learning:	2 (out of which 1 is student)	8	20%	80%

Table 3. Gender composition at ARACIS, number of people (2013, 2018 and 2019)

	2013		2018		2019	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Technical apparatus (permanent staff)	27	6	25	8	24	9
Council (decision-making body)	2 (out of which 1 is student)	13 (out of which 1 is student)	4	16 (out of which 2 are students)	4	16 (out of which 2 are students)

Table 4. Gender composition at ARACIS, percentage (2013, 2018 and 2019)

	2013		2018		2019	
	% Women	% Men	% Women	% Men	% Women	% Men
Technical apparatus (permanent staff)	82%	18%	76%	24%	73%	27%
Council (decision-making body)	13%	87%	20%	80%	20%	80%

Annex III:

Gender Equality Plan

**Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
(ARACIS)**



Gender Equality Plan – ARACIS

1 Background

ARACIS (The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) was established in 2005 as a consequence of Romania's participation in the Bologna process. Our mission is to carry out the quality external evaluation of education provided by higher education institutions and by other organizations providing higher education study programs, which operate in Romania. Therefore, the TARGET project is very important to the ARACIS, as it is considered to lead to a set of actions aiming at achieving gender equality in science and in all the activities of our organization.

In a self-evaluation report submitted for ENQA, it is written explicitly that "ARACIS will continue to improve gender representation at all levels of the work of ARACIS". Thus, the TARGET project comes as a very important step for institutional transformation.

Although for the moment there is not any dedicated personnel in charge of gender equality at ARACIS, informally some steps have already been followed (as, for instance, taking care to increase the number of women in the specialty commissions).

The fact that the institution receives public funding and is thus governed by law in all of its areas of work helps promoting gender equality in an indirect way, as it ensures equal pay for people on the same position, equal access to information (for members in the decision-making body), equal access to training and equal access to the social benefits established by law.

There are very few instances in which ARACIS has official gender equality policies. The work of the institution (human resources, decision making and evaluations) is mostly done on the principle of non-discrimination, rather than gender equality. A long-term gender equality strategy is needed.

2 Main Objectives

The conclusions drawn after applying the GEAT at ARACIS and from our first institutional workshop led to a series of specific objectives for the near future. They are developed in the next sections, as suggested, after being grouped into four categories:

Human Resource Management

- O1. To foster gender equality in recruitment practices;
- O2. To promote the integration of gender equality in recruitment and selection practices.

Decision Making

- O3. To foster gender balance in decision making (Council and Executive Office);

- 04. To formalize policies for counteracting gender bias and promoting gender equality within the institution of ARACIS.

Gender Dimension in Research Content

- 05. To integrate gender equality in the curricula of the universities;
- 06. To raise awareness of gender equality – sending a strong message with this respect to the Romanian universities.

Transversal Measures

- 07. To promote gender equality in environments that are closer to the children (as values are formed many years before they become students at universities);
- 08. To raise awareness of gender equality by addressing to the academic community in Romania.

3 Human Resource Management

There is no requirement in the Romanian legislation for implementation of gender equality policies when it comes to the recruitment of permanent staff. In its Procedure of selecting and appointing of new members of the Permanent Specialty Commissions, “gender balanced representation” is stated as one of the principles, which reflects a commitment of ARACIS to promoting gender equality. There is not any dedicated personnel in charge of gender equality at ARACIS, which makes the effort more difficult. For the moment, most of the internal documents do not specifically refer to gender equality and ARACIS does not have formalized policies for counteracting gender bias and promoting gender equality when it comes to recruitment of permanent staff or composition of recruitment panels and there are no official gender equality requirements that need to be taken into consideration when naming the Commissions.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET	TIMEFRAME
To foster gender equality in recruitment practices	Include in all recruitment communications and marketing materials a statement about gender equality	Gender equality expert of ARACIS in project Human Resource Department	A statement about gender equality is prepared and included in all recruitment communications and marketing materials	January 2019 ongoing to December 2021
To promote the integration of	Monitor the sex-disaggregated	Human Resource Department	Sex disaggregated	Starting with 2019, annually

gender equality in recruitment and selection practices	data in recruitment: total applicants, applicants selected, and committees making the selection		indicators are available and jointly monitored by the Human Resource Department	
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4 Decision Making

The main decision making body for ARACIS is the Council (at the moment composed by 4 women and 16 men), supported by its Executive Office (2 women, 3 men). While there is no discrimination in terms of salary policies, resource allocation, and access to relevant information and involvement in the decision-making process (including the budget), there are no formal gender equality policies or monitoring with regards to gender equality in the Council. Despite the lack of official policies, there are some unofficial trials of promoting gender equality. One of the best examples is the Executive Office, which did not have any women representatives several years ago and it is currently formed by 2 women and 3 men.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET	TIMEFRAME
To foster gender balance in decision making (Council and Executive Office)	Implement a policy to foster gender balance in decision making at the institutional level	Council Executive Office Gender equality expert of ARACIS in project TARGET	A policy to foster gender balance in decision making (Council and Executive Office) is agreed and implemented	Policy written (mission statement and SMART objectives) – 2020 First results after implementation - 2021
To formalize policies for counteracting gender bias and promoting gender equality within the institution of ARACIS	Include in all the main documents (Code of Ethics, Statement of Agency Organization and Operation,	Council Executive Office Gender equality expert of ARACIS in project TARGET	A statement about gender equality is prepared and included in all the main documents	Starting with 2019 (some documents will be changed easier compared to others)

	methodologies, etc.) a statement about gender equality			
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5 Gender Dimension in Research Content

ARACIS carries out the quality external evaluation of education provided by higher education institutions and by other organisations providing higher education study programmes (mostly bachelor and master's degrees). It does not directly offer financing for research, but once programmes are authorized/accredited by ARACIS they become eligible for applying for governmental funding from the Ministry of Education.

The criteria taken into consideration for the evaluation are established by law. They include research standards and strategies, research results since the last evaluation, the existence of resources for research; the existence and enforcement of a code of ethics, etc. There is no requirement for the evaluation of the existence/implementation of gender equality policies in the research programmes; however, there is a legal requirement that there cannot be any discrimination in the acceptance of students. The Evaluation Commission for the university programmes is formed by 3-4 members. Again, there are no official gender equality requirements that need to be taken into consideration when naming the Commission. There is an unofficial attempt to distribute the evaluations equally between the members of the commission and registry, regardless of gender.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET	TIMEFRAME
To integrate gender equality in the curricula of the universities	Recommend universities to include gender equality issues in their programmes)	Body / Key stakeholders responsible for university evaluations	Recommendation for universities to develop a personal development module (including gender equality)	2020, for starting with the academic year 2020-2021
To raise awareness of gender equality – sending a strong message with this	Collect gender disaggregated data from universities as	Body / Key stakeholders responsible for university evaluations	Fields related to gender should be filled in for each evaluation. While	Starting with 2019, for all evaluations

respect to the Romanian universities	part of quality external evaluation		this process is just a small step, even a symbolic one, it could send a strong message to universities.	
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6 Transversal Measures

ARACIS has already gained commitment from top tier and upper level management and research staff for GEP implementation and it has already started to develop a community of practice.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET	TIMEFRAME
To promote gender equality in environments that are closer to the children (as values are formed many years before they become students at universities)	Involve Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education (ARACIP) in TARGET project as part of the community of practice	Project manager of ARACIS in project TARGET Gender equality expert of ARACIS in project TARGET Other members of project TARGET (from ARACIS)	ARACIP to be represented in our main events related to the project (especially institutional workshops) and ARACIS to help ARACIP to achieve their own gender-related objectives	Representation: Starting with the end of 2019 Help to their objectives: End of 2020
To raise awareness of gender equality by addressing to the academic community in Romania	Organize a workshop / conference to promote best practices in gender equality and also see success stories of women in	Project manager of ARACIS in project TARGET Gender equality expert of ARACIS in project TARGET	Event organized in Romania (preferably Bucharest, maybe in partnership with a university)	Preparation: the academic year 2018-2019 Workshop / conference: The academic year 2019-2020

	education and research	Other members of project TARGET (from ARACIS)		
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7 Monitoring Indicators

The community of practice will have a major role in creating a favorable environment for the effective implementation of the GEP actions.

The key responsible persons for GEP implementation are the following:

- Project manager of ARACIS in project TARGET
- Gender equality expert of ARACIS in project TARGET
- Other members of project TARGET (from ARACIS)
- Council
- Executive Office
- Human Resource Department
- Body / Key stakeholders responsible for university evaluations

ARACIS will develop tailored process and outcome indicators in the next phase of the GEP (implementation phase), using both quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

Some monitoring indicators that need to be followed, in order to understand if the objectives are met:

- Share of job advertisements / main documents formulated in a gender sensitive language;
- Share of women / men out of total applicants / total employees / members of permanent commissions (sex-disaggregated data);
- Share of women / men in decision-making bodies (Council and Executive Office);
- Stage of organizing the conference + feedback survey after the event.

TARGET } Taking a Reflexive approach to Gender Equality for institutional Transformation



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