Project no. 027087

TENCompetence

Building the European Network for Lifelong Competence Development

Project acronym: Integrated Project TENCompetence

Thematic Priority: 2.4.10

**ID2.3 Gender Mainstream Requirement Action Plan**

Due date of internal deliverable: 30-04-2007
Actual submission date: 10-04-2007

Start date of project: 01-12-2005  Duration: 4 years

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Version 1.0

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Project Internal Deliverable Report

ID2.3 - Gender Mainstream Requirement Action Plan

Work package: WP2 - Requirements & Analysis of the Integrated System

Task

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# Table of contents

1. Introduction ............................................................................................................ 2
2. Definitions ............................................................................................................... 3
3. Motivation ............................................................................................................... 4
   3.1 OTHER EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS ......................................................................................... 8
4. Approach ................................................................................................................10
5. Scenario for pilot ....................................................................................................11
6. Data from pilot .......................................................................................................14
   6.1 WARNINGS .................................................................................................................. 15
7. Gender Requirements .............................................................................................16
   7.1 PILOT .................................................................................................................................. 16
   7.2 PRODUCT ....................................................................................................................... 16
8. References ..............................................................................................................17
1 Introduction

The European Commission pronounced its commitment to a strategy of gender mainstreaming in 1996, according to which all political activities are expected to contribute to the promotion of gender equality. The Commission pursues the following objectives in the area of research:

- to increase the participation of female researchers in research projects,
- to increase representation of women scientists in evaluation, consultation and implementation processes; for FP6, a quota of at least 40 percent is required for either sex on these panels,
- to re-orient research so that it addresses the needs of both women and men.

To implement these objectives, the European Commission requires that the scientific community should deal with gender issues while preparing a research proposal. This should be documented in a short action plan on gender mainstreaming.

The TENCompetence proposal stated the following commitments to Gender Mainstreaming in respect of women participants in the project:

1. TENCompetence will take a 'positive discrimination' attitude towards permanent and temporary staff jobs and endeavour to hire women for those positions whenever possible.
2. In order to rectify discrimination, partners will be asked to apply temporary preferential actions reserved to women.
3. TENCompetence will give special encouragement to women willing to participate in conferences, workshop subcommittees, standards bodies, and software usability panels.
4. Wherever possible and without resorting to 'positive discrimination' actions, TENCompetence will promote the role of the women.
5. Women researchers from among the Associate Partners will meet as a special interest group.
6. In its internal evaluation systems TENCompetence will maintain a consistent focus upon gender aspects. A monitoring system will be developed.

All these points are really interesting, but what it is really important is knowing how TENCompetence can help to reduce gender inequalities. This is done by:

- Making easier to access the knowledge needed to get a new competence.
- Making possible to get the competence easily and from anywhere.
- Helping to achieve a better management of time.
- Making easier the labour integration of women and other collectives.
2 Definitions

“Gender” describes the sexually defined roles of men and women in a social and cultural context. Gender mainstreaming means identifying and integrating the different circumstances and interests of women and men in every project with a social or political dimension, both in advance of and at regular intervals during its implementation. Individual measures applied in the interests of gender equality should be accompanied by the objective of removing the need for them in the long term.

“Gender equality” means that women and men have equal opportunities, or life chances, to access and control socially valued goods and resources. This does not mean that the goal is for women and men to become the same, but it does mean that we will work towards equal life chances for both sexes.

“Gender mainstreaming” is the process by which reducing the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and working towards equality between them become an integral part of the organization’s strategy, policies and operations.
3 Motivation

Gender mainstreaming in research means to integrate gender aspects in the whole research project from the formulation to the design of the research concept. The needs of women are different from those of men and they are rarely considered explicitly, also the difficulties women experience are different. Often these differences are not taken in account research is carried out by male scientists and innovation is generally viewed from a male perspective.

From different reports and studies from the European Union like “She Figures 2006”, “Waste of talents: turning private struggles into a public issue”, etc. (see References), we know there is a gender pay-gap between women and men. There is an average difference of 15% in Europe between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and female paid employees. This difference is present in all European countries in different magnitude as can be seen in the figure below.

![Figure 1: Gender Pay-Gap (Source: Eurostat economy and finance statistics)](h)

We can see in this figure that only some countries have reduced this pay-gap in the last years and only Italy and Germany have increased this gap. From the observation of the figure, we can not extract the conclusion that pay-gap is culture dependant, higher in Latin countries like Italy, or smaller in high develop countries like Germany. The reasons seem to be more complex.

In the other hand, we can say the pay-gap is educational dependant according to data from the OCDE Employment Outlook 2002. In the next figure, we can see that in all countries the pay-gap is lower when the educational level is higher. Anyway, country differences are still present.
What it is clear from these figures is that we are far away from equality and from our target “same job, same salary”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>% Female unemployment</th>
<th>% Male unemployment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>11,9</td>
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<td>2,7</td>
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<td>5,1</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>9,4</td>
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<td>1,8</td>
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<td>8,5</td>
<td>7,5</td>
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### Table 1: Female Unemployment percentages per country. [Eurostat January 2007]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% Total</th>
<th>% Female unemployment</th>
<th>% Male unemployment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.4</td>
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<td>-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
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<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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</table>

Figure 3: Female Unemployment percentages per country. [Eurostat January 2007]

This employment handicap is even bigger if females are married and have children. From a study made in Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries, we see that the working probability of married women is really low and when having children even mission impossible.

Cross-country analysis shows that women in Nordic Europe are protected by family-friendly social policies, but are faced with high job segregation. Conversely, women in Anglo Saxon countries have more career opportunities, but little social protection.

Finally, one other thing we see from different studies is that there is a professional segregation and the presence of females in top management positions is still low. The presence of females in the main Latin countries is lower than 18% as we see in the next figure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Percentage of women in Top Management positions. [d]

This is a common situation all over Europe as can be seen in figure 6, the presence of females in higher positions is lower than 15% on average.

![Graph showing female percentages by profession in the EU-25 countries.](image)

Figure 6: Female percentages by profession in the EU-25 countries (Source: She Figures 2006 from European Commission)

In the next figure, we can see clearly that the presence of women is low in professions like engineering, manufacturing and construction and in professions like in education women form the majority.
There are many studies on the reasons why women decide not to enter or leave sectors in which the level of facilities is low and the competition rather high, for example Faulkner (2000), Gerson (2004), Moloney (2005) or Thaler (2005), but clear answers still lack.

Before starting out on any research project, it is appropriate to reflect on the consequences of the research findings for each of the two sexes, in order to eliminate all gender discrimination from the outset. This is what we have tried to do in this motivation epigraph.

The Gender Requirements Action Plan will ensure that all research and product development within the project takes appropriate account of gender issues.

### 3.1 Other extracts from reports

We include some other extracts from reports and studies that we thought could clarify the situation:

- “Large proportion of highly qualified women scientists who are currently working in the research institutions of the Enwise countries in very poor conditions, representing a real waste of talents for both their national scientific communities and the European Research Area”. [b]
- “Gender equality is sometimes even felt as discrimination against men!” [b]
- “Formal legislation is an absolutely necessary condition, but it is not sufficient to guarantee equality. Changes in mentalities and in working conditions are needed. Institutions have a role to play in supporting or encouraging these changes, by...
questioning norms, setting new standards, monitoring progress in order to allow women to take full advantage of and contribute to the European Research Area”. [b]

- “Examples of preconceived ideas on society are that gender inequality is directly reflected in occupational segregation, that occupational segregation is highest in ‘old-fashioned’ countries without adequate care provisions, and that the gender wage gap is highest in countries with high occupational segregation. Statistical analyses presented here indicate that these preconceived ideas may not be true. Surprisingly, for instance, occupational gender segregation appears to be highest in Sweden, the country we all look up to as the forerunner of gender statistics”. [c]

- “It is important measuring non-economic, social or even psychological issues, such as the division of household and care tasks within the family, attitudes on child care, work and career orientations, the perceived need for care leave, life style preferences, attitudes towards gender roles, second earner identity, etc. etc. Information on these topics appears to be indispensable when trying to explain gender inequality, occupational segregation and the gender wage gap”. [c]

- “Around three-fourth of all part-time jobs are occupied by women and their share in part-time work is higher than 60% across the OECD”. [l]

- “Job characteristics and female and male human capital differ from each other”. [c]
4 Approach

The promotion of women does not mean applying the same assumptions and equivalent measures as the support of men. In traditionally structured European society, it is usual to regard men’s needs, situations and characteristics as the norm and apply the same criteria to women. The objective of gender mainstreaming is to consider the differences between men’s and women’s life patterns and to use them as a starting point for all actions.

Equality between sexes is an ongoing process that must turn away from an approach to equal opportunities based on positive discrimination and go to a new approach that raise awareness of the wider issues involved. *Positive discrimination is not a good long term solution.*

For this reason, Gender Mainstream Action Plan is going to be the tool used in TENCompetence to determine the distinctive gender characteristics applicable to this project and after all corrective actions will be proposed.
5 Scenario for pilot

The starting point for the Gender Mainstream Action Plan is determining the distinctive gender characteristics. To do that, we plan to generate a pilot based in a scenario that takes into account the data provided in epigraph 1.2.

The main points we have in account to generate the scenario are:

- There is a 15% gender pay-gap in the EU-25 countries.
- Percentage of women in top management positions is lower than 20% in all the countries.
- Unemployment is higher in women than men in most of the countries.
- Women with children have even more problems to find a job.
- Women are often forced to accept low-paid, low-skilled and precarious jobs.

As result, we have generated a gender stereotype character called Jane and a history that describes her problem and her restlessness. The resulting scenario is:

“Jane is a 35 years old Computer Science Engineer who has three children. She finished her studies with great qualifications 12 years ago when she was 23 years old. She got some knowledge in programming languages, but she specialized in COBOL programming during a practice period in a Bank. As result of her good performance and aptitudes, she got a good economic and professional offer to continue working in the bank.

Her professional evolution was good during the first years and she reached a position as analyst and programmer for system based in COBOL.

She got married after 5 years working in the Bank and one year later the first of her three children was born. To be able to look after her children, she asked for a Labour Day reduction of 3 hours that her company granted her because her exceptional performance and type of work. She started working 5 hours per day.

Today, after six years looking after her children, she feels her professional career has stopped. She is still a good programmer and she knows well the company and its environment, but she has noticed that her colleagues have evolved to edge technologies or to management positions using the opportunities that she has lost. She was not able to participate in some courses about new generation programming languages and her skills became older. Also because she has mainly contacted with her team and not with other people, her communication skills need to be improved. The problem is that she hasn’t got time to follow a Communication skills course.

Jane thought that it was the moment to improve her skills and abilities to be able to leave the technological environment she knows and avoid getting out of the market. She wants to make an ambitious learning plan using the new learning resources that her company offers since last year in her little free time. She wants to do it at the same time she continues looking after her children.

She wants to start with the newest technologies, especially that she could use to develop systems for internet and wireless networks, although she doesn’t know yet which one is going to be the best in the future. She wants also to improve her management skills (work groups management, leadership, ...), starting with her communication abilities.
One night after she laid down her older son, she started using the new company system. The first steps were updating her professional profile and check her competences. With this information, she decided to update her technical competence, to do that she asked for information about the Internet related technologies. She received hundreds of different learning options from different providers like: J2EE development, .NET, JAVA for dummies, Web Services and SOA, servlets, ASP, PHP, ... Some of them were actual courses, others were on-line, others were mixed, ... but the problem was there were too many and she had to spend too much time to select one. She needed a learning activity with a flexible planning that gives her the opportunity to follow more advanced courses and something she could follow in short free periods like travels to work. To find this activity between the hundred of options, she needed help and some guidance from some expert.

She asked about the evolution of technologies and development frameworks for internet in an specialized news forum. Almost everyone, said that the future was Java/J2EE. Next step was finding someone with the same problems and needs that her. She found some examples in a learning network and also the different learning paths they used to reach the target. Using this information, she finally found the first of a self-learning course series on SOA Architecture design. This course was guided by a tutor and let her to get different levels of proficiency in some months and, the most important point, these courses were recognised by her company.

After this success, she tried to improve her management skills using the same method. The members of the first learning network gave her the reference of other related learning network to get her target. Now she thinks that in one year she will be able to renew her competences and get more interesting jobs”.

In this scenario, we have an example of a user with requirement different from the average male use. Developing this kind of scenarios we can evaluate how useful can be TENCompetence to resolve or mitigate gender issues and it could give us information to tune the actions to decrease the effect of the gender issues.
Figure 8: UML diagram to describe the Jane pilot.
6 Data from pilot

We run the pilot to get useful information about gender issues and to be able to replay questions like:

- Do functional system needs differ along gender lines?
- Do pilot and validation outcomes differ along gender lines?
- Do motivation and practices for sharing and management of learning resources differ along gender lines?
- Do development approaches of UoLs differ along gender lines?
- Do actual learning activities differ along gender lines; what are learning preferences?
- Do preferential patterns of moving through competence networks differ along gender lines?
- Do role attribution mechanisms and related incentives in groups and networks differ along gender lines?
- How do functions in the future TENCompetence services network and gender relate, and what are the training implications?
- Do learning needs and methods differ by gender? Which are these differences?
- Is career evolution different by gender? Which are the root causes? Examples.(see [j])
- Why some professions are mainly performed by one or the other gender? Which are the root causes? How could we change it?
- Is there any gender difference in the motivations to share knowledge? Have both gender the same motivations?
- Is the competitively greater in men or women? Is it the same as 10 or 20 years ago?
- Are really useful the positively discrimination action or they have negative side effects?
- Is description of the competence and positions men-focus?

To be able to answer these questions we need information about:

- Personal information:
  - Gender.
  - Married status.
  - Number of children.
  - Age.
  - Incapacity level.

- Description of the components of the human capital:
  - Education.
  - Training.
  - Professional experience.
  - Actual job.

- Factors that describe the job, these factor must be included in the model used to describe the positions:
  - Sector.
  - Working hours.
  - Work schedule.
  - Type of contract.
  - Size and localisation of the enterprise.
  - Salary.
  - Social benefices.
  - Availability labour day reduction.
• Use of the TENCompetence resources:
  o Learning path followed. (Navigation history)
  o When and how much time is connected.
  o Learning activities started.
  o Learning activities finished.
  o Learning activities abandoned.
  o Contributions to the network.
• Results archived:
  o New competences acquired.
  o Increase in salary.
  o Job opportunities found.
  o Job opportunities applied for.
  o Job opportunities got.
• Psychological aspects as:
  o Division of household and care tasks within the family.
  o Attitudes on child care.
  o Work and career orientations.
  o Reasons to change profession.
  o Perceived need for care leave.
  o Life style preferences.
  o Attitudes towards gender roles.
  o Second earner identity.

With the information collected from the pilots we were able to implement the needed gender difference actions.

6.1 Warnings
We have to take into account all the applicable national laws about private information protection.
7 Gender Requirements

7.1 Pilot

Requirement for the pilot:

- Log the information detailed in epigraph 6 Data from pilot. These information must be included in the user profile. (Applicable to WP4)
- Determinate how different are actions performed in the system by males and female using the logged information about: (Applicable to WP5 -8)
  - Gender.
  - Learning path followed. (Navigation history)
  - When and how much time is connected.
  - …
- Determinate how effective labour insertion of the TENCompetence participant according these information:
  - New competences acquired.
  - Increase in salary.
  - Job opportunities found.
  - Job opportunities applied for.
- Job opportunities got.

7.2 Product

In a first approximation to the problem, we can extract this requirement to solve part of the gender aspect, the rest of the problems will be solve based in the results and conclusions from the pilot.

These requirement are:

- Log the information detailed in epigraph 6 Data.
- Learning paths must be flexible and adapted to the user needs.
- The assessment periods for the activities must be flexible.
- Dedicated networks to share women experiences with the system are needed.
- Mechanisms to compare competence evolution between user are needed.
- System must be accessible from everywhere.
- A system to be able to share experiences and get in contact with people with a similar profile or preferences is need.
8 References


[d] Las mujeres sólo ocupan el 18% de los cargos de responsabilidad en la empresa” La Vanguardia.es, Barcelona 08-03-2007

[e] “España, entre los países de la UE-25 con más paro femenino” Cinco Días.com, Madrid 06-03-2007

[f] “Reino Unido recorta hasta un 40% el sueldo a sus funcionarios para equipararlo al de las mujeres” El País.com, Madrid 13-03-07


[k] DOW. Description Of Work v3 28-09-05 TENCompetence