

Handbook

on inclusive strategies for
gender and intersectionality
in **research** and
teaching

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What is the purpose of this handbook?

The handbook is intended to help academic staff integrate gender and intersectionality into research and teaching (undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies).

What does gender-sensitive and intersectional research take into consideration?



Social dynamics such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, socioeconomic status (class), age, disability, location, and others affect the process of research being conducted. Therefore, a research that integrates gender and intersectionality takes into account differences among all genders and other social aspects of individuals, as well as structural inequalities that research subjects may experience, at all stages of the research: from the initial idea, formulation of research questions, objectives and methodologies to data collection, results and presentation.

Furthermore, in addition to gender and intersectionality integration in the content, this approach aims to provide equal participation of individuals in the scientific process.



What does gender-sensitive and interdisciplinary teaching take into consideration?

Gender and intersectionality integration into teaching focuses on the aforementioned differences in social dynamics, as well as other social inequalities that individuals may experience, both in curriculum development and in classroom behaviour. In a broader sense, the content of the course and the task assignments ask the students to integrate the dimension of gender and intersectionality into the subject. Therefore, this approach can turn teaching into a more inclusive process, as well as stimulate critical thinking.

Important Definitions:

Biological gender (sex): The term “biological gender” refers to a person's sex based on the characteristics of the female and male bodies, their congenital differences and their reproductive functions.

Social Gender: The term “social gender” refers to the collection of socially constructed ideas about human behaviour, actions and roles in relation to ideas of “masculinity” and “femininity”. Social gender may not align with the biological gender assigned at birth. Social gender is not a binary form, as it is characterized by the spectrum of genders.

Gender Identity: Gender identity refers to the individual and external way a person experiences their gender, whether or not it coincides with the gender assigned at birth. In other words, a person may biologically belong to one gender but socially to another and this may be expressed through their clothing, speech and behaviour. It may also involve altering their physical appearance through medical, surgical or other means.

Sexual orientation: Sexual orientation refers to the erotic, emotional, sexual, romantic attraction of a person to a specific gender. The most common expressions of sexual orientation are heterosexuality (attraction to the opposite sex), homosexuality (attraction to the same sex), bisexuality (attraction to both sexes) and asexuality (the person has no interest in sexual relationships).

Gender Expression: The way people communicate their gender identity to others by the way they dress, behave and/or refer to themselves.

Intersectionality: an analytical framework through which we can understand how gender and race inequalities are interconnected and constitute other forms of social exclusion, such as sexuality, disability, socio-economic status, age, religion, location and so on.

Therefore, it highlights the way in which equality is related not only to the dimension of gender but also to other aspects of the social identity of individuals. Specifically and according to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2018¹), gender prejudice and inequalities can be better addressed by considering their correlation with other types of inequality such as disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, location, socio-economic status (class) or nationality.

Important Definitions:

Gender+: The term “gender+” is used in this handbook to briefly refer to the social dimensions mentioned above: gender, origin, age, religion, location, nationality, socio-economic status of individuals, etc.

Stereotypes: A simplified and/or standardized belief, often commonly held by people about another group.

Prejudice: not only a stated opinion or belief, but also an opinion/attitude that includes negative feelings.

Discrimination: it occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another and this attitude cannot be justified otherwise than as a direct result of prejudice.

Introducing gender+ and intersectionality in research and teaching

STEP 1

Designing research & curriculum content, by integrating the dimension of gender+ and intersectionality

Identifying the **research problem** and **formulating research questions** incorporating the dimension of gender+ and intersectionality:

IN RESEARCH

- Have you considered individuals from across the gender spectrum when formulating the research questions?
- Have you considered the characteristics of individuals regarding intersectionality when formulating the research questions?
- When identifying the research problem, consider how individuals of all genders (social classes, age, etc.) relate to the problem differently.
- When identifying a research problem, consider the ways in which male and female bodies differ.
- If your project deals with structural issues of a society (e.g. decision- and policy-making) consider the ways in which the position of men and women in society differs. Do women have equal opportunities with men in all areas of the political system? Are they equally represented in the decision-making bodies? What is the distribution of ownership of relevant resources (land, income, property) between the genders? Are there inequalities that men also experience? In addition, do men and women experience other inequalities and social exclusion which are not only due to gender but also to other social dynamics? (such as sexuality, disability, class, age, religion, location and so on.)

- If your project deals with individuals' private lives, consider how women experience different life situations than men. When analyzing individuals' behaviour (e.g. career choices, consumption trends, etc.) consider the different challenges and/or parallel inequalities that individuals face (mother in a wheelchair, male single parent, obese).

Are the individuals influenced by dominant gender roles and other social characteristics of society? Does society place different expectations on men and women, and do these expectations influence the behaviour you are analyzing?

- When writing a reference list (literature review) for your research, look for gender+ related literature and research projects being conducted in your field, or consider what areas references may be lagging behind. Be concerned about which people/writers you have considered so far and what position they write from?
- At all stages of your research, consider your own background, stereotypes and prejudices, and identify how they have influenced you: from the initial idea, formulation of research questions, aims and methodologies to data collection, results and presentation.

IN TEACHING

- Do you think about how your students, as future professionals, deal with gender issues in their professional environment? Will they be prepared and aware of the different needs that women and men may have as customers/patients/ or users of the products they will make? Will they be able to consider multiple needs and inequalities they may experience for optimal outcomes? (e.g. in product design, can they consider disabilities, in health service can they consider different choices in terms of gender and sexual orientation?)
- How your teaching could inspire future scholars to conduct research that will be more sensitive to gender+ and intersectionality in your discipline?
- The course should consist of publications that follow a gender-sensitive approach (social & biological) as well as intersectionality.
- Devote at least two academic hours to discuss about gender+ and intersectionality by applying it to the main subject of the course.
- Make gender+ and intersectionality a requirement for student assignments.

Detecting gender+ stereotypes, bias and inequalities

IN RESEARCH

- If you think about gender differences in your research, have you asked yourself if you might be projecting stereotypical roles into how women and men would behave, what they need and what they want?
- Now think again. Are there hidden aspects of gender roles and stereotypes in the research questions and objectives?

IN TEACHING

- How do you make your students more aware of the gender stereotypes associated with the field you teach?
- Are your students aware of the gender inequalities and intersectionality they will one day face as professionals?
- If you teach for a male-dominated profession, have you considered how your female students feel about the field they are entering? And vice versa.

STEP 2

How to apply a theoretical and methodological structure sensitive to gender+ and intersectionality?

Inclusive and gender+ sensitive methodology

IN RESEARCH

- Research that does not apply an inclusive gender-sensitive approach may lead to general conclusions based on individual data. For instance, if we want to understand certain social processes, we should include both male and female perspectives. If we want to investigate a medical phenomenon, we should choose both female and male patients.
- Do you have data from people across the gender spectrum in your research sample? Ask yourself: Is my approach inclusive enough? Which individuals are included and who are excluded, and why?
- If you are producing a new, original methodology, consider how you might integrate the gender+ dimension into it.
- If you are conducting surveys, design your questions to address people across the gender spectrum, taking dimensions of intersectionality into account and use inclusive language to achieve more participation.
- Do you use inclusive language in your research analysis?
- If part of your project conducts visual analysis, consider how the images might reproduce certain stereotypes about gender+ roles.

IN TEACHING

- Do you teach students about inclusive gender+ sensitive methodology?
- Do you use gender-sensitive and intersectionality-sensitive language when teaching and creating course materials?
- Do you use visual material that is sensitive to gender, ethnicity, age, etc.?

Data analysis by gender and analysis in a gender+ -sensitive manner

IN RESEARCH

- When collecting data, disaggregate data by (biological) gender and, depending on the subject, consider other gender+ characteristics.
- When conducting polls, make sure you have the right (social) gender ratio. If you conduct focus groups, include an equal number of people from different social groups in the sample. Act accordingly when conducting interviews.
- When conducting laboratory or medical experiments, always report the (biological) gender of the cells, tissues, animals or subjects you use. If you use only one gender, please justify why and make a relevant note in your research limitations.
- If you use statistics or other data collected by public bodies, disaggregate them by (biological & social) gender and analyze them bearing in mind a gender+ dimension.

IN TEACHING

- Practice gender+ sensitive methodology by assigning students a study, asking them to adapt it in order to provide gender+ sensitive data where possible.

STEP 3

How to produce gender-sensitive results?

Inclusive and gender+ sensitive results

IN RESEARCH

- Is the data presented in a way that reflects the gender+ dimension? Which people are represented and which are not?
- Have you checked whether your publication/exhibition features images of people from across the gender and social spectrum? Have you considered whether these images might be reproducing stereotypical gender roles?

IN TEACHING

- If you are drafting a handbook for your course, include the gender+ dimension in the course topic enriching its content by providing gender-sensitive learning points, including female authors.
- You probably issue evaluation forms to your students at the end of the course. Such questionnaires usually ask students to rate the ability of the teaching staff to transfer knowledge – e.g. how well they explain theories and concepts etc. Consider asking a question about the extent to which the course is gender-sensitive and/or the extent to which the teaching staff is gender-sensitive in their teaching.

Inclusive and gender+ sensitive, user/beneficiary identification

IN RESEARCH

- Have you considered how people of different (biological and social) gender, other nationalities, etc., might use the results of the project in different ways?
- If the outcome of your project is a new/improved product or technology, think about how it will be used by people across the gender spectrum, how it will benefit their lives differently?

IN TEACHING

- Perhaps your university collects data on the career paths of graduates (e.g. sector /type of employment, time taken to secure employment - longitudinal surveys three/five/ten years after graduation, etc.). If so, consider disaggregating the data by gender as well as other cross-cutting characteristics (ethnicity, disability, etc.). Conduct a gender and inclusive analysis of data already collected.
- Some Universities/departments provide short "success stories" of graduates on the University website. If the same applies to your department, be careful to present stories from both female and male alumni as well as gender+ stories in general.

Important Note:

“No one can be expected to integrate gender into the electromagnetic spectrum.”

(Quote from an Iceland Report, GARCIA Project).

We do not assume that gender+ should be a necessary part of every scientific endeavour. Rather, gender should be considered in research and teaching where deemed necessary.

Therefore, in our analysis we make a distinction between cases where gender simply does not appear and those where gender is excluded. The fact that gender does not appear means that the particular topic of a particular project or course has no obvious gender component, or that the teaching staff cannot be accused of not including gender because the connection between gender and the particular topic is not immediately apparent or it is simply non-existent.

IMPLEMENTING A GENDER-SENSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO RESEARCH

CHECK LIST

- Are you considering improving diversity in your project team?

- Do you prevent hierarchical (gender) relationships in your team?

- Do you discourage gender segregation in your team?

- Are working conditions developed in a way that serves all individuals equally?

- Did you have people across the gender spectrum in mind when you formulated your research question?

- Have you tested whether people across the spectrum of genders and social characteristics relate differently to the research problem you want to address?

- Have you looked for gender+ sensitive studies when preparing the literature review of your research?

- Have you checked whether you are projecting stereotypical gender roles?

- Do you have a male and female sample in your survey sample?

- Does your methodology address issues relevant to all individuals (considering gender and intersectionality?)

- Is the language you use gender sensitive?

- Do you separate the data by (biological and social) gender+?

Do you report/present the data by (biological and social) gender?

Have you checked how people of different genders will use the results of the project in different ways?

Is your research related to social inequalities in society?

IMPLEMENTING A GENDER-SENSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE APPROACH IN CURRICULUM

CHECK LIST

Do you invite an equal number of female and male academics/professionals as visitors to your course? Do they represent other social groups at the same time?

Have you invited a speaker who is known for his/her sensitivity to gender and intersectionality?

Do you attract/encourage students of all genders to attend your course?

Do you encourage students to work in mixed gender groups?

Are you preparing your students to become professionals sensitive to gender-related issues and other inequalities?

Have you devoted at least one session to the gender dimension of the course topic?

Do you inform your students about gender and intersectionality stereotypes associated with the field you teach?

Do you inform your students about the gender inequalities they may face as professionals?

Do you teach students gender-sensitive methodology?

Do you use inclusive language and visual materials when teaching and writing course materials?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Science and Technology (UNESCO, 2004)

Gender Indicators in Science, Engineering and Technology: An Information Toolkit (UNESCO, 2007)

Gender Equality Policies in Public Research (European Commission, 2014)

Structural Change in Research Institutions: Enhancing Excellence, Gender Equality and Efficiency in Research and Innovation (European Commission, 2012)

Toolkit Gender in EU-funded Research (European Commission, 2011)

Toolkit Gender in EU-funded research (Yellow Window Management Consultants, 2009)

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