

European Strategy for Gender Equity in Engineering and culture changes in Poland

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Managing career progression and retention

The significance of the gender dimension in research and innovation increases. Initiatives to promote gender equality in the STEM field have been developed in Europe for nearly two decades but were insufficient to increase the number of women in engineering, particularly in positions of responsibility. Gender equality in the context of engineering and the academia means: 1. Reduction of vertical and horizontal segregation (underrepresentation of women in male-dominated sectors). 2. Balancing the asymmetric gender culture in organizations (removing structural barriers for women). 3. Integration of a gender dimension in teaching and research (gender awareness-raising among the academic engineering staff). Aiming to contribute to these three key topics, the strategy for EU Horizon2020 project "Gender Equality in Engineering through Communication and Commitment", GEECCO was built. The main objective is the development and implementation of Gender Equality Plan at Politechnika Krakowska, Polish technical university. The project is focusing on structural, procedural and cultural changes towards gender equality and makes all aware that including a gender dimension in their professional engineering work is possible and useful. It aims in removing barriers to the recruitment, retention and career progression of female engineers for addressing gender imbalances in decision making processes and to strengthening the gender dimension in research programs, which is in line with the EC goals. This paper presents initial results of current status of women career at university, inequity and barriers in career development. It is concluded, that successive implementation of Gender equality plan is strongly dependent on significant cultural changes, supported by changes in law.