



newsletter

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Dear colleagues,

In this issue we bring you the highlights of past six months at the Centre for Gender in Science. The second half of 2019 was especially eventful, but the more rewarding for us as we found new allies, introduced the topic of gender equality to previously unconcerned institutions and brought attention to often overlooked issues. We have done so through a number of conferences, events and other activities presented below.

On behalf of the Centre I wish you inspiring reading and a Happy New Year 2020.

Marcela Linková

DOMESTIC POLICY: OUR ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

In 2019, we paid increased attention to advocacy activities. Under the auspices of Prof. Eva Zažímalová, President of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and Senator Miluše Horská, we organized a conference on parenthood and research in the Senate. The event was attended by nearly seventy people from the academic community and those at the head of key research institutions and state administration bodies. We have negotiated with the Governmental Office for Research, Development and Innovation (R&D) and, at our initiative, from January 2020 a new member of the R&D will be charged with the agenda of parenthood and research. We have intensified cooperation with active parents in science who are increasingly addressing us and – to our immense joy – also the responsible institutions, both individually and collectively.



We attended a number of meetings, drafted more than twenty opinions and suggestions and consulted various materials during the consultation process. We were involved in the preparation of an expert report for the chapter on education and research of the new Strategy of Equality of the Office of the Government and, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, prepared input material for the National Policy for Research, Development and Innovation 2021+. We intensified our cooperation with the Academy of Sciences, the R&D and the Office of the Government and continued our cooperation with the Ministry of Education set up in previous years. The very first outcome of these cooperations is the appointment of three new R&D members, Rut Bízková, Ilona Müllerová, and Jitka Ulrichová, who all have been dear collaborators of the Centre in the past.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: GENDER EQUALITY IN RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

To our great satisfaction, Czech higher education and research institutions are increasingly applying for the HR Award, and the interest in gender equality actions has been growing as well. In 2019, the Working Group for Change, operated by our Centre, expanded both in the number of researchers and HR managers. The group brings together people who are actively involved in the systematic promotion of gender equality in their institution, or who wish to start implementing cultural and institutional change projects. In the past six months, we organized four workshops focused on the role of HR in promoting gender equality, gender sensitive communication, gender dimension in research, development and innovation content, and the gender pay gap in the academic sphere. They were attended by people from HR departments, the Rector's Office and the management of institutions, project centers, as well as people from the private sector and students. Members of the group have the opportunity to share their practical experience, develop their (gender) expertise and competencies, and receive practical advice and inspiration. We were also happy to receive invitations from cooperating universities, to talk for example about “Gender as an integral part of the HR AWARD Action Plan” at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen.

As part of our activities, we also invited Dr. Bente Knoll, an Austrian expert on urban planning. Her lecture “Public Space Without Barriers” focused on gender dimensions of urbanism and an intersectional approach to urban planning and public space. For those who could not attend the lecture, we made a record that you can watch at our [YT channel](#).

MENTORING: SPACE FOR MUTUAL SUPPORT

2019 was the fourth year of our mentoring program for (post)doctoral researchers. In order to contribute to the current efforts towards greater internationalization of the Czech academic environment, we have decided to “switch” the entire program to English - and it paid off, as the program attracted more foreign women researchers, as well as Czechs than in the previous years. The foreign and Czech mentees thus had an opportunity to be mentored and to improve their expertise in our soft skills workshops. We are also pleased that our mentees have started to meet informally outside the official program, as one of them, with our help, set up a discussion group that met once every two weeks at a café to discuss a given topic. The themes focused on dealing with the different situations to which early-career researchers are exposed, such as pressures on publication performance. Hence, the mentees have created a safe space where they can share their concerns, talk about what they are not doing well, and give each other tips on how to manage a challenging period in their research career. For example, how not to become a boring person who is able to talk only about study and work. You can learn more about our mentees and their mentors from a traditional [exhibition](#) we prepare at the end of this year's program.



POPULARIZATION OF SCIENCE: OXFORD PROFESSOR GINA NEFF IN PRAGUE



The second half of 2019 was traditionally in the spirit of popularizing research and especially gender topics in science. The highlight of these efforts were two November lectures organized within the Week of Science and Technology of the Czech Academy of Sciences. At our invitation, Professor Gina Neff from Oxford University, came to address the social and political preconceptions encoded in the data used by artificial intelligence, and to show examples of how these systems incorporate human biases about women and their role in society. Her lectures on AI and gender provoked a great discussion both in the media and

professional circles, as such a debate was completely lacking in the Czech public space. We are obviously pleased with the interest the lectures gained, the more so that in 2020, we plan to run a campaign on gender dimension in research and innovation. Prof Neff's lectures were thus the first of many activities the Centre is planning to carry out in order to highlight the benefits and in many cases the vital need to integrate sex and gender analysis in current research. If you are interested to learn more about the gender dimension in AI, [here](#) you can watch a video of Prof Neff's lecture.

2019 MILADA PAULOVÁ AWARD: PROFESSOR MARIE ČECHOVÁ

The 11th [Milada Paulová Award](#) for recognition of lifelong research achievements and contribution to advancement of research was given in the field of linguistics. Out of the record number of thirteen nominated researchers, Professor Marie Čechová at the University of J. E. Purkyně in Ústí nad Labem, was selected as the winner of the award organized by the Centre and awarded by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. “When I started my professional work in the early 1970s, whatever the team, the editorial board, the textbook team and others, I was always the only woman in it. This has completely changed over the last fifty years,” says Prof Čechová, who received her award on 27 November 2019. In her career, she has focused on research into contemporary Czech language with an emphasis on enhancing its quality. Her main focus is on the state of knowledge and communication skills of young people, as well as on improving the education of current and future teachers.



GENDERACTION: VISIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EU

For GENDERACTION, a very busy year has come to a close. In April, we organized a successful conference in Brussels entitled [The Future Of Gender Equality in the European Research Area](#), to discuss visions on gender equality in research in the EU, in particular in the new Horizon Europe framework program. Marcela Linková followed up the outcomes of the conference and other project activities in the autumn by presenting recommendations on structural change as the main tool for promoting gender equality at the level of research institutions at the Finnish Presidency Conference on New Pathways for Gender Equality in Research and Innovation. These recommendations are part of a series of documents drawn up by the GENDERACTION team, which were aimed among other objectives at increasing the integration of gender equality into the new framework program (for more go [here](#) and [here](#)). We ended the eventful year with a [workshop](#) on gender equality in international cooperation at STEM in Malta. We discussed the possibilities and limits of cooperation with non-EU countries and considered specific topics and challenges that we should prioritize in our efforts to achieve gender equality in research in the future.

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE FOR STUDENTS' RESEARCH ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS



This year, our colleague Nina Fárová led an internship Women and Men in Czech Society within the Open Science (Otevřená věda) project of the Academy of Sciences. The secondary school students she supervised, carried out a research study into sexual harassment at secondary schools. They conducted a total of 11 interviews with their classmates and for their work won a special jury prize on 22 November. “It is great that we used the last moment when we were studying in secondary schools and that we could interview our classmates who talked to us on an equal footing. This is much better than if someone completely

strange arrived or if the interviews were done by teachers,” said the students and concluded: “We would like sexual harassment to be seen more as bullying. Bullying is talked about. And we all know it's wrong. But when bullying gains a sexual undertone, people suddenly feel fine. We would be very glad if sexual harassment was not tolerated.”

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The newsletter is published free of charge by the Centre for Gender and Science of the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

ISSN 1801–7339

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