



newsletter

2 / 2020

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Dear colleagues,

The end of the year is a time to reflect on the events of the past months. As 2020 was probably one of the most challenging years for many of us, we want to welcome the New Year remembering the good that has happened. We are happy to report on advancements made by the Centre for Gender and Science on the domestic front in the Czech Republic. We also bring you the highlights from our popularization and mentoring activities, as well as information about the influential research into domestic violence at times of COVID-19 by our colleague, Blanka Nyklová.

On behalf of the Centre, we wish you inspiring reading and a Happy New Year 2020,

Kristýna Veitová and Marcela Linková

COMMUNITY FOR CHANGE

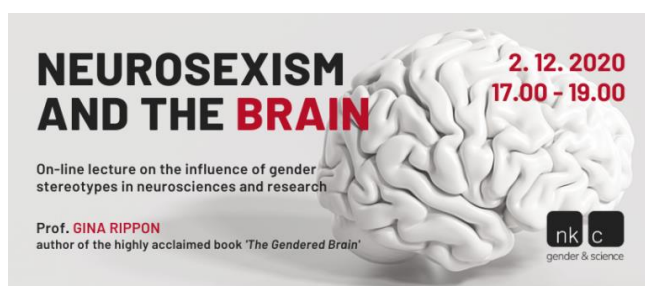
In the second half of 2020, the Community for Change has been systematically working on providing information and awareness raising regarding the European Commission's plan to include Gender Equality Plans among the conditions for obtaining support from the upcoming Horizon Europe programme. Together with experts Anita Thaler (AT) and Jennifer Damen-Adkins (DE) we organised a workshop "Resistances to Change" which focused on overcoming resistances to changes towards fairer working conditions in institutions.

In September, we worked intensely together with the Institute of Physics of the Czech Academy of Sciences on a series of lectures. "The Academic Careers from Other Perspectives" which introduced the topics of work-life balance, parenthood and equal opportunities to the IOP's staff's attention.

Apart from the individual consultations for several Czech research and higher education institutions (CEITEC, University of Hradec Králové, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague), we also provided tailor-made workshops about equal working conditions (FNUSA,



Agrovýzkum Rapotín) and open workshops for the Community. Both of the open workshops for the Community aimed to provide more information regarding gender equality plans. The first focused on general information, while the second provided details on the topic of gender audits.



The Community's lectures with foreign experts were - thanks to the on-line format - very successful this year. In October we invited Prof Sabine Oertelt-Prigione (NL) who spoke about gender aspects and gender blindness of COVID-19 research and medical trials. At the beginning of December, we hosted a

lecture by Prof Gina Rippon (UK) on neurosexism and the gender stereotypes in neurosciences with - the quite amazing - 170 people attending.

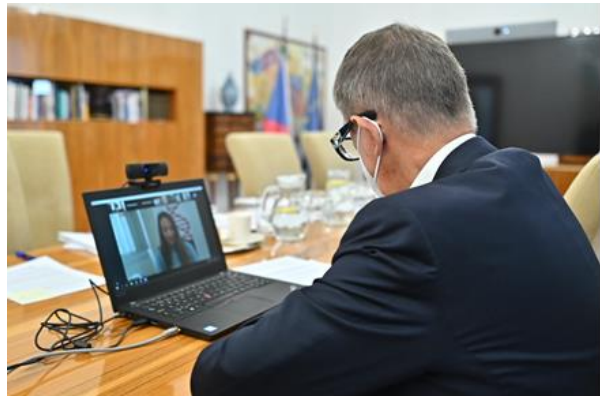
Currently, the Community for Change, with some 200 members, is planning a series of workshops for 2021, which will focus on gender equality plans, their preparation and implementation. We are revising our Methodology for Implementing Gender Equality in Research in view of the developments at the EU level, which will become available to research performing organisations in January 2021.

OUR ADVOCACY ACITIVITIES

In 2020, we were very busy at the policy level. Through membership in advisory and expert bodies and direct engagement with the national authorities, we contributed to the National

Research, Development and Innovation Strategy 2021+ which for the first time ever addresses gender equality issues. Furthermore, the Centre also contributed to drafting the Equality Strategy 2021+ which will contain a section on Research and Innovation. Following the appointment of new members of the Science, Research and Innovation, Hana Tenglerova has worked closely with the responsible Council Member and drafted a methodology for research funders on addressing gender equality issues. The methodology was adopted by the Council in autumn 2020 and following this, it was presented to the Scientific Council of the Czech Science Foundation and a forum of research funders. This work will continue in 2021.

In October 2020, under the auspices of Prime Minister Andrej Babiš and Government Commissioner for Human Rights Helena Válková, the Centre organised an online conference on opportunities and challenges in female researcher's careers. The event was attended by eighty people from the academic community and heads of key research institutions and state administration bodies.



Altogether, we attended a number of meetings, drafted more than twenty opinions and suggestions and consulted various materials during the consultation process. 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. In 2021 we look forward to starting cooperation with a new working group to be established at the Czech Academy of Sciences after the election of the new Academic Council.

For further information, follow our [Twitter account](#).

DEVELOPMENTS IN ERA

Marcela Linková

There has been a lot of anticipation in 2020 regarding gender equality in European Research and Innovation. Discussions continued throughout the year about how the European Research Area should be revamped for the future. Now we know that **gender equality will remain on the European R&I agenda** despite the political challenges to gender equality coming from some EU countries.

With the Communication from the Commission published on 30 September and Conclusions of the Competitiveness Council published on 1 December, **gender equality plans** (GEPs) have been put firmly on the future agenda as the tools to promote gender equality. The Commission has announced to make GEPs a requirement for Horizon Europe and Member States committed to work with the Commission on making GEPs reality.

These negotiations were carefully followed by the [ERAC Standing Working Group on Gender in Research and Innovation](#) which I have the privilege to chair, now for the second term. First, SWG GRI contributed to the ERAC Opinion on the Future European Research Area and then published its own [position paper on the future gender equality](#)

[priority in ERA](#). Keeping the institutional change as the core principle for reforming all ERA institutions was one of the key recommendations. Others include keeping gender equality as a priority, taking an intersectional approach to gender equality, reinforcing gender equality structures both at member state level and in the Commission and reinforcing the monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies, and making the sex and gender dimension as a requirement of research funders. Another topic that merits further attention according to SWG GRI is gender-based violence in academia. Crucially, we also recommended that gender equality should be linked with funding, and the requirement of having a GEP is thus highly welcome.

Meeting immediately after the lockdown and suspension of travel, SWG GRI turned its attention to the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and prepared [a position paper on the gendered impacts on research and researchers](#).

We also concluded a yearlong effort analysing the efforts by national authorities to combat gender-based violence and sexual harassment in academia. The [report from SWG GRI](#) is accompanied by a policy brief titled "[Mobilising to eradicate gender-based violence and sexual harassment: A new impetus for gender equality in the European Research Area](#)" where we present the main findings and recommendations to national authorities, the European Commission and research funders. SWG GRI found that gender-based violence is, with a few exceptions, an unrecognised issue and an underdeveloped field of knowledge at the national level. Measures to combat gender-based violence range from a few well-financed and complex programmes to several short-term ad hoc initiatives. We also conclude that given the importance of international mobility in building the European Research Area, it is alarming that the higher risk of victimisation for internationally mobile students and researchers is not recognised in ongoing work against gender-based violence in academia or in ongoing work on academic mobility at the national and EU levels.

SWG GRI also revisited the seven recommendations on targets and quotas to improve gender balance in decision making which were contained in the 2018 Guidance from the Commission and the Helsinki Group. In [the Report on the Implementation of Targets: Follow-Up on the 2018 Guidance Recommendations](#), we highlight that many MS and AC have made progress and are developing their national as well as institutional policy frameworks to advance gender balance in decision-making. As the examples of good and emerging practices show, these take various forms from a comprehensive policy where addressing gender balance in decision-making is one part of a set of actions to stand-alone initiatives. The report highlights the continued differences in the degree of implementation of the recommendations. On a positive note, statistical data collection has improved over the years, and nowadays statistics on decision-making positions and on Grade A positions are generally available. There appears to be a continued gap between the EU-15 and the EU-13.

After the announcement of the GEP requirement we have launched a Task force on GEPs to map the situation in the EU in terms of where and on what basis GEPs are implemented, and we also aim to address what the national authorities such as ministries need to make gender equality plans fly in the EU.

EUMENT-NET CONFERENCE

Just like everything else, even the Mentoring Programme for Early Career Researchers was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a consequence, the majority of soft skill workshops took place from August to December. Despite this inconvenience, the head of Mentoring, Kateřina Maršálková, managed to organise the traditionally most demanded workshops on topics such as time or project management.



The most important event of this year's Mentoring programme was the international conference "[Mentoring in Academia and Research: a Tool to Improve Gender Equality in Human Resource Management](#)". The conference was organised jointly by the Centre and the European network of mentoring programs eument-net and took place online on October 23rd. The conference programme was divided into three expert-led sessions in which the participants learned about how to create their own mentoring programme, how to work with mentees and how to work with mentors. The online format allowed for much bigger audience than usual, thus over 70 registered participants from across Europe took part in the lively discussions. For further information, you may read the [conference report](#).

AUTUMN EVENTS



For the promotion team, the last six months were in the spirit of organising events, as due to the pandemic all the events planned for 2020 took place in autumn. The first of these is a Brunch for early-career women researchers with a high-ranked or outstanding woman researcher. This year, the brunch with Alice Valkárová, the Czech Science Foundation's President, attracted

fifty researchers who discussed problems facing them as well as suggestions for change.

In October and November, altogether three discussions were organised. First, "Feminist Erosion" dealt with the topic of anti-feminist attitudes in Czech society. Second, "Women's Private Life During Pandemic" addressed the COVID-19's impact on Czech women. How important the topic is to society was mirrored in the unusual number of registered participants – 120. Last but not least, the discussion "Challenges in Assistive technology" opened the so-far over-looked topic of discrimination in technological development. Each of the events managed to attract a great amount of attention.

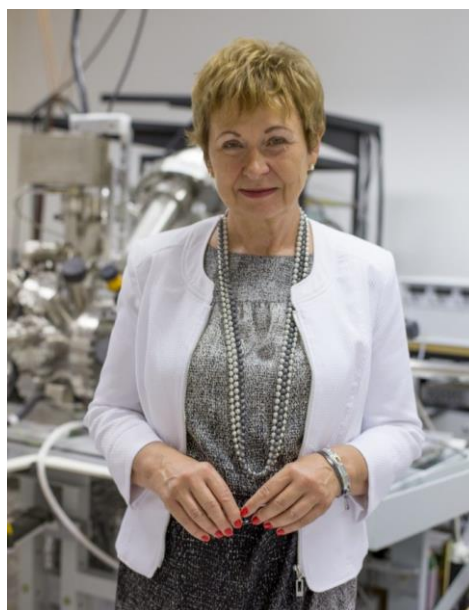


The most important task for the promotion team is currently the preparation of a new website which will tackle the topic of **the gender dimension in research, development and**

innovation. The website's release is planned for January 2021. It will go under the name "One size doesn't fit all" highlighting the fact that the lack of diversity in science can have dangerous and at times deadly consequences. The website will provide information on these consequences from seven fields – transport and urbanism, information and communication technology, medical sciences, technology and innovation, social sciences and humanities, agriculture and environment and climate. The goal of this undertaking is to raise awareness among the research community and public at large about the importance of addressing the sex and gender dimension in research, also in light of the fact that the gender dimension should become the default requirement for Horizon Europe projects.

MILADA PAULOVÁ AWARD 2020 GOES TO DR ILONA MÜLLEROVÁ

The 12th [Milada Paulová Award](#) for recognition of lifelong research achievements and contribution to advancement of research was given in the field of electrotechnics. Out of four nominated researchers, Dr. Ilona Müllerová, Director of the Czech Academy of Sciences' Institute of Scientific Instruments, was selected as the recipient of the award conferred by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. "I think that activities such as Milada Paulová Award are very important and that there should be more of them. And what do I say to the fact that some of the Czech science awards were never given to a woman? Well, it is definitely a mistake that needs to change," says Dr Müllerová, who received her award at the beginning of December. In her career, she has focused on the field of electron microscopy which she pioneered with her discovery of the slow electron method that is now used by researchers worldwide. In the early stages of the method's development, Müllerová was paradoxically not trusted by her colleagues. Despite this, she managed to establish and maintain her own project team and even become the Director of the Institute of Scientific Instruments. There, she contributed greatly to building its international reputation in research circles, as well as national reputation among the general public. Her science-promotion activities, as well as her enormous contribution to the field of electron microscopy, were among the main reasons the evaluation committee chose Dr Ilona Müllerová to be the recipient of Milada Paulová Award 2020. For more information see [here](#).



GENDERACTION

Over the last six months, GENDERACTION has started focusing especially on disseminating all the work produced over its duration years. The GENDERACTION team has been active at [national](#) and [European](#) levels with the aim to move the gender equality in research and innovation agenda further mainly by engaging with relevant stakeholders, participating in research and innovation (R&I) events and in Horizon Europe consultations. The team has also translated its policy papers in multiple languages to help the dissemination among

national stakeholders. The briefs are now available in [Czech](#), [French](#), [Polish](#), [Serbian](#), [Slovak](#), and [Spanish](#). More languages are coming.

The GENDERACTION team also transformed some of their most important policy papers into videos. The video topics cover the role of research funding organisations in promoting gender equality in R&I, good practice criteria to improve gender equality policy making in European research, and the importance of gender equality actions in European research and innovation. They are available on our newly created [Youtube channel](#).

GENDERACTION has also started planning its final conference which will be organised jointly with the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU. So **save the date for 8 and 9 July** to discuss how member states can contribute to advancing the gender equality agenda and take the actions and objectives set by the European Commission to their home context. You can follow GENDERACTION developments on our [Twitter account](#) or subscribe to our [bi-annual newsletter](#).

RESEARCH ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

This year, our colleague Blanka Nyklová and Dana Moree (Faculty of Humanities, Charles University) conducted a qualitative research which showed that demand for services of organisations helping domestic violence victims increased by 30 to 40% during the spring lockdown. At the same time, they found the procedure of the police and the authorities in the regions was not unified, as they often tried to reconcile the couples instead of protecting those at risk of violence. "As a consequence, the violent person can get the feeling that what he is doing is okay and that he will succeed," said Nyklová and Moree. Their research results attracted a great amount of media attention and they appeared in a number of interviews for online journals and radio stations. Furthermore, Blanka Nyklová served as the Czech



national expert in the European Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) study on domestic violence. EIGE published two press releases which assess the measures taken by EU countries to protect women during the pandemic. Despite Nyklová's presence, none of the press releases mention Czech Republic. "They focused on examples of good practice and we are unfortunately still lacking them," says Nyklová. More on her research in English can be found [here](#).