



**WIELKOPOLSKA  
REGION**

**Polish Science Contact Agency „PolSCA” of the Polish Academy of Sciences  
and  
Information Office of the Wielkopolska Region in Brussels**

cordially invite you for the event:

**WiSER – Women in Science and European Research**

**Date: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

**8.45 - 11.30**

## OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this event is to bring together the decision makers, mainly representatives of the European Union institutions, and practitioners representing universities, research institutes and various stakeholder organisations to discuss opportunities and challenges in implementing gender-balanced policy in academia and research culture. A particular attention will be paid to current instruments and best practices fostering an institutional change in terms of strengthening the gender equality in European science and research.

The online event, which will take place in English, is opened to everyone interested in gender-equality issues in the EU policy related to the research and innovation.

## PROGRAMME

### 8.50 - 9.00 Welcoming words

**Dr. Tomasz Poprawka**, Director the Polish Science Contact Agency in Brussels

**Małgorzata Sylla**, Acting Director of the Information Office of the Wielkopolska Region in Brussels

### 9.00 - 9.15 Keynote speech

**Mariya Gabriel**, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

### 9.15 - 10.00 Panel session I: WiSER – European perspective

**Moderator: Dr. Michał Matlak**, European Parliament

#### **Speakers:**

**Mina Stareva**, Head of Gender Sector, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (RTD), European Commission

**Prof. Barbara Romanowicz**, Chair of the ERC Working Group on Gender Issues

**Dr. Simona Isler**, Head of Gender Equality in Research Funding, Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)/ AcademiaNET

### 10.00 - 10.15 Q&A

## 10.15 - 11.00 Panel Session II: WiSER - organisational insight

**Moderator: Dr. Michał Matlak**, European Parliament

### **Speakers:**

**Prof. Bogumiła Kaniewska**, Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan

**Prof. Agnieszka Dobrzyń**, Director of Nencki Institute of Experimental Biology of the Polish Academy of Sciences

**Prof. Claudine Hermann**, President of European Platform of Women Scientists

## 11.00 - 11.15 Q&A

## 11.15 - 11.30 Closing words

### **Why more gender inclusive-policy in European research is of great importance?**

Gender equality is a core principle of the European Union, but it is not yet a reality, also in the academia and research area. The ‘She Figures 2018’ report<sup>1</sup> underlines that gender inequalities persist: women represent very slightly over one third (33,4%) of the total population of researchers and the proportion of women in higher education institutions in Europe is only 22%. Differences between women and men can also be seen in their working conditions as researchers. According to the report, in the EU women earn on average 17% less than their male colleagues. Moreover, the proportion of women researchers (13%) working part-time is higher than that of men (8%). The coronavirus pandemic reveals that women in academia are disadvantaged more strongly than men – the number of academic papers or grant applications submitted by women has significantly dropped because of the additional lockdown childcare or increase in domestic chores.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, a significant change has been observed in Poland regarding a number of women holding the position of a rector. In the previous two terms of office only 5 women served as Polish universities’ rectors, currently there are 14 (11 of them lead university for the first time).

Equality between women and men has been actively promoted by specific EU R&I policies. In Horizon 2020 (H2020), gender-equality is a cross-cutting issue, as the programme aims to support

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<sup>1</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/8ad66c25-0434-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-RDF/source-search>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/may/12/womens-research-plummets-during-lockdown-but-articles-from-men-increase>

gender balance in research teams, decision-making bodies and advisory groups and to integrate the gender dimension in research and innovation content (sex- and gender-related studies). Many initiatives on gender equality were also funded under ‘Science with and for Society’ H2020 programme.

Despite these efforts to reduce gender inequalities, a common approach on more inclusive policy in research is still needed. On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the European Commission announced ‘A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025’<sup>3</sup>, which sets out policy objectives and actions to make concrete progress on gender equality in Europe. Horizon Europe (HE), the next EU framework programme for research and innovation, is explicitly addressed in this strategy by introducing new measures to strengthen gender equality. A requirement to submit a gender equality plan by public and private R&I organisations might be one of these measures. Funding for gender and intersectional research will also be available in Horizon Europe. According to the Communication on the new European Research Area<sup>4</sup>, published on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, gender equality in research is one of the key priorities of a new ERA. The European Commission will strive to work closely with Member States and stakeholders to bring new solutions to promote gender equality in the field of R&D. The ERA intends to strongly support women participation in various fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and to promote female entrepreneurship.

We believe that the WiSER virtual event could serve as a viable contribution to the process of co-creation and co-ownership. Consequently, the event shall eventually lead to the physical workshop among stakeholders in 2021, where a mutual learning process could be continued.

Polish Science Contact Agency PolSCA and the Wielkopolska Region are already looking forward to it!

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<sup>3</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2020:628:FIN>