

RECOMMENDATIONS

YesWePlan!

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The following recommendations regarding the professions of Architects and Civil Engineers are based on the outcomes of all parts of the project research and also take into account previous research and recommendations on national and European level and shall provide tools, methods, and approaches to address (structural) inequalities on different levels.

They mainly focus on tools, methods, and approaches that can be applied

- by Universities - in the field of **EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**,
- by professional chambers and organizations - in the field of **PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION AND SUPPORT**
- by employers - in the field of **WORKING CONDITIONS**

Recommendations are set out grouped by ideas or concepts which, in reality, are interchangeable, as the whole discourse is focused on achieving equality in terms of pay, responsibility, opportunity, recognition, and respect as competent professionals - as Ellen Perry Berkeley, writer and editor for Progressive Architecture and Architectural Forum - already stated in the 70s. Action to improve gender equality should extend to all areas and all levels of society and political action.

Within the professions, it is important to raise awareness of the issue among all individuals, regardless of whether the person is an employer, employee or self-employed Architect or Civil Engineer. Professional recognition should focus on what each individual contributes to the profession and society regardless of gender (or nationality, religion, ...). In advanced modern and forward-looking societies, diversity is recognized as a key starting point for better performance and more innovative solutions. Of course, the gender-diverse composition of working groups requires the development of communication skills and the ability to genuinely express respect for differences. At the same time, these are the qualities that ensure the sustainability of society in the global world.

Gender equality is a great opportunity for the overdue restructuring of the professions: Gender balance improves decision-making and leads to more creativity and innovation in companies and provides both women and men with a higher level of commitment to the profession. It can open up the labour market to women and men alike and give companies the opportunity to attract the most talented employees. A family-friendly corporate philosophy brings manifold advantages for architectural and engineering offices: From better chances of attracting auxiliary, specialist, or managerial staff, less absenteeism, shorter parental leave, increased employee satisfaction and motivation through a better combination of work and private life, operational flexibility due to flexible working hours and locations and even an optimization of office space utilization.

Each and every one of the following recommendations contributes, to a greater or lesser extent, to the achievement of the general objective of gender equality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

COMBATING SEXUAL AND WORKPLACE HARASSMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

- Specifically address sexual and workplace harassment in the university environment. Transparency, information, and support for victims
- Implement courses and workshops on gender perspective
- Establish mechanisms to help people gain access to university education without being affected by their social background, gender, or any other condition external to each person's choice

COMBATING JOB INSECURITY

- Fight against the notion of efficiency based on overwork and time consumption. This situation, at university, leads to students dropping out of their studies, a lack of confidence in their own abilities, and, in the workplace, to the normalization of precariousness
- Fight against the gender pay gap, not only in the nominal sense of "equal pay for equal work", which is difficult to avoid in public institutions, but also in how merit is measured to enable promotion on the career hierarchy and how opportunities are accessed.
- Facilitate the possibility of flexible working hours and shared time management

ACTIVATING PROCESSES OF IMPROVING SELF-REPRESENTATION

- Establish mentoring programmes and workshops to help build professional self-confidence
- Establish work programmes between the university and high schools to further students' training in equality and self-esteem
- Encourage student participation in activities that increase their communication skills, such as theatre or debate forums

STRIVING FOR RESPECT AS COMPETENT PROFESSIONALS

- Broaden and describe the field of professional tasks assigned to Architecture and Civil Engineering, standardizing, and recognising work in administration, research, and teaching
- Encourage the presence of women at all decision-making levels, whether in companies, institutions, or universities, including through the establishment of quotas that provide equal opportunities for competent persons
- Contribute to the construction of respect for the professional task of each person, through the dissemination of a culture that is NOT masculinized and does NOT segregate any other reality.
- Re-elaboration of study plans and subject curricula incorporating a gendered point of view

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2. PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION AND SUPPORT

REVIEWING THE WHOLE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

- Enable the acquisition of competencies focused on solvency in professional practice in all areas
- To disseminate, reward and recognize other work and professional possibilities (work in administration, research, social work, participation processes, exhibition curatorial work, etc.), apart from those usually recognized, such as those related to building and urban planning
- Review the bibliography of the different subjects and reward those that include more than 40% of female authors
- In research, encourage citation styles that show the author's name.
- Juries, selection boards in competitive examinations, thesis readings should always be equal

CREATING SUPPORT NETWORKS AMONG WOMEN

- Encourage the creation of support networks and associations, already at university level
- Improve relations and links between universities and professional associations, so that the transition between studies and professional practice is more and better accompanied

CLOSING THE GAP IN THE EXPERIENCE OF INEQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

- Encourage the creation of specific working groups on equality. The gap in the experience of inequality between men and women needs to be closed. Men are often unaware of equality issues and they are experienced by women and why it is important to them. This tends to trivialise women's perceptions
- Standardise care leave for men in all areas of work
- Make inclusive language mandatory in all official documentation

CLOSING THE (STRUCTURAL) GENDER GAP WITHIN THE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

- Commit to diversity and equity by compliance and/or mission statements promoting gender equality within the institutions
- Strictly emphasize the contribution of both genders in decision processes so that the priority of diversity and variety is visible at all levels of each body
- Create flyer/toolkit/handbook on diversity, the benefits of diversity, functioning, and behavior in the architectural and engineering sector
- Implement mechanisms to assess gender equality
- (Temporary) quota setting on all levels: within professional bodies, enterprises, juries, etc.
- Implement diversity training measures for professional representatives
- Promote good practice examples on diversity/equality
- Implement specific working groups on equality
- Mandatory use of inclusive language in all official documentation
- Temporary deliberate exposure of areas (if detectable) where women are more pervasive

COMBATING GENDER STEREOTYPES

- Implement awareness-raising activities on the stereotypical representation of the qualities attributed to men and women in the sector (workshops, events, leaflets, gimmicks, etc.) addressed to different target groups (professional representatives, clients, public)
- Promote role models by increasing the visibility of women in the profession (by prizes, exhibitions, articles, etc.)
- Emphasize the importance and benefits of diversity and equality in all kinds of public relation work and consider diversity and equality aspects in the appearance of the organization
- Provide information material for (public) clients
- Implement an ombudspoint within the professional organization for mediation and support in all cases of (gender) discrimination

ACTIVATING PROCESSES OF IMPROVING SELF-REPRESENTATION

- CPD focus: Providing learning/training possibilities to support skills of all kinds to improve self-confidence at work (finance, professional communication, rhetoric, personal growth, management, presentation, networking, etc.)
- Implementing mentoring projects
- Direct women to recognize the ways to solve problems and above all to present the position: What is my contribution to the profession and society?

SUPPORTING EQUAL MARKET ACCESS FOR ALL PROFESSIONALS

- Promote the importance of excellent and inclusive planning and its positive influence on (public) costs and quality of life and of the built environment
- Promote procurement and competition regulations that enhance equal access to procurement procedures
- Lobby for a legal basis requiring mandatory quality based public procurement of architectural and engineering services as a basis for inclusive and sustainable planning processes
- Lobby for quality based procuring procedures among public and (public) clients as a basis for inclusive and sustainable planning processes
- Lobby for adequate capacity and reference requirements that allows small offices/MSMEs (women are mostly owners of MSMEs) to participate in public procurement procedures
- Promote measures in procurement procedures in order to balance inequalities caused by parental leave, child care obligation etc.
- Enforce equality based invitations to participate in invited Architectural Design Competitions
- Enforce gender balanced compositions of juries and other decision groups within the competition process
- Create tools to statistically evaluate the participation of women and men in public procurement procedures and Architectural Design Competitions in order to fully evaluate the gender equality of participation
- Emphasize the benefits of gender equal approaches to (public) clients (handbook/flyer) and promote a gender sensible approach in the development of Architectural Design Competitions (gender budgeting, functional analysis, etc.)
- Start the promotion of architecture in different media and on the web, always being attentive to the gender balanced presentation; use every possibility to promote both men and women professionals and promote the benefits of different perspective contributions of gender diverse teams and cooperations in the professions
- Support and promote young Architects and Civil Engineers that are entering the profession and the market in a strictly gender balanced way

CREATING EQUAL ACCESS SUPPORT NETWORKS

- Encourage the creation of support networks within and across professions
- Encourage and implement mentoring programmes
- Improve relations and links between universities and professional associations, so that the transition between studies and professional practice is more and better accompanied – paying special attention to gender balance when addressing young professionals paves the way for equal treatment within profession and society

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3. WORKING CONDITIONS

COMBATING THE GENDER PAY GAP

- Carry out an equal pay analysis to examine company pay structures in their entirety for structural discrimination potentials with a special focus on part-time and duration of employment work as a potential discrimination factor
- Establish non-discriminatory criteria for determining the pay of all positions in the company
- Transparently present payment criteria and salaries paid in order to avoid negotiation gaps
- State the expected salary in job advertisement

ENFORCING GENDER-RESPONSIVE RECRUITMENT

- Gender-appropriate formulation of the job advertisement, addressing women and men equally
- Reference in the job advertisement to the promotion of the compatibility of family and career
- Giving priority to the underrepresented gender in the case of equal suitability, aptitude and professional competence
- General offer of part-time employment or flexible working time models
- Equal representation on the selection committee
- Recognition of competencies acquired in the performance of family tasks and relating to the future position (self-reflection, organization, conflict resolution, assumption of responsibility)
- Preparation of a selection report

INTRODUCING FLEXIBLE WORKING TIME AND A BETTER WORK-LIFE BALANCE AS A MEAN TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY

- Analysis of the workforce's needs for flexible working models
- Analysis of the range of tasks with regard to time, place, and quantitative flexibility (job sharing, working from home and teleworking, or part-time management)
- Development of a working time concept tailored to the company and the workforce
- Use of IT-supported working and communication models to create modern and family-friendly working environments
- Evaluation of the working time concept with further development of equal career opportunities for women

EQUALISING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Introduction of part-time management positions - tandem leadership
- Further training for part-time employees and those returning to work
- Introduction of a women's quota at all hierarchical levels
- Offer an in-house mentoring programme
- Restrict meetings to core working hours

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project “YesWePlan!” is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union and connects different European partner organisations with the aim of sharing experiences and best practice examples for closing **the gender gap** in the professional field of Architecture and Civil Engineering.

www.yesweplan.eu

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The **YesWePlan! Recommendations** shall provide tools, methods, and approaches to address (structural) inequalities on different levels. Based on the different outcomes of the project survey that consisted of the **YesWePlan! Country Situation Reports**, the **YesWePlan! Career Tracking System** with an online survey and over 100 qualitative interviews and the collection of **YesWePlan! Best Practice Examples** a number of concrete tools, methods, and approaches to increase gender equity in the fields of education and vocational training, professional representation and support and working conditions were developed. They also take into account previous research and recommendations on national and European level and address Universities, professional chambers and organizations and employers.

The **YesWePlan! Country Situation Reports** are analyses that were carried out to provide better comparability between project partner countries. They analyse legal and practical gender equality frameworks and conditions and have a focus on gender-specific differences with regard to vocational training and professional practice.

The core of the project is the so-called **YesWePlan! Career Tracker** that was developed on the basis of the **YesWePlan! Country Situation Reports** and led to the implementation of a broad European online survey on gender equality issues with over a thousand responses. The survey was complemented by over a hundred qualitative interviews and the results build an excellent basis for the definition of relevant measures for the promotion of gender equity. They are reflected in the YesWePlan! Recommendations. The YesWePlan! Career Tracker will be re-used and promoted as an efficient tool to evaluate gender equality issues in professions.

The **YesWePlan! Best Practice Examples**, a collection of national best practice approaches to promote gender equity, was created to enable the project partners to learn from each other. Therefore, their transferability is an important aspect. A good example of a transferred best practice is the French ARVHA Women Architects Award, which annually honours outstanding works by women architects and which has now been transferred to Austria in a similar form.

PROJECT PARTNERS



AUSTRIA

Federal Chamber of Architects and chartered Engineering Consultants (Coordinator)
www.arching.at



FRANCE

ARVHA Association for the Research on the City and Housing
www.femmes-archi.org



GERMANY

Federal Chamber of German Architects
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OXYS Management UG
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SLOVENIA

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SPAIN

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