

FP7 STAGES project Structural Transformation to Achieve Gender Equality in Science (2012-2015) (G.A. No. -289051 ; **Seventh FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME, Specific programme ‘Capacity’, Work programme ‘Science in Society’, FP7-SCIENCE-IN-SOCIETY-2011-1)**

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1. STAGES project brief presentation and consortium

The European evidence data and statistics showed constantly that the research performance is limited by the perpetuation of direct and indirect gender discrimination and that promoting gender equality at all levels contributes to achieving excellence and efficiency. This has led the European Commission to a shift in focus *towards addressing the structural transformation of institutions*, using a systemic, comprehensive and sustainable approach (EC, 2012) as an integral part of the Europe 2020 Strategy as well of the new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020.

Launching the topic SiS.2011.2.1.1-1 "**Implementing structural change in research organizations/universities**", the Commission decided to really address the many and interconnected layers of the **problem of gender inequality in science** from an **integrated** perspective, deeply involving the organizational culture in research institutions, modifying and gendering its basic tenets. The **STAGES** project belongs to this very recent direction of action and generations of projects launched by the European Commission in order to tackle gender imbalance in science and research.

The **FP7 STAGES project** brings together **seven partner universities and research institutions from five European countries**: Department for Equal Opportunities, Presidency of the Italian Council of Ministers (Italy); Aarhus University (Denmark); Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (Romania); Fraunhofer Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e.V. (Germany); Radboud University Nijmegen (Netherlands); University of Milan (Italy); ASDO (Italy).

The **main aims** of the project are **to develop different self-tailored action plans** geared at introducing **structural changes** in each of the participating organizations, representing different kinds of research institutions as well as **to produce research based knowledge in order to understand the dynamics surrounding structural change** aiming at addressing gender imbalance in universities/research institutions (please visit www.stages.csmcd.ro)

2. The role of the Romanian team

The STAGES –UAIC project is coordinated by Prof.dr. Doina Balahur from the Center for Social Management and Community Development (CSMCD), Department of Sociology, Human Resources and Social Work. CSMCD coordinates the Working Package 4, "**Bridging the Gender Gap through an Active Knowledge Brokerage**". The self-tailored **Action Plan developed and the accompanying research targeted 9 out of 15 faculties** from the UAIC: *Hard sciences* (Mathematics, Computer science, Physics, Chemistry), *Earth sciences* (Geography and Geology), *Life sciences* (Biology), Humanities (Letters) and *Social sciences* (Economics and Business Administration and Philosophy and social-political sciences). It was also designed to address to **different categories of managers at the level of university, departments and faculties**. It is worth to be stressed that the implementation of the activities of the AP will generate *changes at the level of the whole university* and, potentially, at the *national level* (through different national councils and agencies involved as partners in the project).



The UAIC's Action Plan **consists in more than 70 actions and activities** and the **accompanying evaluation research** and has been *structured* around **three strategic areas** (Women-friendly environment, Gender Aware Science and Women's leadership in science) and **nine objectives** (*Actions promoting change in organizational culture; Actions promoting work-life balance; Actions supporting early stage career; Actions challenging gender stereotypes and consequent horizontal segregation; Actions aimed at gendering S&T contents and methods; Actions promoting women's leadership in the practice of research; Actions promoting women leadership in the management of research; Actions promoting women's leadership in scientific communication; Actions promoting women's leadership in innovation processes and science-society relationships*).

3. Research infrastructure.

The research infrastructure is assured by the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University which made available for the FP7 STAGES project the technical infrastructure needed (PC networks, adequate soft for social science research) as well as meetings, workshops and conference rooms.

4. The Human Resources involved in UAIC-STAGES project

Reflecting the complexity and the large number of UAIC activities in the Action Plan, **three different working groups** have been organized: 1. **The executive team for Action Plan implementation** (containing 15 members); 2. **UAIC Research Group on Gender Equality in Science** (including 15 members); 3. **UAIC team for media communication and public relations** (formed by 3 members). The three working groups were conceived to act in order to support the new structure that had to be created within the framework of the STAGES Project, namely **UAIC Network of Women in Academia and Research**.

5. The results

After 18 months since the STAGES project started the implementation phase important outcomes have been registered towards the institutional transformation to achieve gender equality at the UAIC and the long term sustainability. They consist in **setting up and institutionalizing new functional structures** like the **Center for Gender equality in Science** (the first one that has ever been created in a Romanian university) which will evaluate, monitor and report on the gender equality policies at the UAIC; the setting up and institutionalizing the **UAIC Network of Women in Academia and Research**; the setting up and the institutionalization (for the first time in a Romanian university) of the **annual events** like **Women's Researchers Day; Women's Annual Science and Technology Excellence Award** and **Women's Annual Distinction for Young Researchers**. Under the UAIC-STAGES project for the first time in a university in Romania women's scientific excellence is acknowledge through an open source database "**UAIC profiles of Women in Science**" and "**Young Women Researchers Career Development: The road towards the excellence**". In cooperation with the national Broadcasting Company (TVR) the UAIC-STAGES project produced the **first documentary film on women's life and scientific career**. The activities and events organized so far have been widely mediatized and acknowledged through **the project website** www.stages.csmcd.ro designed not only for dissemination reasons but also for increasing women in academia and research visibility.

6. The impact of the results on the scientific community and Romanian society

The UAIC-STAGES self-tailored Action Plan developed and the accompanying research targeted 9 out of 15 faculties and also different categories of managers at the level of university, departments and faculties. It is worth to be stressed that the implementation of the activities of the AP will generate *changes at the level of the whole university* and, potentially, at *the national level* (through different national councils and agencies involved as partners in the project). In the meantime the wide media dissemination of the events organized with European and international experts on gender equality issue has an important impact on the raising awareness of the policy decision makers and also on the wider public.

7. UAIC-STAGES project team integration within different research networks

The UAIC-STAGES teams have partnership relations with a wide variety of national, European and international research networks and governmental and non-governmental organizations actively involved in gender equality in science promotion. For example, connections have been developed with LERU (League of the European Research Universities) network of universities recognized for its policy of “scientific excellence without gender bias”; with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), with European Platform of Women in Science (EPWS), with the representative of Athena Swan (UK) and with the “twin” research projects that implement structural transformation in universities/ research institutes.