

EQUALITY GUIDE

HR Instruments for Equal Opportunities at Universities

At Flemish and at European universities in general, women rarely reach the top. That is why five of the six Flemish universities – Free University of Brussels (VUB), Ghent University (UGent), Catholic University of Leuven (K.U.Leuven), University of Hasselt (UHasselt) and the University of Antwerp (UA) – joined forces to create an 'Equality Guide: HR Instruments for Equal Opportunities at Universities' with Tool Annex. Each university chose a different HR topic to work on. The VUB prepared a module on personnel development and organisational culture (1); the UGent on the whole career (inflow-promotion-outflow) (2); the K.U.Leuven on career management (focus on promotion) (3); the UA on science communication (4); and the UHasselt on mentoring (5). Each of these modules take up a chapter in the Equality Guide: a practical guide with tips, do's and don't's on the topic of Equal Opportunities and Human Resources Management. Each chapter of the Guide contains a description of casestudies carried out at the different universities. Principal target audiences are policy makers at universities -and beyond- in Europe.

The project was financed by the European Social Fund, as part of the EQUAL programme, and coordinated by the Working Group on Equal Opportunities of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR).

EQUALITY GUIDE

HR Instruments for Equal Opportunities at Universities

VLIR-Werkgroep Gelijke Kansen
(EDS)



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Een partnerschap tussen de Europese Commissie en het Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.
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EQUALITY GUIDE
HR INSTRUMENTS FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT UNIVERSITIES

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Antwerpen-Apeldoorn

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Equality Guide
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Preface

At Flemish and at European universities in general, women rarely reach the top. That is why five of the six Flemish universities – Free University of Brussels (VUB), Ghent University (UGent), Catholic University of Leuven (K.U.Leuven), University of Hasselt (UHasselt) and the University of Antwerp (UA) – joined forces to create an ‘Equality Guide: HR Instruments for Equal Opportunities at Universities’. Each university chose a different topic to work on. The VUB prepared a module on personnel development and organisational culture (1); the UGent on the whole career (inflow-promotion-outflow) (2); the K.U.Leuven on career management (focus on promotion) (3); the UA on science communication (4); and the UHasselt on mentoring (5). The scope of the topics varies from broad to narrow and more thematic: the first modules deal with the broader career, the last two modules focus on a very specific career topic. Each of these modules take up a chapter in the Equality Guide. Each university developed one or more instruments in the scope of its module: HR instruments to help introduce equal opportunities in the career and personnel management of universities. In some modules the whole population of the university has been taken into account (personnel and students); some modules focus on personnel only (UA and UHasselt). For some modules only academic personnel (AP) was taken as a research topic, in others administrative and technical personnel (ATP) was addressed too. In most modules equal opportunities was defined as the gender topic or as ‘equal opportunities for women and men’, but in the case of the VUB, ‘equal opportunities’ also included diversity.

The project covered two years, from October 2005 until November 2007. The project was financed by the European Social Fund, as part of the EQUAL programme, and coordinated by the Working Group on Equal Opportunities of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR). The EQUAL programme was created by the European Commission as an addition to the measures of the structural funds to counteract circumstances that have led to inequalities and discrimination in entering the labour market and education: EQUAL wants to contribute to equal opportunities for job-seekers and employees^{1 2}. National partners in an EQUAL-project constitute a ‘development partnership’. These partners work together around a specific theme, bundling their respective expertise and experience. Transnational cooperation is also seen as an important source of ideas and methods to counteract inequalities and discrimination.

The ‘Equality Guide’ project, coordinated by the VLIR and financed by the EQUAL-programme of the ESF, will from now on be referred to as the ‘VLIR-EQUAL project’.

¹ http://www.esf-agentschap.be/2000%2D2006/NIV_1/esfinvldr.htm.

² http://www.esf-agentschap.be/2000%2D2006/NIV_1/esfinvldr.htm.

A Dutch version of the Equality Guide³ also exists, and was sponsored by the Flemish Government, Department of Economics, Science and Innovation (EWI).

The Equality Guide consists of two different parts: Part 1 is the actual Guide with a literature study, process report, report of case studies, evaluation, conclusions and recommendations per chapter. Part 2 is the Tool Annex with all the different tools developed in the scope of each module. These two parts cannot be seen apart from each other. The Guide is a manual with a lot of useful know-how, tips and information on how to apply the HR tools.

Although the Equality Guide is mainly focused on universities, a lot of the developed instruments are also applicable to other organizations and settings. The transferability of the tools is shortly discussed in each of the chapters.

The target group of the Equality Guide are policy makers, (academic) leaders and managers of European universities – and beyond –, working in the variety of faculties, departments and service units, at central and decentralised levels. The Guide can also be very useful for scientists and other employees, in offering them tips for their career (development).

The national partners in the ‘**development partnership**’ were:

- Coordinator: VLIR⁴-Working Group on Equal Opportunities (Elsy Van Roy and Ilse Haesendonck of the Diversity Policy Office of the K.U.Leuven coordinated the project under the authority of the VLIR-Working Group; the administrative support was taken care of by Brigitte Corthouts);
- VUB: Promoter Prof. Dr. Machteld De Metsenaere, researcher Yanna Van Wese-mael;
- UGent: Promoter Prof. Dr. Marysa Demoor, researchers Sigfried Lievens, Hanneke Pyck and Liselotte Vandebussche;
- K.U.Leuven: Promoters Prof. Dr. Reinhilde Veugelers and Prof. Dr. Sabine Van Huffel, researcher Esther Hiel;
- UA: Promoters Sonja Spee and Hilde Van den Bulck, researcher Ann Van der Auweraert;
- UHasselt: Promoter Prof. Dr. Mieke Vanhaegendoren, researcher Bie Nielandt;
- Department of Economics, Science and Innovation (EWI) of the Flemish Govern-ment: Karen Haegemans and Lut Bollen;
- Department of Education – subdepartment Universities of the Flemish Govern-ment: Ann Raiglot and Noël Verduyck;
- Institute for the Equality of Women and Men, Carla Rijmenams and Michel Pasteel.

The project had the **support** of the following Ministers:

- Flemish Minister of Equal Opportunities, Kathleen Van Brempt;
- Flemish Minister of Work, Education and Training, Frank Vandebroucke.

³ VLIR-Werkgroep Gelijke Kansen (2008). *Gelijke-Kansengids: HR Instrumenten voor Gelijke Kansen aan Universiteiten*. Antwerpen: Garant.

⁴ Flemish Interuniversity Council.

The partners in the **transnational consortium** 'Equality by Degree' were:

- the University of Maastricht (the Netherlands) with their project 'Priority for Participation'⁵: Annelies van der Horst and Akke Visser;
- the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET⁶ (UK) with their JIVE-project: Claire Pickerden, Ross Wall, Jacki Mason, Sally Driscoll and others;
- Generalidad Valenciana, Conselleria de Economia, Hacienda y empleo - direccion GE (SP) with their project Profesion@1⁷: Luis Ballester, Pedro Albertos and Ester Barbera;

The VLIR-EQUAL project was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF): contact person for this project at the ESF was Caroline Meyers.

On the cover of this Guide the Chancellors of the six Flemish universities are portrayed. The cover of this Guide was also used as a poster in the campaign to start off the VLIR-EQUAL project. The text for this poster campaign read: 'Wanted: Chancellors (m/f). The VLIR-EQUAL project is working at it.'

⁵ www.participatiealsprioriteit.nl.

⁶ www.setwomenresource.org.uk; www.letswtist.bradfordcollege.ac.uk; www.jivepartners.org.uk.

⁷ www.equal-profesional.info.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the *national and transnational partners* for the fruitful collaboration over the past two years. The project researchers of the national partnership worked very hard to deliver a useful, practical and innovative guide with many tips to help introduce equal opportunities at all levels at universities. Although the road was tough and many bureaucratic challenges were to be faced, all universities managed to create a positive change climate.

The meetings with the transnational partners on the other hand delivered many useful insights in the problem areas and good practices in other European countries; these insights were incorporated in the Equality Guide. Working with our transnational partners was very inspiring, and the Flemish delegation was always very warmly welcomed in the UK, Spain and the Netherlands.

Special thanks to *Akke Visser* and *Annelies van der Horst* for organizing the transnational end-event WISER in Maastricht⁸, which was extremely successful. Also special thanks to *Luis Ballester* for coordinating the transnational collaboration and to *Pedro Albertos* for taking care of the transnational website.

We would like to thank the *Department of Economics, Science and Innovation (EWI) of the Flemish Government*, and especially our contact *Karen Haegemans*, for funding the publication of the Dutch version of the Equality Guide.

Special thanks to *Daniëlle Gilliot* and *Anne-Marie De Jonghe* of the VLIR for their practical support.

Deserving a special mention are *the many people who cooperated actively in the different modules*: the respondents of the surveys of the VUB, the UGent and the K.U.Leuven, the members of the Diversity Forum of the VUB, the researchers at European University College Brussels EHSAL, the Mainstreaming Promoters of the K.U.Leuven, the Research Coordination Office of the K.U.Leuven, the trainees of the training on Scientific Communication of the UA, the people who participated in the focus group sessions of the UA, the lecturers, the mentees and mentors who took part in the mentoring programme of the UHasselt, the steering committee at the UHasselt, the employees of the Personnel Departments and Student Services of the different universities who provided the project researchers with the necessary data and figures, the managers and policy makers who lent their cooperation, and many others.

We would like to thank *the Chancellors of the participating universities*, Prof. Dr. Van Camp (VUB), Prof. Dr. Vervenne (K.U.Leuven), Prof. Dr. De Schepper (UHasselt),

⁸ Women in Science, Education and Research: www.wiserineurope.eu.

Prof. Dr. Van Cauwenberghe (UGent), Prof. Dr. Van Loon (UA) and Prof. Dr. Van Hoecke (K.U.Brussel), for their support on the project. It was a real statement of top management involvement to agree to be the “heads” for the campaign.

Also thanks to *Caroline Meyers* of the European Social Fund for her practical support and critical insights into the project process.

General introduction

At European universities, the glass ceiling still exists. Although women constitute 50% of first degree university students in many European countries, the percentage of female full professors at European universities is very low: in higher education only 15% of those at the highest academic grade are women⁹. Women do not get enough access to the scientific infrastructure, nor do the universities provide enough encouragement for female academics¹⁰. “... *There is clear evidence that women are underdeployed in research generally ..., have poorer access to R&D resources, receive lower pay on average, and have a disproportionately lower chance than men of reaching senior levels or holding positions of influence, for example through membership of scientific boards.*”¹¹

Of the 17 European member states that provided data for the *She Figures 2006*, “*there are only two where the proportion of female members of scientific boards is over 40%; only one in the range 30-39%, and five in the range 20-29%, with all the rest below 20%*”¹². Moreover, male academics are in general more actively engaged in professional networks that provide them with information, encouragement and new research opportunities¹³. Studies on the under-representation of female researchers at universities show that a lack of adequate information, support and coaching is one of the important reasons for the slow career paths of women academics¹⁴.

This under-representation of women in all fields of science, research and development threatens the goals of science in achieving excellence, since universities and research institutes explore only 50% of the existing research potential. During each step of their scientific career, women meet minor disadvantages in terms of funding, laboratory facilities etc. As a consequence after some years, mostly in the mid-career period, these small gender biases seem to cause a major gap between the careers of male and fe-

⁹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research, Science and Society, Women and Science (2006). *She Figures 2006*. Brussels: European Commission, 114 p.

¹⁰ Blake, M. & La Falle, I. (2000). *Who Applies for Research Funding?* London: National Centre for Social Research, 163 p.

¹¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research, Science and Society, Women and Science (2006). *She Figures 2006*. Brussels: European Commission, 114 p.

¹² European Commission, Directorate-General for Research, Science and Society, Women and Science (2006). *She Figures 2006*. Brussels: European Commission, 114 p.

¹³ Blake, M. & La Falle, I. (2000). *Who Applies for Research Funding?* London: National Centre for Social Research, 163 p.

¹⁴ Valian V. (1997). *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

male scientists¹⁵.

The situation in Flanders is similar to that of the whole of Europe. A recent study¹⁶ shows that the proportion of women throughout the different vertical steps on the academic ladder at Flemish universities decreases. While the percentage of female graduates for the five big Flemish universities (VUB, UGent, K.U.Leuven, UA and UHasselt) is 49%, this percentage declines throughout the academic career. Moreover, there is not only a gender problem for academic personnel (AP): female administrative and technical personnel (ATP) is over-represented in the lower grades and under-represented in the higher grades too.

This Equality Guide is aimed at countering these inequalities and at offering gender-neutral HR instruments for introducing equal opportunities in the personnel and career management of universities. To this end, each of the partner universities in the project (VUB, UGent, K.U.Leuven, UA, UHasselt) chose a different HR-topic to work on, depending on their specific interests, experience, expertise and scope of the equal opportunities policies in the organisation. The aim of the authors is to get these different modules incorporated in the policies and management systems of universities and other organizations, via the method of gender mainstreaming¹⁷.

The Equality Guide consists of 5 chapters, one for each module by a different university. In the scope of each module, a literature study and case study at the own university (and others) were carried out. A report of the whole process of setting up the modules at the universities, developing the instruments and carrying out the case studies and evaluations can be found in each chapter.

The VUB developed a module on personnel development and organisational culture. More precisely, they developed two surveys, one for all personnel (AP and ATP) and one for students, to measure how people perceive their working climate and how they think about equal opportunities/diversity and related initiatives and services. The surveys can be seen as a self screening instrument for universities and other organizations, and as a benchmarking tool, to position the university in the broader higher education landscape. A case study was carried out at the VUB, at the European University College Brussels EHSAL and at the universities of two transnational partners.

The UGent dedicated a chapter to the whole academic career (inflow-promotion-outflow). This chapter consists of 4 different parts: a part on inflow that explores the wishes and expectations of UGent last-year students with regards to an academic ca-

¹⁵ MIT (1999). 'A Study on the Status of Women Faculty in Science MIT'. In: *MIT Faculty newsletter*, Vol. 11, nr. 4, March.

¹⁶ Vlaamse Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (2006). *Doctoreren aan Vlaamse universiteiten (1991-2002)*. Studiereeks 15, VRWB.

¹⁷ The concept of gender mainstreaming is explicitly defined by the European Commission: "Gender Mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies and at all stages by the actors normally involved in policy-making." (From: Council of Europe, Gender Mainstreaming. Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Presentation of Good Practices. Council of Europe, Strassbourg, May 1998.)

reer, and the gender differences on these topics. A survey for final-year students was developed in this respect. The second part tackles the inflow/through-flow, with the development of a vacancies checklist, and the screening of UGent vacancies. The third part is about through-flow ('promotion of women'): in the scope of the UGender project at the UGent, a survey was developed for all staff members (AP and ATP) on the various aspects of a (scientific) career and potential gender problems at the university. The survey was carried out at the UGent; an overview of the results can be found in part three. Part four tackles the outflow through the report on in-depth interviews carried out with former employees – both male and female – of the UGent. For this, a semi-structured in-depth exit interview was developed. The aim of such an interview is to investigate gender differences in career expectations, work satisfaction, support and opportunities of former employees of a university.

The K.U.Leuven developed a module on career management (focus on promotion). The aim of this chapter is to offer tools, tips and a step-by-step plan to introduce equal opportunities in the career management of a university. In this chapter, the career opportunities of the entire personnel database – both AP and ATP – of the K.U.Leuven are examined and clarified. Different smaller projects on the topic of career management were set up in collaboration with diverse entities of the K.U.Leuven and six different tools were developed.

The UA created a training in Scientific Communication for female researchers, to show them how they can sell themselves and their research better, and to make them aware of the need for visibility. The training was developed through the organization of focus groups with female researchers of the UA. This way, the need for a training on scientific communication and the topics that have to be tackled in such a training could be checked with the target audience. A report of these focus group sessions, of the process of development of the training, of the testing of the training at the UA and other Flemish universities, and an evaluation of the trainings can be found in chapter 4. A lot of practical and useful tips are presented to the reader.

The UHasselt developed a mentoring programme for female academics, and instruments to help set up such a programme in your own university or organization, i.e. checklists for the organization of the programme and content records on mentoring for mentors and mentees. In Chapter 5 the project researcher of the UHasselt reports on the development of the mentoring instruments, on the process of setting up mentoring programmes at the UHasselt and the K.U.Leuven, on the case studies at these universities, and on the evaluation of the projects.

The 5 chapters together cover a wide range of HR domains and are aimed at improving the personnel and career management at universities with respect to equal opportunities. However, the chapters can also be read separately, depending on the reader's personal interest or function in the organization.

Chapter 1

Personnel development and organisational culture

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1. Introduction

1.1. Problem definition

In the last few years, many public organizations in Flanders have started working on a diversity or equal opportunities policy, undertaking actions like incorporating deontological codes in their company regulations, introducing quotas, paying special attention to the content of job openings, etc. Organizations can actually undertake many actions at local level exceeding official regulations; it mainly depends on the goodwill of the management and (the needs) of personnel. The effect of those actions can then be measured by counting the number of women (or members of the other target groups) working in the company, the number of hours a week, etc. However, counting is not the only way in which the effect of a diversity policy can be measured. It is equally important to know how people react to all those actions during their daily work and how those actions affect their working climate. The effects of incorporating a diversity policy may involve several steps over several years. That's why it was important to create an instrument that could be used every x years and include all members of personnel. Consequently, we opted for a survey that would measure how people perceive their working climate and how they think about equal opportunities and related initiatives and services. Comparing those data with personal data can give information about the needs of certain groups on this matter. The instrument can be considered as a tool to make people aware of and talk about equal opportunities and to make them realize that the organization is working on it.

1.2. Context VUB

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) stands for principled academic education and scientific research, both with strong roots in society. The VUB educates critical, independent thinkers in an open atmosphere of free inquiry, freedom, tolerance and diversity. Hence for the Vrije Universiteit Brussel the implementation of an equal opportu-

ities policy has become a substantial part of the university's identity. Opting for diversity is considered a considerable added value. Making the most of the talents of women, ethnic minorities, foreigners, people with disabilities or of a different sexual orientation, is a matter of justice and democracy and does prevent the university from wasting significant (human) resources that might otherwise contribute to a high-quality university and a more agreeable working environment. If the University can educate members of socially disadvantaged groups to be critical, independent thinkers, it is also contributing to more democracy and fighting social exclusion. Moreover education plays a role in developing tolerance. The university considers itself as a progressive scientific laboratory for social movements and social changes. It does not limit its educational task to academic teaching, but wants to instil the skills for living and working in the complex society of the future into young people. Or, to quote Daryl G. Smith's words: *"In viewing diversity not only as an issue of social justice for those who have been excluded, and not only as an issue of creating a supportive climate for increasing numbers of students, but also as an issue of educational purpose for all students, the discussions about diversity go to the heart of education"*¹⁸. Learning to learn and live with others is one of the most important skills.

The VUB uses the model of **inclusive diversity** as a frame of reference for its diversity policy. The basis of this model is the assumption that the interaction between personal characteristics and environmental characteristics can lead to an inequality situation. This model is inspired by Fougeyrollas¹⁹ handicap creation model that states that an inequality situation is created and is not static. In other words the situation and the interaction with others and/or with the context play an important role in a person feeling more (or less) disabled. Not only physical and psychological factors can lead to a handicap situation, but also factors like gender, cultural background, social-economic background and sexual orientation. A simple example is the white male middleclass work and education culture that can be dominant in universities. Women or students from another ethnic-social background can be confronted with an inequality situation when working or studying at the university.

For pragmatic reasons, the VUB focuses its diversity mission and policy (and thus the diversity survey) on certain target groups. Those groups are: women, ethnic minorities, persons with physical, psychological or learning disabilities, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) persons, international students, work students and students performing sports at high level.

On the other hand, even if diversity is a substantial part of a university's mission statement, it may not interfere with the university's common values also stated in the mission statement. That is why the Vrije Universiteit Brussel points out the conditions of

¹⁸ Smith, D.G. (1995). 'Organizational Implications of Diversity in Higher Education'. In: *Diversity in Organizations: New Perspectives for a Changing Workplace* (Martin M. Chemers, Stuart Oskamp & Mark A. Costanzo eds.).

¹⁹ Fougeyrollas, P. (1995). 'Documenting Environmental Factors for Preventing the Handicap Creation Process: Quebec Contributions Relating to ICIDH and Social Participation of People with Functional Differences'. In: *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 17 (3-4): 145-53.

reasonability and acceptability in its mission statement about diversity. Consequently, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel has set itself the aim of promoting diversity in society both in its study programmes and in its student and staff policy, by guaranteeing equal opportunities for all, without distinction on the grounds of gender, social or ethnic origin, belief, sexual orientation, age or disability. In this way, the integrity of every individual is respected, with all their gifts and failings. To fulfil this aim in practice, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel has taken measures so designed that they can be regularly evaluated on the basis of quantifiable data. More concretely these measures are related to education, student policy, student facilities and enrolment, staff and recruitment policy. A general 'diversity plan' has been developed by the 'diversity forum', a kind of policy think tank advising the Chancellor and composed of students, staff members and experts from within the university. As the scientific counterpart of this policy forum, RHEA (The research centre for Gender and Diversity), a multidisciplinary research team, plays a key role in promoting research collaboration and attracting research projects. These projects are fundamental as well as policy supporting. The plan is evaluated and adapted on a yearly basis. To evaluate the measures taken, an evaluation on the basis of quantifiable data is of the utmost importance.

That is why the Vrije Universiteit Brussel wished to create an instrument that fulfilled those needs. The Glass Guide²⁰, which was developed in the Netherlands in the 2001-2005 period acted as a source of inspiration. This instrument focuses on the under-representation of women in higher education. But since its aim is to reconcile and value the diverse creativity and the varied subgroups for the benefit of the organization, it lent itself perfectly to integrating emancipation goals as well as positive actions in a global policy. The instrument the Vrije Universiteit Brussel wished to develop would be an analogous instrument that would broaden its action radius to the other groups that are involved in the VUB's diversity. Therefore, the organizational culture had to be expressed in measurable terms and had to be comparable to the organizational culture of other institutions, or to its own culture but in a later period. The same applied to labour agreements, labour supplies and policy instruments. Eventually, this instrument would serve as a validated self-screening instrument for Flanders to audit the structure and culture of an organization.

²⁰ Glazen Gids: <http://www.theglassguide.org/>.

2. Literature study

Conducting a diversity policy often means organizations have to change their organizational culture²¹ since a diversity policy implies more than passive tolerance for diversity. It goes beyond taking positive actions^{22 23} or reaching quotas. In their definition of diversity management²⁴, Janssens and Steyaert²⁵ put the emphasis on actively supporting and stimulating an increase in heterogeneity. Before implementing changes in the framework of diversity management, it may be necessary to determine what kind of climate exists in the organization and, more specifically, to determine whether the current climate is open to diversity. In the context of higher education too, supporting diversity goes beyond including the topic in a mission statement. Diversity must be set as a priority, supported by leadership. Activities should be implemented to evaluate and reward progress and to create a diversified student body²⁶.

When developing the present survey, the following questions were relevant: what are the characteristics of an organizational climate that is receptive to diversity? What dimensions can measure the amount of diversity in an organization?

Let us first clarify some concepts. First, there is the complex concept of diversity. As stated earlier, this concept has to do with increasing heterogeneity. Diversity is often reduced by organizations to a simplistic one-dimensional distinction between minority and majority groups and is also often considered a problem that has to be solved²⁷. But diversity contains many dimensions (ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, social background, physical abilities, education, etc) and these dimensions are often entangled with each other. Each of these dimensions has an influence on how people

²¹ Spataro, S.E. (2005). 'Diversity in Context: How Organizational Culture Shapes Reactions to Workers with Disabilities and Others Who Are Demographically Different'. In: *Behavioral Science and the Law*, 23: 21-38; Maddock, S. and Parkin, D. (1993). 'Gender Cultures: Women's Choices'. In: *Women in Management Review*, Vol. 8 (2), p. 3-9.

²² Positive action has the aim to counter the current effects of past discriminations. In practice, this means that positive measures are taken to increase the representation of minorities (ECU Equality and Diversity from A to Z, 2005). These measures should be temporary and must not be confused with positive discrimination because this means that the same standard is not used for everyone.

²³ Lynch, F.R. (2001). *The Diversity Machine. The Drive to Change the "White Male Workplace"*. Transaction Publishers.

²⁴ "A management that not only shows passive tolerance for diversity, but that is also prepared to support and stimulate the increasing heterogeneity" (Janssens & Steyaert, 2001).

²⁵ Janssens, M. & Steyaert, C. (2001). *Meerstemmigheid: organiseren van verschil*. Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven.

²⁶ Rowley, L., Hurtado, S. & Panjuan, L. (April 2002). *Organizational Rhetoric or Reality? The Disparities between Avowed Commitment to Diversity and Formal Programs and Initiatives in Higher Education Institution*. Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

²⁷ Miller, E.K. (1994). 'Diversity and its Management: Training Managers for Cultural Competence within the Organization'. In: *Management Quarterly*, 0025.1860, Vol. 35, issue 2.

function within an organization. Hence, managing diversity means organizing these dimensions in such way that they offer continuous added value to the organization. The American Association of Colleges and Universities²⁸ defined diversity as “the variety created in any society (and within any individual) by the presence of different points of view and ways of making meaning which generally flow from the influence of different cultural, ethnic, and religious heritages, from the differences in how we socialize women and men, and from the differences that emerge from class, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability and other socially structured characteristics”.

Two other concepts that play an important role in this project are organizational culture and organizational climate. Organizational climate is the measurable outworking of organizational culture and can be described as “the shared philosophy among people of the same organization”. This shared philosophy consists of basic assumptions, attitudes, standards and values²⁹. Consequently, organizational climate consists of the perception people of the organization have about certain behaviours and consequences within this culture³⁰. Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv and Sanders³¹ give a similar definition and state that culture manifests itself in symbols, heroes, rituals and values. These definitions lead us to conclude that organizational culture has a great influence on processes like recruitment, promotion and dismissal and that they constantly maintain themselves, unless they are changed by management. Co-workers confirming those strong cultural values are accepted by their colleagues, while co-workers who deviate from them will be repudiated³². Mischel³³ places a link between diversity and the strength of the organizational culture by stating that people with different values, standards and attitudes, will function better in an organization with a weak culture, that is, a culture in which standards and values are not clearly defined and applied.

According to Spataro³⁴, organizational culture is important in conducting a diversity policy for several reasons. Since organizational culture determines the behaviour of people within the organization in general, it will specifically influence the way in which they interact with people who are similar or different from them. Organizational culture

²⁸ Association of American Colleges and Universities (1995). *The Drama of Diversity and Democracy: Higher Education and American Commitments*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

²⁹ Schein, E.H. (1990). *Organizational Psychology*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs (N.J.); Offers, E.H. (1995). ‘Organisatiecultuur en emancipatiebeleid’. In: *Tijdschrift voor Management en Organisatie*, Vol. 49, 1.

³⁰ Schein (1990), *op. cit.*

³¹ Hofstede, G., Neuijen, B., Ohayv, D.D. & Sanders, G. (1990). *Measuring Organizational Cultures: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study across Twenty Cases*. ASQ, June.

³² Chatman, J.A., Spataro, S.E. (2005). ‘Using Self-categorization Theory to Understand Relational Demography-based Variations in People’s Responsiveness to Organizational Culture’. In: *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 48, nr. 2, 321-331.

³³ Mischel, 1977, in: Cox, T. (1992). *Cultural Diversity in Organizations. Theory, Research and Practice*. Berret-Koehler Publishers.

³⁴ Spataro (2005), *op. cit.*

also has an impact on the extent to which people will suppress or emphasize mutual differences. Because of those reasons, an organization's culture has a direct impact on how a diversity policy is outlined.

Several authors³⁵ distinguish different types or stages of organizational culture with respect to diversity. Spataro³⁶ distinguishes a differentiation culture, a unity culture and an integration culture. In a differentiation culture, the emphasis lies on the nature of the differences between people or, more specifically, on the characteristics preferred by the organization. Co-workers possessing these characteristics will have more power than those who do not and whose contributions are less appreciated. In such an organization, the focus of diversity management should be on changing the value system. A unity culture is characterized by the suppression of individual differences by placing the emphasis on shared identities and common bonds. In such an organization, there is a great identification with the organization and co-workers are loyal and devoted. A positive characteristic of this is that co-workers interact and communicate more with each other and experience fewer conflicts. It is the organization's task to determine if a unity culture is favourable for the performance of employees. In the third culture that Spataro distinguishes, the integration culture, the emphasis is on valuing differences among co-workers. This type of culture puts the emphasis on completing tasks, considering individual differences, whatever they may be, as 'extra tools' to complete those tasks.

Maddock and Parkin³⁷ also make a distinction between four types of organizational culture but their focus is more on gender. According to one of the four types, men are more paternalistic or excluding towards women. As a matter of fact, several other authors³⁸ have emphasized that organizational cultures are 'sex-coloured', meaning that women and men hold different positions and that different expectation patterns exist according to gender. Hofstede³⁹ distinguishes between masculine and feminine standards and values when talking about organizational culture. Individualism, competition, emphasis on material reward, emphasis on status and hierarchy, etc are supposed to be characteristics of a masculine culture. A feminine culture would be characterized more by collectivism, collegiality, emphasis on positive feedback, participation in the decision-making process, etc. Despite the fact that this masculine-feminine dimension is quite stereotyping, it is embedded in several topics of our survey.

³⁵ E.g., Chemers, M.M., Oskamp S., Costanzo, M.A. (Eds.) (1994). *Diversity in Organizations*. Newbury Hills, CA: Sage, 282 p.; Smith (1995), *op. cit.*; Spataro (2005), *op. cit.*

³⁶ Spataro (2005), *op. cit.*

³⁷ Maddock and Parkin (1993), *op. cit.*

³⁸ Cox (1992), *op. cit.*; Maddock, S. (1999). *Challenging Women: Gender, Culture and Organization*. London: Sage Publications, 1999, 258 p.; Fischer, A.H., Rodriguez Mosquera, P. (2000). *Masculiniteit met een feminien gezicht: onderzoek naar de rol van organisatiecultuur in de doorstroming van vrouwen naar hogere functies*. 's-Gravenhage: Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, 123 p.

³⁹ Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: international differences in work-related values*. Beverly Hills: Sage, 475 p.

A recent survey by Benschop, Brouns, Mescher and Berkel⁴⁰ that measures the Glass Ceiling within an organization, the Fempowerment, also questions this feminine-masculine component. The respondents have to indicate by means of judgements, what their ideal image of a manager or co-worker is and whether this ideal image fits women or men. Beside that, the respondents are asked to indicate descriptions that are characteristic of the image their organization has of female and male employees. By means of these questions, the survey tries to measure to what extent the respondents still think in stereotypes. This feminine-masculine dimension is thus still relevant.

Cox⁴¹ also turns to the question about organizational culture and diversity. According to him, there might be certain “*types of organizational culture that are more suitable for culturally diverse workforces*”. In his book, Cox puts the emphasis on cultural diversity, but we think his findings may also apply to other aspects of diversity (gender, physical abilities, sexual diversity, etc). He argues that organizations that do not place a high value on cultural diversity will require their personnel to conform to the existing organizational standards and values; they will impose assimilation⁴². Organizations with a high-prescription culture are less suitable for diverse workgroups. They have a narrow view of right or good behaviour; have a prevalence of judgmental behaviour and people who easily express criticism, a general intolerance of mistakes and a manager who gives strict instructions about how the work has to be done. In the present survey, those findings have been operationalized into a topic about rules and control.

The way people interact with each other seems to be an especially important factor in the success or failure of a diversity policy in an organization⁴³. For example, a study by de Graaf et al. about the work perception of gay, lesbian and straight teachers showed that they all evaluate their work as more positive when there are clear rules about interaction with the students⁴⁴. Interactions between co-workers are also important. They include the way newcomers are treated, whether they are accepted and how the relationships between the co-workers are. This is considered to be a part of socialization, which can be defined as “*the process in which an individual not only learns how to work in a particular organization, but also comes to accept and behave in ways that are*

⁴⁰ Benschop, Y., Brouns, M., Mescher, S., van Berkel, M. (2005). *Fempowerment in opdracht van The Glass Guide, door de Nijmegen School of Management aan de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen*. www.fempowerment.nl.

⁴¹ Cox (1992), *op. cit.*

⁴² Assimilation is a one-way adaptation in which an organization's culture becomes the standard of behaviour for all other culture merging into the organization. The goal of assimilation is to eliminate cultural differences, or at least the expression of different cultures (Cox, 1992).

⁴³ Diversiteitsaudit, Steenkampinstituut: <http://www.cda.nl/domains/cda/content/downloads/steenkamp/diva/oplevering/index.htm> (June 2006).

⁴⁴ de Graaf, H., van de Meerendonck, B., Vennix, P. & Vanwesembeek, I. (2003). *Beter voor de klas, beter voor de school. Werkbeleving en gezondheid van homo- en biseksuele mannen en vrouwen in het onderwijs*. Rutgers Nisso Group, 127 p.

*appropriate to that organization*⁴⁵. Individuals learn this as newcomers, with the help of their colleagues. That is why social networks and mentoring are important in the socialization process. The above-mentioned study by de Graaf et al. also stresses the relationship between good relations with superiors and a diversity policy. Superiors who promote a diversity policy seem to interact more collegially with their personnel⁴⁶. They also point to the link between a culture open to diversity and getting more feedback and social support from colleagues and being better informed about relevant matters.

Social (or informal) networks are important in the socialization process because they help employees to reach work-related, personal and social goals by means of unofficial channels. The above-mentioned Fempowerment⁴⁷ that measures the Glass Ceiling in an organization also includes a topic on informal networks. Network bonds can be strong or weak and consequently, employees in a network will see, help, support, trust, etc each other more or less, depending on the strength of the bond⁴⁸. The socialization process is again an important factor within diversity management. A lot of organizations are faced with the 'revolving-door effect'⁴⁹ because new co-workers do not or cannot go through the socialization process, often because of the existing organizational culture.

In the present project, these findings were operationalized into questions about social networks and about the quality of the relationships between the respondents and their colleagues and superior. Another topic was about the way newcomers are welcomed in the respondent's unit.

According to Doyen, Lamberts and Janssens⁵⁰ there are several circumstances that influence the diversity policy. They distinguish between:

- *individual circumstances* (being interested in diversity, having information about the organization's possibilities);
- *relational circumstances* (in-group/out-group feelings, relationship with out-groups, relation with superior) and
- *contextual circumstances* (law, local labour market, current diversity in the organization).

The present survey mainly measures individual and relational circumstances. For the

⁴⁵ Taormina, R.J. (2004). 'Convergent Validation of Two Measures of Organizational Socialization'. In: *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15: 1, p. 76-94.

⁴⁶ de Graaf et al. (2003), *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ Benschop et al. (2005), *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ McGuire, G.M. (2002). 'Gender, Race and the Shadow Structure: A Study of Informal Networks and Inequality in a Work Organization'. In: *Gender & Society*, Vol. 16, nr. 3, 303-322.

⁴⁹ The phenomenon where employees leave the organization very fast. More specifically, it concerns people from minority groups who are leaving.

⁵⁰ Doyen, G., Lamberts, M., Janssens, M. (2002). *Diversiteitsmanagement in de praktijk*. Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid, K.U.Leuven. 348 p.

individual part, several attitude statements are presented concerning the concept of diversity and the respondents have to indicate to what extent they agree. This is a way to measure if respondents are interested in diversity. Whether respondents have enough information about the possibilities of the university is also tested by presenting them with a list of available facilities and services. The respondents have to indicate whether they know the service, if they have used it and how they value the service for themselves. The relational circumstances are measured throughout the whole part on organizational climate. As mentioned earlier, questions are also asked about the relationships between employees and between employees and their superiors.

This section gives a selection from the many studies about university climate and diversity. Especially in the United States there is a history of doing research about 'campus climate' at universities. Contrary to the present survey that wants to discuss the diversity climate in a broader sense, other studies have focused on the climate for specific minority groups like women, ethnic minorities or LGBT (lesbian gay bisexual transgender) persons. It was in the early eighties that Hall and Sandler⁵¹ introduced the concept of 'chilly climate' for women at universities. Their studies focused on the fact that women (professors as well as students) are often treated differently from men in a subtle way and that this can lead to the development of a chilly climate.

Other similar researches about the university climate for certain populations followed. Waldo⁵², for example, used a survey to measure students' perceptions about the academic climate and their attitude towards LGBT persons. Perception questions handled their experiences with professors, about whether they felt accepted and safe at the university, about how self-confident they were, etc. The attitude questions dealt with LGBT persons and the university's policy towards LGBT students. This study was completed by Noack in 2004⁵³. This time, she used the survey *Assessment of Campus Climate for Underrepresented Groups*, developed by Susan Rankin⁵⁴, for the staff population of a university. The results showed that the university environment was not very welcoming towards LGBT persons. Noack also concluded that heterosexual people's attitudes towards LGBT persons improved when they had more contact with this popu-

⁵¹ Hall, R., Sandler, B. (1982). *The Classroom Climate: A Chilly one for Women?* Washington, DC: Projects on the Status and Education of Women. Association of American Colleges; Sandler, B., Hall, R. (1986). *The Campus Climate Revisited: Chilly for Women Faculty, Administrators, and Graduate Students*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

⁵² Waldo, C.R. (1998). 'Out On Campus: Sexual Orientation and Academic Climate in a University Context'. In: *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 26, nr. 5.

⁵³ Noack, K.W. (2004). *An Assessment of the Campus Climate for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Persons as Perceived by the Faculty, Staff and Administration at Texas A&M University*. Doctoraal proefschrift: txspace.tamu.edu/bitstream/1969.1/1046/1/etd-tamu-2004B-EDAD-Noack-2.pdf.

⁵⁴ Rankin, S.R. (1998). 'Campus Climate for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Students, Faculty and Staff: Assessment and Strategies for Change'. In: R. Sanlo (Ed.) *Working with lesbian, gay, and bisexual college students: A guide for administrators and faculty* (pp. 227-284). Westport, CT: Greenwood.

lation. Another survey study by Rankin and Reason⁵⁵ among ten university campuses showed that coloured students experienced more harassment than white students. White female students, on the other hand, reported more gender harassment. Harassment was defined as “any offensive, hostile or intimidating conduct that interferes unreasonably with one’s ability to work or learn on campus”. Respondents had to indicate whether they had experienced such behaviour and what the focus of that behaviour was (e.g. race, gender).

Another study at the University of Colorado used a survey to see how students perceived the climate of their university in general⁵⁶. More precisely, they were asked to what extent they felt comfortable and welcome, how often they experienced stereotyping and how often they heard negative remarks or saw negative behaviour towards particular populations. The results were divided according to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious preference and physical abilities to make comparisons possible. Some elements from this survey were taken over in our questionnaire.

3. Process report

3.1. Research question

The most important questions to be answered in this research are:

- What are the characteristics of an organizational climate that is receptive to diversity?
- What dimensions can measure the amount of diversity in an organization?
- How open is the organizational climate to equal opportunities and diversity?
- What do people think about equal opportunities and diversity?
- What are people’s needs concerning equal opportunities and diversity?

3.2. Research design

Data were collected by means of two surveys: one for all members of personnel (ATP as well as AP)⁵⁷ and one for all the students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. The most important part of the research was to design and test those two surveys. This involved

⁵⁵ Rankin, S.R., Reason, R.D. (2005). ‘Differing Perceptions: How Students of Color and White Students Perceive Campus Climate for Underrepresented Groups’. In: *Journal of College Student Development*, vol 46; 1, p. 43-44.

⁵⁶ <http://www.colorado.edu/pba/surveys/climate/01/index.htm>.

⁵⁷ ATP = Administrative and Technical personnel; AP = Academic Personnel.

several steps:

- consulting the existing literature;
- involving students, members of personnel and experts;
- conducting a pre-test on a small sample with a paper version;
- conducting an online pre-test with a larger sample;
- conducting the final tests with all members of personnel and students.

Several factors had to be taken into consideration during these different steps. For example, did we want the surveys to be anonymous and how would we guarantee this? Which experts would we involve? In the next paragraphs, the different steps of the process of creating the surveys will be outlined.

3.3. Creating a first outline of the study

A thorough analysis of existing surveys and relevant literature about organizational culture and diversity was the starting point for this research. The following sources and existing surveys were used to design the Equal Opportunities survey:

Table 1: Sources and existing surveys used to design the EO survey

Concept to measure	Item	Source / reference
Feminine/ masculine culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The emphasis is on gaining individual results. – The emphasis is on good relationships with colleagues. – There is a competitive atmosphere. – In my unit, more decisions are taken informally than during formal meetings. – When decisions are made in my unit, everyone's opinion is taken into account. – Only a limited number of people are involved in the decision-making process. – Colleagues consider each other as competitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hofstede, 1980, 1990 – Fempowerment, 2005
Prescription culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Unfounded criticism is expressed about colleagues. – My superior gives me enough freedom to perform my tasks. – Ideas can be expressed openly to colleagues without being condemned. – In my unit, co-workers can choose when they start and stop working (provided they work all the necessary hours). – Expressions of the culture of colleagues are respected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cox, 1992 – Diversity Audit

Socialization/ networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New co-workers are left to their own devices. - Newcomers are presented to their colleagues during their first working day. - In my unit, newcomers have to find out by themselves which rules, habits and behavioural codes apply here. - New colleagues are helped by a more experienced colleague in the beginning. - When a newcomer comes to a meeting for the first time, he/she is greeted immediately by everyone. - Colleagues help each other in performing tasks. - Informal activities are organized within my unit. - I'm invited to join informal activities organized by colleagues from my unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cox, 1992 - Taormina, 2004 - Fempowerment, 2005 - DIVA, Steenkampinstituut - Diversity Audit
Relationships with colleagues and superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The emphasis is on good relationships with colleagues. - Colleagues are on good terms with each other. - Colleagues are on good terms with their superiors. - There is a pleasant atmosphere in my unit. - There is a feeling of solidarity in my unit. - Colleagues gossip about each other. - There are cliques in my unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - de Graaf, van de Meeren-donck, Vennix, & Vanwesembeek, 2003 - Taormina, 2004 - Verkorte OrganisatieklimaatIndex voor Profit Organisaties - Input from researcher and expert Yvonne Benschop
Communication openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everyone has a say during formal meetings. - Information about the unit is accessible to everyone. - Information about the unit is distributed in an understandable language. - Everyone in my unit dares to say what is going well or badly in relationships with colleagues. - More things are discussed informally than during formal meetings. - You have to be forceful to have a say in our meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DIVA, Steenkampinstituut - Diversity Audit
Well-being	<p>During the past year at the VUB, I felt ... (accepted, humiliated, valued, different from others, welcome, thwarted, free to be myself, worked against, respected, neglected).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey at Colorado university - de Graaf, van de Meeren-donck, Vennix & Vanwesembeek, 2003

Attitudes towards diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I think it is good that there is a preference for hiring minority groups if they're equally competent. – I have no problem with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with a colleague from another culture; • working with a colleague of the other sex; • working with a colleague who is LGB; • colleagues wearing religious attributes. – It's the VUB's task to form critical, independent thinking people. – It's the task of the VUB to form people in an open atmosphere of free inquiry, freedom, tolerance and diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Kreitner, Kinicki & Buelens, 1999 – Diversity Forum – VUB⁵⁸ mission statement
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The Diversity Forum: composition and tasks

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel's Diversity Forum was founded in 2003 by Prof. Frank Winter, adviser to the chancellor, and acted as a sort of think-tank for policy matters. Prof. Machteld De Metsenaere took over the chairmanship of the Forum in 2004. The Diversity Forum consists of approximately 25 people from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and the Erasmushogeschool Brussel who, through their function (student, staff) and/or expertise are interested in thinking about the diversity policy. They meet monthly and discuss specific themes about diversity and equal opportunities besides the progress of ongoing projects. The Diversity Forum forms the basis of the diversity policy plan of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, in which short- and long-term policies about diversity at the university are outlined.

The people of the Diversity Forum brought up themes and items they thought would be important to measure in the survey.

3.4. Putting the information into a survey

Once the information from several sources had been collected, the items were put together into themes. This resulted in four parts: in the first part, factors regarding the organizational climate that influence the diversity policy are investigated. In the second part, the well-being of the respondents is examined. Both the first and the second part can be seen as methods to measure the effects of diversity management. In the third part, attitude questions are asked about diversity in general, about diversity projects that are undertaken at the university and about facilities and services at the university. The purpose of this part is to examine whether the respondents are actually interested in diversity. The last part asks for personal data.

⁵⁸ <http://www.vub.ac.be/downloads/Organiek.Statut.pdf>.

3.4.1. Personnel survey

The **first part**, organizational climate, contains 50 items divided into six subparts. This part is about personnel's perceptions about their working unit. The respondents are presented with statements about their department and they have to indicate by means of a Likert scale to what degree the statement fits their department (1 = not at all, 2 = not, 3 = moderate, 4 = pretty much, 5 = very much). The six subparts are: working atmosphere, decision-making, information and communication, networks, rules and control, handling of new colleagues. This first part gathers information about the following:

- What is the working atmosphere in the department? Do colleagues gossip about each other? Do colleagues respect each other's culture? Is there a competitive atmosphere or is the emphasis more on good relations between colleagues?
- How are decisions made? Is everyone involved or are they made informally by a limited group of people?
- How is important information for employees communicated? Does everyone understand the information? Does everyone get the chance to communicate things?
- How are relationships between employees? And between employees and their superiors? Are there any cliques? Are there in-groups and out-groups in certain departments? Who's in and who's out?
- Do employees get enough feedback from their superiors? Are there unwritten rules about the way to dress, the way to behave or about working at home or at the university? Is unfounded criticism common?
- Are new employees welcomed properly to the department? Do they get a mentor when starting the job?

The **second part** of the survey deals with the respondent's well-being at the university during the past year. This part is based on an existing climate survey at the University of Colorado at Boulder⁵⁹. The respondent is asked how often she or he felt accepted, humiliated, valued, excluded, different from others, welcome, threatened, free to be her/himself, thwarted, respected and neglected on campus during the past year. Next, the respondent has to indicate whether she or he has encountered discrimination, intimidation, bullying or aggression and if so, by whom (students, other members of personnel). They are presented with several grounds of discrimination (gender, age, skin colour, origin, sexual orientation, ideas, etc) which they can select and they can also fill in a ground for discrimination themselves.

The **third part** of the questionnaire is more about attitudes and opinions. It contains two subparts. In the first, respondents have to indicate to what extent they agree with general statements about diversity at the university (e.g. I think that more diversity at the VUB will contribute to more tolerance for each other). In the second part, they are presented with a list of projects that have been undertaken or will be undertaken (e.g. a mentoring project for students and PhD students). They have to indicate how important they think those projects are (e.g. 1 = very important, 4 = very unimportant).

⁵⁹ <http://www.colorado.edu/pba/surveys/climate/01/index.htm>.

In the **fourth part**, personal data from the respondent is gathered. It is emphasized again that the survey is anonymous and that data will only be used in an aggregated form. The following data are asked for:

- gender (also transgender);
- age;
- category of personnel (professor, assistant, other academic personnel, technical or administrative personnel);
- which department or faculty the respondent works in;
- which language(s) the respondent speaks at home;
- nationality(ies);
- which country the respondent was born in;
- which country the respondent's father was born in;
- which country the respondent's mother was born in;
- whether the respondent has a disability (learning disability, physical disability, chronic illness, mental problems).

3.5. Testing the survey in a pilot study

After the first versions were designed, the two Equal Opportunities surveys were presented to the students and personnel of the Diversity Forum for further modifications. This was also done with 30 students and members of personnel who were not involved with the Diversity Forum. They were asked to give comments on the questions. The purpose of this was to find out whether the questions were clear and understandable, whether there were too many questions and whether all specific terms were explained clearly. The members of personnel were from the academic staff as well as from the administrative or technical staff.

After the comments were collected, the survey was reworked. A first online testing was then performed with a randomly chosen sample of students and personnel. The random sample was selected with the Excel program. The project researcher sent a mail to the sample of persons in blind carbon copy (Bcc)⁶⁰ with a word of explanation about the survey.

Why was a web survey chosen?

For measuring such a complex construct like diversity, it would have been more logical to use a qualitative method like focus groups or structured interviews. Consequently, this is the most important disadvantage of the present survey. But since the objective was to create a monitoring instrument that reaches all the people at the university (which is a large population), a survey seemed the best choice. The advantages of a web survey are obvious: first of all, this method allows for much faster processing of the information gathered. Only the design of the survey and the technical procedures to put it online may take some time. When this is done,

⁶⁰ Bcc: The e-mail addresses in this field receive an e-mail without the other receivers seeing this.

one just has to send an e-mail to everyone and all the responses are collected in a database that can easily be merged to a statistical programme (immediate data validation). The costs are low since there are no paperwork and printing costs. Besides, to create the online survey and design the web pages, software costs can be reduced by using an open source web-design programme. In theory, everyone at the university has access to the Internet. Students who do not have access at home can easily use a computer in one of the computer rooms at the university. For some groups of personnel (e.g. kitchen staff) we decided to print the surveys and hand them over in closed envelopes that the respondents could send back to our unit. Another advantage of the survey is that it is a simple quantitative method which can be used on a yearly basis, and which can easily be applied by other researchers. Weaknesses of this method are social desirability and not considering the present context in which the respondent fills out the questionnaire. Furthermore, the same survey will be used for academic staff as well as personnel with lower educational and literacy levels. Therefore, it is important to create questions that are understandable for all populations, but that are not too simplistic either.

To put the survey online, Osucre⁶¹ was used, a user-friendly software program that generates the response in a spreadsheet, which can easily be merged to a statistical programme like SPSS. To design the web pages, the open source web-design programme NVU⁶² was used. The web survey was completely anonymous: we did not ask for the name of the respondent and the link to the questionnaire was not linked to their e-mail address. The only personal item the Osucre programme registers, is the IP address.

3.6. Validating the scales

One of the most important aspects in developing this survey was to test whether the instrument was valid, i.e. does the instrument measure what it is meant to measure? One way of doing this is by verifying whether items cluster around a particular construct, by means of factor analysis. This was the aim of the pre-testing. We measured which variables loaded highly on which factors (this means: which variables fit to the different factors/constructs) and then conducted an item analysis on the factors to examine if those variables constitute a reliable scale. This means: is there an internal consistency in the different scales? Another aim of pre-testing was to make sure the survey was user-friendly and understandable for the respondents. The pre-test was conducted with 315 students (3 random samples + 2 reminders) and 227 members of personnel who have access to the Internet (2 random samples + 2 reminders). There was a 56.8% response for members of personnel (N = 129) and 34.6% response for students (N = 109). Bad timing may be the reason for the lower response from students since they were in the pre-exam period. A summary of the results of the factor analysis of both groups is given below.

⁶¹ Frederik Van Acker – www.osucre.be.

⁶² www.nvu.com.

3.6.1. Personnel survey

The respondents consisted of 48.1% women and 51.9% men. The age frequencies were almost equally distributed between 25 and 50 years. First, the survey was analysed on comprehensibility by examining missing data and ‘I don’t know what this means’ answers. There were no items that strikingly came out as unanswered or as missing. A principal axis factoring (one specific way of doing factor analysis) was then conducted on the six subparts on organizational climate. Principal axis factoring was preferred over the commonly used principal components as an extraction method because the latter does not discriminate between shared and unique variance. Principal axis factoring can identify the variables that contribute to the shared variance in a set of measured variables, which is what is needed in identifying underlying structures. Also, the principal factor method does not have distributional assumptions (meaning the data do not have to follow a normal distribution)⁶³. During the analysis, variables that did not meet the criteria of sampling adequacy and variables that had a low-shared variance were excluded. Variables with factor loadings ≥ 0.4 after rotation were chosen. After the factor analysis, an item analysis (reliability analysis) was conducted on the factors. The analyses were performed using SPSS 14.0⁶⁴.

Table 2 summarizes the high loading variables on the five factors generated by the factor analysis and the Cronbach α from the reliability analysis. An α of 0.8 shows good reliability⁶⁵.

Table 2: Summarizes the high loading variables on the five factors generated by the factor analysis and the Cronbach α from the reliability analysis (personnel survey)

Factor names and high loading variables	Cronbach α and factor loadings
Factor 1: Relationships with colleagues	$\alpha = 0.888$
Colleagues help each other with performing tasks.	0.756
People are on good terms with each other.	0.739
Colleagues are prepared to give each other help or advice.	0.689
The relationship with my colleagues is good.	0.661
There’s a feeling of solidarity.	0.637
There’s a pleasant working atmosphere.	0.546
Emphasis on good interactions with colleagues.	0.504
Emphasis on getting individual results.	-0.498
I’m invited to join informal activities organized by colleagues.	0.410

⁶³ Costello & Osborne (2005). ‘Best practices in Exploratory Factor Analysis: Four Recommendations for Getting the Most From Your Analysis’. In: *Practical Assessment Research & Evaluation*, Vol. 10, 7.

⁶⁴ SPSS, 14.0.

⁶⁵ Field, A. (2005). *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. Sage publications, 2nd edition, 777 p.

Factor 2: Openness	$\alpha = 0.813$
The relationship between co-workers and the supervisor is good.	0.653
Everyone gets the opportunity to express his/her views during meetings.	0.563
Information about our unit is accessible for all colleagues.	0.514
Information about our unit is communicated in an understandable language.	0.512
Being friends with the right people is more important than delivering good work.	-0.481
Colleagues respect the expression of other colleagues' culture.	0.465
My superior gives me enough freedom to perform my tasks.	0.442
Ideas can be expressed openly without being condemned.	0.423
Everyone dares to say what is going well or badly in interaction with colleagues.	0.416
Factor 3: Welcoming and integration	$\alpha = 0.821$
New employees have to find out by themselves which rules, habits and behavioural codes apply in our unit.	-0.756
New employees are presented to colleagues on their first working day.	0.642
New employees are helped by a more experienced colleague in the beginning.	0.612
New employees are left to their own devices.	-0.598
When a new employee comes to a meeting for the first time, he or she is immediately greeted and welcomed by the colleagues.	0.417
Informal activities are organized within my working unit.	0.412
Factor 4: Atmosphere and competition	$\alpha = 0.818$
Colleagues sometimes express unfounded criticism towards each other.	0.653
Colleagues gossip about each other.	0.621
Colleagues consider each other as competitors.	0.612
Strongly competitive atmosphere.	0.579
There are cliques in my unit.	0.432
Factor 5: Communication and decision-making	$\alpha = 0.704$
Only a limited number of people from my unit are involved in making decisions.	0.656
In my unit more things are discussed informally (e.g. during coffee breaks, at lunchtime, etc) than during formal meetings.	0.613
In my unit, more decisions are made informally than during formal meetings.	0.570
When decisions have to be made in our unit, they try to take everyone's opinion into account .	-0.492
You need to be forceful to have a say during meetings in our unit.	0.437

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Apart from finding underlying structures by means of a factor analysis, a data reduction from 50 to 34 items was also obtained in the first part of the survey. The topic about rules and control especially, which tried to detect a high-prescription culture, did not fit in our initial model. We still think this is an important topic and so we have kept some

of the questions in the survey, formulated in a different way (e.g. in my unit, one gets the opportunity to work at home). Moreover, a few other questions that should altogether measure the degree of ‘family-friendliness’ of a department’s climate were added.

As for the whole survey, it was decided to preserve the order and the form of the sub-parts (except the factor-analysed part on organizational climate) because they provide variation. In the part that assesses to diversity though, we thought it would be better to vary the use of the terms ‘diversity’ and ‘equal opportunities’ instead of only talking about diversity. The reason we did this is that, even though we clearly stated that we see diversity in a broad way, people still think diversity is only about cultural and ethnic differences.

In the pre-test survey, open questions were not included to avoid overly elaborate processing. However, since there were about five reactions via e-mail from personnel, some positive, some negative, it would be interesting to put an open question in the survey for remarks. After all, not everyone is assertive enough to give non-anonymous remarks.

Since there were four respondents who made the effort to print the survey page by page from the web and send it to us, we decided to create a link to a PDF version of the survey that would be easier to print without a distorted layout.

3.6.2. Student survey

The respondents consisted of 60.6% females and 39.4% males. Here too, principal axis factoring was conducted on the first part of the questionnaire. This did not result in the same factors as the personnel survey but this is logical since a working climate is not the same as a study climate.

Table 3: Summarizes the high loading variables on the five factors generated by the factor analysis and the Cronbach α from the reliability analysis (student survey)

Factor names and high loading variables	Cronbach α and factor loadings
Factor 1: Helpfulness	$\alpha = 0.829$
Students easily pass on notes to each other.	0.741
Students help each other with carrying out tasks.	0.751
There are good relationships between classmates.	0.635
Students are willing to help each other.	0.627
Information is passed on fast between classmates.	0.578
Factor 2: Clear communication	$\alpha = 0.883$
Information about studying is understandable.	0.920

Information about courses and lessons is communicated in an understandable language.	0.865
Information about the exams is communicated in an understandable language.	0.867
Information about studying is accessible.	0.563
Factor 3: Social networks	$\alpha = 0.833$
I'm asked to join social activities.	0.831
Outside the courses, I also have contact with my classmates.	0.761
I don't consider any of my classmates as friends.	0.722
Activities are organized outside class.	0.583
The relationship with my classmates is good.	0.488
Factor 4: Openness	$\alpha = 0.814$
Unfounded criticism is expressed to classmates.	0.642
Classmates gossip about each other.	0.585
Ideas can be expressed openly without being condemned.	0.580
In my class, there's a pleasant study atmosphere.	0.564
There's a feeling of solidarity.	0.554
Students regularly tell jokes hurting other people.	0.482
Factor 5: Rules and competition	$\alpha = 0.701$
There is an unwritten rule that you should always go to classes.	0.693
There is a clear cut view amongst classmates about good and appropriate behaviour.	0.596
Students consider each other as competitors.	0.483
There's a strongly competitive atmosphere.	0.470
There are unwritten rules about the way one has to dress.	0.464

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

We decided to add a part about contact frequency between students. Respondents were asked how many times they have contact with fellow students from another ethnic or social background, students with disabilities or LGBT students. By contact was meant working together on a task, eating together, living together in a student home, etc. A study by Pike⁶⁶ indicated that good-quality interaction among diverse student groups was related to students' openness to diversity.

For both personnel and students, an additional part about services at the university was added. The respondents were presented with a list of services and had to indicate whether they knew the service, whether they had already used it and how important they thought this service was by giving a score (1 = very unimportant, 4 = very important). Examples of services for personnel are child day care, trust person, sports facili-

⁶⁶ Pike (2000). 'The Differential effect of on- and off-campus living arrangements on student's openness to diversity'. In: *NASPA Journal*, Vol. 39, 283-299.

ties, medical service, vegetarian menu in the restaurant. Examples of services for students are: computer classes, trust persons, study grants and loans, special help for learning disabilities.

Several words in the survey were explained in a separate window when the respondent clicked on them. For the paper version, an extra page was inserted with the list of words. Examples of explained words are: discrimination, intimidation, learning disorder, transgender person, minority groups, etc.

3.7. Conducting the final test

After reworking the survey, it was finally conducted with all members of personnel and students.

3.7.1. Do's and don'ts

There are some issues that have to be taken into account when conducting the survey in an organization.

- It is very important to get support from management when you want to distribute the survey in your organization. The results may reveal that the management has to take particular measures to make changes in the organization. You cannot ask people about their opinions without doing anything with the results afterwards. So there has to be a commitment from higher management. It can also be useful to have the e-mail with the link to the survey and the explanation of the purpose sent by the person who has the most influence in the organization. At the VUB, the e-mail was sent by the chancellor of the university. It is also useful if the higher management asks for the cooperation of middle management to get as much response as possible.
- You can organize 'fill-in-sessions' for staff members who do not work on the computer.
- You have to choose the right time to conduct the survey in the organization. In a university, exam and congress periods are not ideally suited. In summer, a lot of people are on holiday. In a higher education setting, you have to take exam periods into account.
- Choose a catchy name for your survey; something that catches the respondents' attention or makes them curious about the survey. Our choice was 'Equal Opportunities survey', but in another test the name 'Happy in yourself survey' was used.
- There has to be someone involved who has expertise in statistics or data analysis.
- Before conducting the survey, the necessary budget has to be agreed for personnel or services (to put the survey online, to analyse the results, etc), for possible printing costs, for incentives, etc.

3.7.2. Conducting the survey

The survey was sent in Dutch to all members of personnel, but an English version was also made for the staff of Vesalius College, an English speaking college that is part of the VUB. An e-mail in the name of the chancellor was sent to all personnel. For technical staff, paper versions were brought to their respective departments. Respondents were asked to keep their specific working unit in mind when answering the questions. The same procedure was followed for students, but they had a different link with a different survey.

After the first two weeks, a reminder was sent. We waited a month and a half before closing the survey. In the next paragraphs we will elaborate more on the steps to take to analyse the results.

3.7.3. Making a codebook of all the variables

Before putting the survey online, it may be useful to make an overview of all the questions and give them numbers and shorter names (labels). It is even better to do this with the programme used for the analysis, in our case SPSS 15.0. The variables are prepared so you can easily copy your data into this program. It is recommended to link the variables to certain values (e.g. the answer 'not at all' becomes number 1).

3.7.4. Checking blanks

Before any analyses are carried out, you should first check for any incomplete lines in the survey. A very strict rule was used in our case: all respondents who did not fill in the personal data were ruled out. We did this because making the comparisons between the different groups is an important aspect of this survey.

In the part about the services, blanks had to be filled in because some respondents indicated they used services but then did not indicate that they knew those services.

3.7.5. New variables and recoding

Several new variables have to be created to conduct further analyses. In our survey, for example, numbers were given to the different faculties and departments and to nationalities. A new variable was created to make a distinction between exact and human sciences. Furthermore, the languages were recoded into a new variable with three categories: Dutch speaking, multilingual (including Dutch) and languages other than Dutch. A new variable was created for LGB respondents, academic versus administrative/technical personnel and exact versus human sciences. For students, a new variable was created about their ethnic background, since it is known that there are a lot of

students with an ethnic background other than Belgian at the VUB. Different numbers were given according to their ethnic background. The different categories are: background from a neighbouring country, background from the rest of the EU, Turkish, Maghreb or Arab (TMA) background, ex-colonial background⁶⁷ and other backgrounds. Respondents were put in one of these categories on the basis of the language spoken at home, their nationality, their country of birth or the country of birth of one of the parents. The identification method and classification categories are based on the method by Almaci⁶⁸.

Categories of ethnic background	
0 =	Belgian background (Belgian language(s) spoken at home, Belgian nationality, born in Belgium, father and mother born in Belgium)
1 =	background from neighbouring countries (UK, Netherlands, France, Luxembourg or Germany)
2 =	background from rest of EU: Scandinavia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ex-Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Austria, Switzerland, Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Ireland
3 =	TMA background: Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan.
4 =	expatriate background: Congo, South-Africa.
5 =	Other: Asia, South- America, North-America, rest of Africa, Oceania
Example: a respondent has a TMA background if she/he speaks Arabic , Berber languages, Turkish or another language from the countries listed above (number 3) or if she/he is born in one of those countries or has the nationality of one of those countries or if one of the parents was born in one of the countries listed above.	

Reverse-phrased items also need to be reversed, before processing reliability analyses or calculating scores. These items are important for reducing response bias. If an item is reverse-phrased then it will have a negative relationship with the other items⁶⁹. It will affect the Cronbach α that measures the reliability of a scale. So the numbers of the reverse-phrased items should be reversed⁷⁰.

⁶⁷ In our case mostly Congo.

⁶⁸ Almaci, M. (2003). *De allochtone student(e) aan de VUB. Samenvatting van het rapport: Project Gelijke Kansen: hoe beter aansluiten bij de multiculturele maatschappij*. Brussel: VUB.

⁶⁹ Field (2005), *op. cit.*

⁷⁰ When a respondent always answers 'pretty much' (= 4) on the positive statements (e.g. There's a feeling of solidarity), indicating a positive climate, he/she will logically answer 'not' (= 2) to a negative (reverse-phrased) statement (e.g. Unfounded criticism is expressed to colleagues). Since a higher score means a more positive climate, the statements that are put in a negative way have to be reversed so that here too, the highest score is the most positive. Reverse those items by switching the numbers of the Likert scale (e.g. number 1 becomes number 5 and vice versa, number 2 becomes number 4 and vice versa, 3 is neutral).

3.7.6. Testing the scales again

For the purpose of this guide, it was important to test the scales within the survey. Another factor analysis was performed on the items of part one about organizational climate. This resulted in the following factors and reliability analysis listed in table 4.

Table 4: Factors and reliability analysis of part one (organizational climate)

Factor names and high loading variables	Cronbach α and factor loadings
<p>Factor 1: Relationships with colleagues</p> <p>There's a feeling of solidarity.</p> <p>People in my unit are on good terms with each other.</p> <p>My unit has a pleasant working atmosphere.</p> <p>Emphasis is on good interactions with colleagues.</p> <p>Colleagues help each other with performing tasks.</p> <p>I'm invited to join informal activities organized by colleagues.</p> <p>Informal activities are organized within my working unit.</p>	<p>$\alpha = 0.887$</p> <p>0.676</p> <p>0.632</p> <p>0.622</p> <p>0.626</p> <p>0.595</p> <p>0.623</p> <p>0.564</p>
<p>Factor 2: Competition atmosphere</p> <p>The emphasis is on gaining individual results.</p> <p>Ideas can be expressed openly without being condemned.</p> <p>Everyone dares to say what is going well or badly in interactions with colleagues.</p> <p>Colleagues sometimes express unfounded criticism to each other.</p> <p>Colleagues gossip about each other.</p> <p>Colleagues consider each other as competitors.</p> <p>There is a competitive atmosphere.</p> <p>There are cliques in my unit.</p>	<p>$\alpha = 0.861$</p> <p>0.329</p> <p>0.444</p> <p>0.419</p> <p>0.603</p> <p>0.664</p> <p>0.752</p> <p>0.710</p> <p>0.591</p>
<p>Factor 3: Welcoming and integration</p> <p>New employees have to find out by themselves which rules, habits and behavioural codes apply in our unit.</p> <p>New employees are presented to colleagues on their first working day.</p> <p>New employees are helped by a more experienced colleague in the beginning.</p> <p>New employees are left to their own devices.</p> <p>When a new employee comes to a meeting for the first time, he or she is immediately greeted and welcomed by colleagues.</p>	<p>$\alpha = 0.846$</p> <p>0.733</p> <p>0.685</p> <p>0.692</p> <p>0.654</p> <p>0.512</p>
<p>Factor 4: Communication openness</p> <p>Everyone gets the opportunity to express his/her views during meetings.</p> <p>Information about our unit is accessible to all colleagues.</p> <p>Information about our unit is communicated in an understandable language.</p> <p>When decisions have to be made in our unit, they try to take everyone's opinion</p>	<p>$\alpha = 0.860$</p> <p>0.531</p> <p>0.766</p> <p>0.668</p> <p>0.472</p>

into account.	
Factor 5: Openness of the supervisor to equal opportunities	$\alpha = 0.785$
The relationship between co-workers and the supervisor is good.	0.461
Colleagues respect the expression of other colleagues' cultures.	0.354
My superior gives me enough freedom to perform my tasks.	0.545
The supervisor pays attention to work-life balance.	0.371
Possibility to work at home.	0.642
Women and men get equal opportunities concerning their careers.	0.464
In my unit, we can choose at what time we start and stop working (flexible working hours).	0.727
You are expected to leave your personal problems at home.	0.343
Factor 6: Influence of informal networks	$\alpha = 0.790$
Being friends with the right people is more important than delivering good work.	0.333
Only a limited number of people from my unit are involved in making decisions.	0.402
In my unit more things are discussed informally (e.g. in the coffee break, at lunchtime, etc) than during formal meetings.	0.780
In my unit, more decisions are made informally than during formal meetings.	0.768
You need to be forceful to have a say during meetings in our unit.	0.406

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

A factor analysis was also performed on the first part of the student survey, which was reworked completely for the final testing. Unfortunately, factor 1 was not very reliable (see Cronbach α values in table 5). It was therefore recommended to use the factors (that constitute the different scales on organizational climate) from the pre-test mentioned earlier, combined with some items from the final test (see the final surveys in the Tool Annex for the end result). Table 5 below shows the factor and reliability analysis from the final test.

Table 5: Factors and reliability analysis from the final testing

Factor names and high loading variables	Cronbach α and factor loadings
Factor 1: Study atmosphere	$\alpha = 0.412$
In my class there is an atmosphere that gives me the feeling of being part of it.	0.753
Fellow students are prepared to give each other help or advice.	0.850
Expressions of culture are respected.	0.542
There is a competitive atmosphere.	-0.347
Ideas can be expressed openly without being condemned.	0.584
Fellow students pass on information to each other.	0.707
Fellow students consider each other as competitors.	-0.499

I'm asked by fellow students to join social activities outside the classroom.	0.531
I have the feeling that I have to minimize particular aspects of my background to be part of the group.	-0.355
Factor 2:	$\alpha = 0.855$
Insulting remarks or jokes about women.	0.748
Insulting remarks or jokes about LGBT persons.	0.797
Insulting remarks or jokes about ethnic minorities.	0.776
Insulting remarks or jokes about people with disabilities.	0.788
Insulting remarks or jokes about other things.	0.565
Factor 3: Contacts with other students	$\alpha = 0.650$
How often contact with LGB students.	0.534
How often contact with students from another ethnic background.	0.715
How often contact with students with disabilities.	0.391
How often contact with students from another social background.	0.666

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

3.7.7. Calculating scores

Scores had to be calculated for parts one, two and three. For part one, dealing with organizational climate, scores were calculated on the six different scales for each respondent, along with the total score of all scales. This total score was reduced to 10 points, with 10 being the maximum score. This is easier to compare with since not every scale has the same number of items and maximum scores would be different. This resulted in seven new variables (six scales plus total score). The higher the score, the more positive the organizational climate is perceived. So a score of 10 means that a respondent perceives her/his climate as very positive. For part two, dealing with well-being, a new variable was created that includes the total score (out of 10) of each respondent on the different items. For part three, which is about attitudes, another step had to be taken first before calculating the scores. It is important to take into account the 'no opinion' answers. First the frequencies for those answers are calculated and then the 'no opinion' answer is left out to calculate the score on this scale. In this case, the score was not reduced to 10 but those on the attitude questions were just added up. The lower the score, the more positive the attitude (e.g. if you have 13 attitude questions, then 13 is the lowest score and 52 is the maximum score).

When calculating the score for the 'Superior's openness to equal opportunities' scale for administrative and technical personnel, the items about flexible working hours and working at home were omitted because staff from these categories often have to be present at certain hours (e.g. kitchen personnel, secretary staff).

Table 6: Calculating scores

Parts	Scores
Part 1: organizational climate	Add up the scores (from 1 to 5) for each scale and transform this total score to a 10-point scale. Then calculate the average of the scores of the six scales and this is your total score on organizational climate.
Part 2: well-being	Add up the scores (from 1 to 5) for each word and transform this total score to a 10-point scale. Then calculate the average of the scores for all the words (in our case: 11) and this is the total score on well-being.
Part 3A: attitude to equal opportunities	Add up the scores (from 1 to 4) for all questions.
Part 3B: attitude to initiatives and projects	Add up the scores (from 1 to 4) for all questions.

3.7.8. Comparing groups

Once you have calculated all the scores, you can start comparing groups to see if there are significant differences. The first thing to check is whether the results follow a normal distribution. In this case, that was not the case so non-parametric tests were used (in our case: Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney) to do the group comparisons. An overview (which can also serve as a checklist) of the comparisons in each part of the survey is given below.

Table 7: Comparing groups

Part	Comparisons
Organizational climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For each subscale within the different faculties and departments (Kruskal-Wallis). – For each subscale between academic and administrative/technical personnel (Mann-Whitney). – For each subscale between women and men (additional analyses between women and men can be done within certain groups, e.g. departments or personnel category). We also made the comparison between women and men for the item 'Women and men get equal career opportunities' (Mann-Whitney). – For each subscale between hetero and LBG respondents. – For each subscale between respondents with and without disabilities. – For each subscale between Belgian and non-Belgian nationalities (we also took language into account).
Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Within faculties and departments (KW). – Between academic and administrative/technical staff (MW). – Between age categories (KW). – Between women and men (MW).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Between hetero and LGB respondents (MW). - Between respondents with and without disabilities (MW). - Between Belgian and non-Belgian nationalities (MW). - Between languages (KW). - Compare with the responses about discrimination, intimidation and bullying (do people who experience discrimination, intimidation and/or bullying have a lower score on well-being than the others?).
Attitudes to equal opportunities and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within faculties and departments (KW). - Between exact and human sciences (MW). - Between academic and administrative/technical personnel (MW). - Between age categories (KW). - Between women and men (MW). - Between hetero and LGB respondents (MW). - Between respondents with and without disabilities (MW). - Between Belgian and non-Belgian nationalities (MW). - Between languages (KW). - It can also be interesting to look at some items separately, depending on the importance you think it may have in your organization.
Attitudes to projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Idem attitudes to equal opportunities and diversity. - It can also be interesting to pick out items and make group comparisons (e.g. see in what way women and men think differently about the 1/3-2/3 directive for boards and committees).

3.7.9. What can the scores and the comparisons tell you?

If you want to interpret the scores of the different parts, it can be important to look at subscales separately or to look at scores in combination with the score of other parts. The subscales of part one can tell a lot about the different aspects of the organizational climate of each department or faculty in your organization. For example, if the score on the 'Supervisor's openness to equal opportunities' scale is low in one department compared to others, then it can be useful to make this supervisor more aware of equal opportunities matters. Another example: if staff from another ethnic background have a lower score on the 'Welcoming and integration' and 'Relationships with colleagues' subscales than staff from a Belgian background, it may mean that cultural differences play a role in this matter and that all staff should be made aware of it or get training in it. This score can also be linked to the responses about discrimination and intimidation from part two. If staff from other ethnic backgrounds experience discrimination by colleagues, then this is a more probable reason for the lower scores on the two subscales mentioned above. As for the part about attitudes to projects, you can actually measure whether the target groups of your initiatives appreciate what you have done.

The data comparisons or combinations you make depend on what you want to investigate and this can differ from organization to organization.

3.7.10. Processing the open question(s)

An open question was inserted in the survey in which the respondents were asked if they had comments about the diversity policy at the VUB or about the survey. This information was processed by dividing the answers into different categories. Every remark was given a number (or even more than one number). Each number represented a different category that arises as new subjects/categories in the remarks are found. Examples of categories are: comments on the survey, positive comments about diversity and initiatives, negative or critical comments about diversity and initiatives, suggestions, etc.

Give incentives?

We thought students would intrinsically be less motivated than personnel to fill in the questionnaire. Consequently we decided to provide them with incentives in the form of movie tickets. Forty persons could win two tickets if they filled in the survey completely. However, response remained lower than the personnel response and more than 400 responses had to be deleted because they were not complete. We supposed that the incentives motivated students to start the survey without being attractive enough to make them go through the whole survey. Whether or not to give incentives depends on several factors:

- What are the characteristics of the group you want to question? What kind of incentive would they be interested in?
- How strongly motivated are the respondents?
- What is the available budget for incentives?

3.8. Validating the scales in the UK and Spain

The scales from part one, organizational climate, were tested by transnational project partners in Bradford, UK, and Valencia, Spain⁷¹. The survey ran on the server in Belgium so data and potential issues could easily be monitored and controlled. Both groups (UK and Spain) were taken together (N = 206) to perform a factor analysis. The results are shown in table 8 below. The third column indicates on which factor the item/variable was loaded in the Belgian testing of the survey.

We notice that the factors do not all correspond to the factors found in the Belgian survey. For some variables, the factor loadings are too small to be displayed (they should be at least over 0.3 to have a good loading). Still, we can distinguish patterns of items that are grouped together in the same way as in the Belgian tests, which indicates a certain validity (it measures what it is meant to measure). It is of course very difficult to reach 100% validity with a concept as abstract as diversity. The instrument should be tested in two different organizations: one that is totally receptive to diversity and one

⁷¹ Generalidad Valenciana, Conselleria de Economia, Hacienda y empleo-direccion GE; UK Resource Centre for Women in SET.

that is not. If the instrument can discriminate between the two groups, it is valid.

Table 8: Results factor analysis UK and Spain

Items	Factor loadings	Factor in Belgian testing
Factor 1		
Information about my unit is communicated in an understandable language.	0,580	Fact 4
New employees are left to their own devices.	-0,405	Fact 3
Information about the unit is accessible to all colleagues.	0,396	Fact 4
The superior pays attention to work-life balance.	0,381	Fact 5
When decisions have to be made in our unit, they try to take everyone's opinion into account.	0,374	Fact 4
Factor 2		
My superior gives me enough freedom to perform my tasks.	-0,680	Fact 5
My unit has a pleasant working atmosphere.	-0,541	Fact 1
The relationship between co-workers and the superior is good.	-0,529	Fact 5
In my unit, co-workers can choose at what time they start and stop working.	-0,526	Fact 5
Women and men get equal opportunities concerning their careers.	-0,522	Fact 5
Colleagues respect the expression of other colleagues' cultures.	-0,503	Fact 5
Ideas can be expressed freely without being condemned by colleagues.	-0,443	Fact 2
The emphasis is on good interaction with colleagues.	-0,334	Fact 1
Everyone gets the opportunity to express his/her views in meetings and consultations.	-0,328	Fact 4
Factor 3		
Colleagues consider each other as competitors.	0,857	Fact 2
There is a competitive atmosphere in our unit.	0,848	Fact 2
Colleagues gossip about each other.	0,593	Fact 2
There are cliques in my unit.	0,546	Fact 2
Colleagues sometimes express unfounded criticism to each other.	0,501	Fact 2
You need to be forceful to have a say in meetings in our unit.	0,337	Fact 6
The emphasis is on gaining individual results.	0,304	Fact 2
Factor 4		
In my unit, being friends with certain people is more important than doing a good job.		Fact 6
More things are discussed informally than in formal meetings.	0,814	Fact 6
In my unit, more decisions are made informally than in formal meetings	0,74	Fact 6

Factor 5		
Informal activities are organized within my working unit.	0,887	Fact 1
I'm invited to join informal activities organized by colleagues.	0,866	Fact 1
The people in my unit are on good terms with each other.	0,395	Fact 1
Colleagues help each other with performing tasks.	0,366	Fact 1
In my unit there is a feeling of solidarity.	0,356	Fact 1
Everyone in my unit dares to say what is going well/badly in interaction with colleagues.		Fact 2
You are expected to leave your personal problems at home.		Fact 5
Factor 6		
When a new employee comes to a meeting for the first time, he or she is immediately greeted and welcomed by colleagues.	0,932	Fact 3
Newcomers are presented to their colleagues during the first working day.	0,713	Fact 3
Newcomers have to find out by themselves which rules, habits and behavioural codes apply in my unit.	-0,505	Fact 3
New employees are helped by a more experienced colleague in the beginning.	0,47	Fact 3
Only a limited number of people in my unit are involved in decision making.		Fact 6

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

4. Instrument and case study results

For the instruments: see Tool Annex.

The instrument was tested in four different test groups: personnel of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, academic staff from the universities of Valencia (Spain) and Bradford (UK) and students from EHSAL European University College Brussels. In the next paragraph we will give an overview of the most important results of the different case studies.

4.1. Personnel at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel

The invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 2,923 members of personnel via e-mail. It was completed by 24.3% (N = 710) of the respondents. Below are listed the personal characteristics of the respondents.

Table 9: Characteristics of personnel at VUB

Characteristics	Absolute number (%)
Gender	
Women	362 (51%)
Men	346 (48.7%)
Age category	
18-24 years	95 (13.4%)
25-30 years	191 (26.9%)
31-40 years	162 (22.8%)
41-50 years	144 (20.3%)
51-60 years	101 (14.2%)
Over 60 years	16 (2.3%)
Language spoken at home	
Dutch	547 (77%)
Dutch + another language (mostly French, English or German)	104 (14.6%)
No Dutch	57 (8%)
Nationality	
Belgian	625 (88%)
Belgian + other	10 (1.5%)
Other than Belgian	51 (7.2%)
Disabilities	
Learning disorder	7 (1%)
Physical disability	14 (2%)
Chronic medical condition	37 (4.2%)
Impairments due to a mental disorder	10 (1.4%)
Sexual orientation	
Hetero	638 (88.8%)
LGB	56 (7.9%)
No orientation	7 (1.1%)

For the characteristics of their working unit, refer to table 1.1 in the Appendices.

Analyses were conducted for each part of the questionnaire. The results of **part one (organizational climate)** show that the members of personnel score highly on this scale (7.2/10), with a specially high score on 'Relationships with colleagues' (7.7/10). This means that personnel at the VUB, in general, have good relationships with each other. On the other hand, the scores for 'Competitive atmosphere' (6.7/10) and 'Influence of informal networks' (6.6/10) were lower, which indicates that there is also some competition and some influence from informal networks. Non-parametric tests show several significant differences on the subscales within the different faculties, but not within departments. This may indicate the existence of subcultures in the faculties stip-

ulating how things should work on the work floor. Significant differences between academic (AP) versus administrative/technical personnel (ATP) and exact versus human sciences were also found on some subscales. For example, ATP scores are higher than AP scores on 'Welcoming and integration'. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that ATP are more formally followed up by the Department of Personnel, unlike AP. Men seem to experience the welcoming and integration in their unit as less positive than women do. When looking at the item about equal opportunities in careers in particular, women score significantly less than men, indicating that women doubt that they enjoy the same career opportunities as men in their unit. Significant differences were found in the scores for 'Communication openness' and 'Superior's openness to EO' within the different age categories. Staff in the 31 to 40 years category do not perceive the communication in their unit to be that open compared to staff over 60 years old. The same age categories have a completely different perception about their superior's openness to equal opportunities. LGB members of personnel score lower than heterosexual personnel on the 'Relationships with colleagues' and 'Welcoming and integration' scales. One explanation might be that LGB personnel experience a hetero standard at work. An extra question about this matter could be added. Staff members with disabilities score lower than their colleagues without disabilities on 'Relationships with colleagues', 'Communication openness' and 'Superior's openness to EO'. This group may experience insufficient sympathy for their situation. We found no significant differences between members of personnel who do not have Belgian nationality compared to Belgian staff. When looking at the 'language spoken at home' parameter in our analyses, we found a significant difference in the score on 'Welcoming and integration'. Staff members who do not speak Dutch at home score significantly lower than Dutch-speaking staff members. Refer to table 1.3 in the Appendices for detailed numbers.

The analyses of **part two (well-being)** show that members of personnel score highly on this scale (average 8.2/10). Differences in scores between faculties and departments exist but they are not statistically significant in non-parametric tests. On the other hand a significant difference occurs between the scores of staff members from exact sciences and those from human sciences, with a higher score for exact sciences. Other significant differences were found between hetero and LGB personnel (with a lower score for LGB) and staff with or without disabilities (with a lower score for staff with disabilities). The score for 'well-being' was also compared with the responses on discrimination, intimidation and aggression. People who experience discrimination, intimidation and/or aggression have a lower score for well-being. Of all the respondents, 12% have experienced discrimination and such over the past year. Respondents could indicate several grounds of discrimination and the like. Refer to table 1.2 in the Appendices for the scores on well-being and to table 1.4 for a detailed list of discrimination grounds and percentages. We examined if certain groups reported more discrimination by means of cross tables⁷². Those analyses showed that one-third of the persons with disabilities report discrimination and the like, which is significantly more than people with-

⁷² Cross table (crosstab for short) is a two-way table consisting of rows and columns. It is typically used to determine whether there is a relation between row variables and column variables.

out disabilities. It also appears that reporting discrimination increases with age. One possible explanation is that the older people get, the more they get exposed to discrimination and are aware of it. Staff with a non-Belgian nationality also report more discrimination than Belgian people. When we look at the responses on discrimination on the ground of origin, we notice that half of the reports come from non-Belgians. As we posited earlier, cultural and linguistic differences may form an obstacle in relationships between staff members.

The analyses from **part three (attitudes to equal opportunities)** showed that the mean score for all respondents is 19.3, which can be considered as a high score since it is much closer to 13 (most positive attitude) than to 52 (most negative attitude). There are significant differences within faculties when it comes to having a positive attitude towards equal opportunities. But even the highest score still indicates a positive attitude. People from human science faculties have a significantly more positive attitude than their colleagues belonging to the exact science faculties. No significant differences were found within departments. On the other hand, hetero and LGB personnel differ significantly in their attitude, with LGB personnel showing a more positive attitude. Non-Belgians too show a more positive attitude than staff with Belgian nationality. When looking at specific items, we found that there is discord about the items *“I think it’s good that there is a preference for minorities in selection procedures as long as they’re as competent”* and *“I have no problem with the fact that colleagues wear religious attributes at work”*. Respectively 66.6% and 65.2% of the respondents agreed with this proposition; the rest of the respondents disagreed or had no opinion. Most agreement was found for the items about working together with colleagues of the other sex, LGB colleagues, colleagues with a disability and colleagues from another culture. More than 90% of the respondents indicated that they had no problem working together with the groups mentioned. A critical note can be added here: culture has a wide meaning and should be operationalized more in detail in the questions. For example, religion can be considered as part of culture. The respondents were less positive on the specific item about religion than on the general item about culture. Detailed results of this part can be found in table 1.5 in the Appendices.

Analysing the **attitudes towards specific projects and initiatives** again shows a significant difference between faculties, but not between departments. The mean score of all the respondents is 15.4, which shows that, in general, the respondents attach importance to the different projects (8 = all projects are considered very important; 32 = all projects are considered very unimportant). A significant difference was found between the sexes: women consider the projects and initiatives more important than men do. The same goes for LGB personnel versus hetero personnel and non-Belgians versus Belgians. Staff from the human sciences consider the projects significantly more important than their colleagues from exact sciences. No significant differences were found between age categories, between languages or between staff with and without disabilities. We were also interested in what target groups think about the initiatives aimed at them. The non-parametric test shows that women find the 1/3-2/3 rule on boards and committees (i.e. every board or committee should include 1/3 of members of the other sex) more important than men do. Staff from human sciences also seems

to find this more important than staff from exact sciences. Due to the content of their work, staff belonging to human science faculties are possibly more aware of the gender issue and more supportive of higher participation by women in important sections of an organization. We also stated that LGB staff attach more importance to an LGB guide than hetero staff members do. As for the use of extra channels to attract more ethnic minorities to job vacancies, this is considered significantly more important by staff with a non-Belgian nationality than by the others. The item about mentoring for PhD students got approval from over 90% of the professors and PhD students. Thus, it appears that people from the target groups appreciate the initiatives taken on their behalf.. In general people from minority groups are more positive with respect to equal opportunities and diversity. A more detailed summary of the results can be found in table 1.6 in the Appendices.

The frequencies (in %) of **knowledge and use of services for staff** are summarized in table 10 below. This part was completed by only 90% of the respondents.

Table 10: Knowledge and use of facilities

Service	Knows the service	Has made use of the service	Amount of importance			
			Very important	Important	Unimportant	Very unimportant
Child day care	81.7	11.7	60.1	23.4	3	5.5
Child care in summer	76.8	14.2	48.9	32.1	42	5.6
Trust persons	50.6	3.9	33.7	36.8	7.2	3.8
Retraining/in-service training	76.3	34.6	45.2	38.7	3.8	4.1
Reimbursement of commuter expenses	81.1	51.8	58.5	23.7	5.2	5.5
Reduction for sport facilities	78.7	34.5	35.4	38	11.5	6.1
Vegetarian menu	82.5	47.7	42.3	34.6	10	4.5
Medical service	79.7	56.8	52.7	28	6.2	4.6
Psychological, legal and gynaecological help, divorce reconciliation	71.8	23.8	45.4	28.9	8.2	4.2
Hospitalization insurance	77.5	26.6	56.9	23.5	3.8	5.5

Intranet with all kind of information for staff members	84.6	73.9	64.8	21.8	2.7	4.4
Flexible working times (parental leave, career break, time credit)	81.8	21	66.1	18.2	2.7	4.6

The service that is most commonly known and used by the staff is the intranet for personnel. The trust person on the other hand is known only by half of the staff. It is also the least used service of all the services being the one that gets the lowest degree of importance from the respondents. 20% of all respondents did not complete this item, which possibly means that not all staff members know what a trust person actually does. Some discrepancies were found between the degree of importance attached to a service and the extent to which it is used. For example, flexible working times are known by 81.8% of the respondents and 84.3% thinks this service is very important, but it is only used by 21%. Cross tabs elucidated that this service is used significantly more by ATP than by AP and significantly more by women than by men. Until recently, the limited use of flexible working times could be attributed to the fact that certain categories of personnel (e.g. professors) were not allowed to use it. This has changed since this survey was conducted.

Another important source of information is the **open question** to which the respondents could give all kinds of remarks or questions. More than 15% of the respondents used this opportunity, 61% of them are men and 78% are from the academic staff. The remarks have all been categorized:

- Comments on the survey: there were about 20 comments on content or form, both positive and negative.
- Very positive comments on diversity and initiatives: 13 comments in which the initiatives for diversity and equal opportunities were praised. Debate is encouraged.
- Very negative comments on diversity: 2 respondents explicitly stated they are against diversity.
- Critical or suspicious attitude to diversity: most comments can be found in this category (25). The respondents consider diversity as a positive thing, but only under certain conditions. Respondents often use the terms 'positive action', 'affirmative action', 'promoting measures', 'preference treatment' and 'positive discrimination' to indicate the same phenomenon. (?). They confused 'positive discrimination' with 'positive action'. This is most common with respondents from exact sciences. Some respondents even stated that initiatives and projects are not necessary, that diversity should come by itself.
- Comments on the organization's diversity policy: the 15 reactions were widely divergent. Some respondents stated that the university has always had a large degree of diversity, others say the opposite.
- Suggestions, points of interest: 15 comments. Three women mentioned structural discrimination against female researchers and think that promotion criteria should

be changed. The English-speaking staff especially stated that there should be more information in English. Someone said language lessons should be obligatory.

- On the 1/3-2/3 gender distribution on boards and committees: six persons considered this to be a bad measure. Only one person thought the distribution should be 1/2-1/2. All reactions came from male academic staff.
- Remarks about LGB: three respondents mentioned the ‘invisibleness’ of LGB staff on campus.

Finally, the **correlations between the different parts of the survey** were examined. All parts seemed to correlate significantly with each other, but the highest positive correlation was found between the degree to which projects are considered important and the attitude towards equal opportunities and diversity ($\rho = 0.606$; $p < 0.001$). Another high positive correlation exists between the total score on organizational climate and the score on well-being ($\rho = 0.592$; $p < 0.001$). A small negative correlation was found between the total score on organizational climate and the attitude towards equal opportunities and diversity ($\rho = -0.203$; $p < 0.001$). The other correlations are all below 0.19.

Conclusions

Although there was a small response percentage and the results should hence be interpreted with caution, they show that the organization generally has an open climate to diversity. Relationships between colleagues are good and the competitive atmosphere is limited. Superiors tend to be open to flexibility for their employees and in general employees have a positive attitude towards equal opportunities and diversity. This image is nuanced once we look at faculties and departments separately.

Language differences seem to have an impact on how people feel welcomed and integrated. Although personnel massively indicate that they have no problem in working with colleagues from another culture, they are more reluctant with regard to specific aspects of someone’s culture, like religion. This was also mentioned in the open question.

This survey underlines the need for involvement of all members of personnel and the need for information about diversity and initiatives around it. By means of the existing channels, awareness about this matter should be raised. The results (from the open question) show that there is considerable confusion about terms and about the reason for initiatives. The survey outcome also confronts us with the necessity to give more information about trust persons since they play a crucial role in monitoring and fighting discrimination, intimidation and bullying at work.

A positive signal is that the target groups of projects and initiatives consider these projects to be very important. This confirms that the diversity policy reaches and is appreciated by the target groups.

4.2. Students at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel

The invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 8,370 students via e-mail. PhD students and students from Vesalius (an English speaking college that is part of the VUB) were not included. 1,353 completed surveys remained after deleting the incomplete responses (461). This resulted in a response percentage of 16.2%. Below are listed the personal characteristics of the respondents.

Table 11: Student characteristics

Characteristics	Absolute number N (%)
Gender	
Women	852 (63)
Men	498 (36.9)
Age category	
18-24 years	1004 (74.2)
25-29 years	174 (12.9)
30-39 years	96 (7.1)
40-49 years	21 (1.6)
50-59 years	8 (0.6)
Language spoken at home	
Dutch	970 (71.7)
Dutch + another language	310 (22.9)
No Dutch	72 (5.3)
Ethnic background	
Belgian background	1040 (76.9)
Background from neighbouring country	71 (5.2)
Background from rest EU	39 (2.9)
TMA – background	95 (7.0)
Colonial background	42 (3.1)
Other	45 (3.3)
Disabilities	
Learning disorder	44 (3.3)
Physical disability	24 (1.8)
Chronic medical condition	43 (3.2)
Impairments due to a mental disorder	39 (2.9)
Sexual orientation	
Hetero	1193 (88.2)
LGB	123 (9.1)
Special programme	
Working student	165 (12.2)
Sports student	3 (0.2)

The survey respondents show an overrepresentation of female students since the distribution of all students is 55.3% women and 44.7% men.

Analyses were performed for each part of the questionnaire. We will not elaborate too much on the results from **part one (organizational climate)** since the factor analysis of this part showed no reliable scales. Nevertheless, students scored 6.69/10 on average for studying climate. Significant differences were only found on this score between faculties. In this part, the extent to which some groups are subject of laughter and of-fensive remarks is also measured. Below are listed the results.

Table 12: Number of offensive remarks or jokes

Offensive remarks or jokes about	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Women	650 (48%)	500 (37%)	189 (14%)	8 (0.6%)
LGBT people	715 (52.8%)	445 (32.9%)	167 (12.3%)	18 (1.3%)
People from other ethnic backgrounds	618 (45.7%)	479 (35.4%)	225 (16.6%)	26 (1.9%)
People with disabilities	842 (62.2%)	390 (28.8%)	98 (7.2%)	7 (0.5%)
Other	246 (18.2%)	59 (4.4%)	32 (2.4%)	16 (1.2%)

The most (?) insulting remarks or jokes are made about people from another ethnic background. Other people students make insulting remarks or jokes about are: French-speaking Belgians (5), students with good points (3), students with bad points (5), professors (4), men (3).

Furthermore it was checked to what extent students have contact with other students who are different from them. By contact we meant more permanent forms of working or living or studying together for example working together on a task, eating together, living together in a student home, etc. An overview is given below.

Table 13: Number of contacts with other students

How often contact with	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Seldom	Never
LGBT students	187 (13.8%)	257 (19%)	123 (9.1%)	467 (34.5%)	311 (23%)
Students from other ethnic backgrounds	432 (31.9%)	339 (25.1%)	167 (12.3%)	285 (21.1%)	124 (9.2%)
Students with disabilities	27 (2%)	86 (6.4%)	73 (5.4%)	630 (46.6%)	530 (39.2%)
Students from other social backgrounds	625 (46.2%)	344 (25.4%)	135 (10%)	191 (14.1%)	51 (3.8%)

Students have most contact with students from another social or ethnic background. They have least contact with students with disabilities.

The analysis of **part two on well-being** revealed that students generally feel good at

the university, with a score of 8.2/10 (same as personnel). The differences between faculties, between exact and human sciences, between hetero and LGB students, between age categories, and between sexes and backgrounds are insignificant. However, a considerable difference in well-being occurred between students with and without disabilities. Students with disabilities score lower. A significant difference was also found between Dutch-speaking and multilingual students, with multilingual students scoring lower. For detailed numbers and significances, refer to table 1.7 in the Appendices. Furthermore, a comparison was made between the scores on well-being and the responses on the questions concerning discrimination, intimidation and bullying. Students who reported discrimination, intimidation and/or bullying, score significantly lower on well-being than students who did not. Just over 9% of the respondents reported discrimination and such during the past year, which is less than the number for personnel. Respondents could indicate several grounds of discrimination etc. and students could quote other grounds than the ones already mentioned in the survey. Other reasons for discrimination and the like were political conviction, difference of opinion, learning disabilities, good or bad results, family situation, lifestyle and past education. The number of students reporting discrimination on the basis of background is the highest (N = 28), compared to the other grounds. Three-quarters of those respondents (N = 21) have a TMA background. The number of students who reported discrimination and such on the basis of appearance, is also high (N = 24) and 75% of them are women (N = 20). By means of cross tabs, comparisons were made between different groups concerning their reports of discrimination. A significant difference was only noted between the languages spoken at home: multilingual students (16.7%) reported more discrimination than students who speak Dutch (7.2%) or no Dutch at all (9.7%). There was also a difference between women and men in reporting discrimination (10.7% of resp. vs. 7.6%) but this difference is not significant ($p = 0.064$). Respondents indicated that they suffer mostly from discrimination by fellow students, followed by academic personnel. Refer to table 1.8 in the Appendices for an overview of grounds for discrimination, intimidation and bullying.

In general, students showed a positive attitude towards diversity and equal opportunities, as measured in **part three (attitudes to equal opportunities)**. The average score is 25.4, but this only represents the respondents who gave their opinion on all items (N = 624). This score means a positive attitude since it is closer to 15 (the best score = very positive attitude) than to 60 (the worst score = very negative attitude). For an overview of the responses on the separate items, refer to table 1.9 in the Appendices. More than half of the students responded at least once with 'no opinion'. This is particularly the case for the items about the advantages of diversity and the efforts for equal opportunities. When looking at the items separately, we notice that only a minority (40%) want diversity to be incorporated in the curriculum in order to raise understanding about the issue. An even smaller minority (31.1%) said diversity at the VUB was one of the reasons for choosing this university. A positive result is that more than 90% of the students endorse the university's mission statement. There is no significant statistical difference on this scale when comparing the overall score between faculties, exact versus human sciences, hetero versus LGB students, Belgian versus

other backgrounds, languages and disabilities. There is however a significant difference between the sexes, with female students scoring lower than male students and hence showing a more positive attitude towards diversity and equal opportunities ($U = 36775$; $p = 0.001$). Refer to table 1.10 in the Appendices for more details.

On the scale about **attitudes towards projects and initiatives**, the students ($N = 713$) score an average of 17.3, which shows that the respondents consider the projects and initiatives to be important since it is closer to 9 (best score = respondents think all the projects are very important) than to 36 (worst score = respondents think all the projects are very unimportant). Again, more than half of the students answered at least once with 'no opinion'. Significant statistical differences were found between faculties, with engineers according the least importance to the initiatives. A significant difference is also noted between different ethnic backgrounds, with students from a Belgian background scoring the highest (and hence according less importance) than all the other backgrounds. Hetero and LGB students differ significantly from each other on their attitudes to initiatives: LGB students consider it significantly more important. The same goes for women versus men: female students display a significantly more positive attitude than male students to initiatives and projects. There was no significant difference between students with and without disabilities on this matter, nor according to the languages spoken at home. Details about the differences between groups can be found in table 1.11 in the Appendices. When looking at the items separately, we notice that respondents attach the least importance to the LGB guide. On the other hand, the free language lessons for students are considered important to very important by 94.2% of the respondents. The item about the 1/3-2/3 gender distribution on boards and committees is considered significantly more important by female students than by male students. Furthermore, on the item about addressing different channels for getting more ethnic minorities into job vacancies, a significant difference occurred between students from different backgrounds. Students from a TMA background have the most positive attitude towards this item, especially compared to students from a Belgian background.

The frequencies (in %) of **knowledge and use of student services** are summarized in the table below. The large amount of missing responses is marked in the last column. A future survey should emphasize the importance of answering all of the items, even if the respondent does not know the service or has never used it.

The services most commonly known to students are the computer rooms and the 'self-study' centres. The trust persons and the possibility to test themselves for a learning disorder are least known by the students. The facility students use the most are the computer rooms. As a matter of fact, this facility was considered the most important by the respondents since more than 84% considers this important to very important. The service students use the least is the child care facility (1%), followed by the trust persons (1.2%). The service to which the least importance is attached is the child care facility (20% of respondents). Over 27% of the respondents did not even answer the question about the importance. When we analyse the items separately, we find that female students consider Sjerp, the self study centre, the course counsellors, study

advice and trust persons significantly more important than male students do. Significant differences between ethnic backgrounds were recorded in the area of adapted housing prices, vegetarian menus, meal cards, scholarships and loans. Students from a TMA background find this more important than students from a Belgian background. Students with disabilities accord significantly more importance to the service for disabilities than students without disabilities do.

Table 14: Knowledge and use of student services

Service	Knows the service	Has used the service	Degree of importance				Missing
			Very important	Important	Un-important	Very un-important	
Medical service	79.8	38.1	45.3	32.6	5.9	1.9	14.1
Sjerp: psychological, legal and gynaecological help, divorce reconciliation	55.9	7.5	37.5	33.4	5.8	2.4	20.6
Self study centre	83	46.6	38.9	37.5	7	1.8	14.7
Course counsellor	59.4	16.2	29.6	37.1	6.9	1.5	24.7
Study advice	73.5	19	36.2	35.6	6.2	2	19.8
Ombudsman	68.2	6.1	44.9	29.4	3.7	1.1	20.8
Service for top-class sport students	55.5	1.6	14.5	42	14.8	4	24.6
Service for disabilities	40.6	2.6	39.3	31.4	1.7	0.7	26.7
Late library opening hours	70	43.8	48.8	26.7	6.8	1.1	16.3
Computer rooms	83.9	64.8	61.7	22.5	1.8	0.5	13.2
Housing service	73.1	25.3	36.6	36.6	5.1	1.1	20.4
Adapted housing prices	69.5	21.1	52.8	22.8	4.4	2.2	17.5
Job service	58.2	12.6	21.5	40.4	11.9	2	23.9
Child care	42.8	1	20.4	32.2	15.2	4.8	27.1
Sports facilities	76.5	38.7	38.1	34.8	8	1.2	17.7
Vegetarian menu	76.2	33.2	31.3	35.4	12.5	3.5	17
Exam facilities for disabled students	34	2.7	41.8	27.3	2.1	0.6	28.1

Meal card	70.9	19.2	37.7	31.9	9.2	1.6	19.5
Scholarship	76	19.8	58.5	20	1.9	0.9	18.4
Loans	36.6	5	34	28.2	7.4	1.4	28.8
Reduced price at MIVB	75.9	40.4	51.5	24.9	5.1	1.3	17.1
Trust persons	32.1	1.2	37.7	29.1	4.1	0.7	28.1
Testing for learning disability	24	1.6	26.5	31.4	10.7	1.9	29.3

Just over 14% (N = 199) of the respondents used the **open question** to make a remark. The remarks were categorized into the following subjects:

- Positive remarks concerning the diversity policy, services and/or initiatives and general diversity at the VUB: 22 remarks were about the fact that respondents considered the initiatives or policy in general very positive. Some respondents said they thought it is important that the university has such a policy and carries out initiatives and projects. They think the university is doing a good job.
- Remarks concerning LGB people at the VUB: (N = 6) some remarks were made by LGB students. Most remarks were about the LGB guide or the fact that some questions in the survey about LGB were hard to answer since LGB people are not 'visible'.
- Suggestions concerning diversity: a majority of the respondents (N = 84) used the open question to make suggestions. These suggestions could be very specific, like better administration, halal food in the restaurant, improvement of the job service, more communication about particular services, less/more use of English, less/more use of ICT, the organization of theme-days about diversity, including a course about diversity in the curriculum, arranging a room for people from different religions, active punishment of racist behaviour, the organization of more debates, etc. Other suggestions concerned diversity in general, like getting more students from other ethnic backgrounds into university or getting more women and ethnic minorities into high academic positions.
- Criticism about diversity: 33 respondents expressed their reservations about diversity and initiatives relating to it. One common remark concerns the use of quotas or positive discrimination. Others stated that nothing should be done about diversity, considering diversity a hot topic that annoys most people. Another classic one-liner is that everyone should be treated equally and that differences should be ignored.
- Remarks/suggestions about working students or students over 26 years old: 12 remarks were made about this matter. The general idea is that the facilities for evening students should be larger and should make more use of ICT. Furthermore, respondents also stressed the fact that students over 25 cannot use particular facilities (e.g. reduced prices for public transport).
- Remarks about the social background of students: 4 remarks were made about the fact that studying at university is hard for those who come from a family with a low income.
- Remarks about the survey: 15 remarks were made about the survey itself. Most

remarks were about the contents of the questions. A few respondents stated that they were curious about the results.

- Negative remarks about services, initiatives or personnel at the VUB: 13 students made remarks about services that do not work well or about professors who are not sympathetic enough.
- Anecdotes: a few respondents used the open questions to tell a (personal) anecdote that had to do with diversity.
- Respondents who give their definition of diversity: 2 respondents gave their own definition of diversity. *“For me, diversity entails that everyone gets along with each other without problems and without the difference being notable”*. *“Tolerance and the possibility to discuss everything”*.

When the **correlations between the different parts** were analysed, we could see quite a positive correlation between the two attitude parts ($\delta = 0.543$, $p < 0.001$). There is also a smaller positive correlation between well-being and climate ($\delta = 0.351$, $p < 0.001$). The other correlations are below $\delta = 0.2$.

Conclusions

The results described cannot be generalized to the whole student population since only 16% of students completed the survey. This low response percentage may imply that students are not interested in the subjects of diversity and equal opportunities.

Parallels are found between the results of students and personnel. Their feeling of well-being seems to be the same and students who report discrimination and such feel less good than those who do not. Concerning the reporting of discrimination and the like, we noticed that language also plays a role in this. It may indicate that language is an issue. A positive signal is that a large majority of the students find the language lessons important to very important. Another parallel with personnel is that the target groups of projects and initiatives consider these projects very important.

It seems that students do not always have an opinion, even if it is about matters that concern them. This was expressed in the parts where attitudes were measured and in the part about services for students, where sometimes up to 28% did not answer the question. On the other hand, a lot of suggestions were made in the open questions, which shows that the respondents are concerned about this subject. Personnel tended to give more criticism than real suggestions for improvement.

4.3. Academic staff at two foreign universities

Part one (about organizational climate) of the personnel survey was tested at the universities of our transnational project partners in the UK and Spain. The validation of the scales by means of factor analysis has been explained earlier. The survey was completed by 252 respondents. It is not known to how many persons the link to the survey

was sent. The table below lists the different characteristics of the respondents.

Table 15: Student characteristics (UK and Spain)

Characteristic	Absolute number N (%)
Gender	
Female	117 (46.4%)
Male	117 (46.4%)
No answer	18 (7.1%)
Age	
18-24 years	5 (2%)
25-30 years	29 (11.5%)
31-40 years	84 (33.3%)
41-50 years	66 (26.2%)
51-60 years	42 (16.7%)
Over 60 years	8 (3.2%)
No answer	18 (7.1%)
Nationality	
Spanish	96 (38.1%)
UK	150 (59.5%)
Other	4 (1.6%)
No answer	2 (0.8%)
Disabilities	
Learning disability	2 (0.8%)
Physical disability	5 (2%)
Chronic medical condition	3 (1.2%)
Impairment due to mental disorders	1 (0.4%)
Sexual orientation	
Hetero	207 (82.1%)
LGB	11 (4.4%)
No answer	34 (13.5%)

As with the Belgian survey, comparisons were made on several variables between the different groups. Significant differences were found on the total score of organizational climate and on three subparts of the scale. These results are quite obvious since two different organizations in two different countries are compared. It is not relevant to discuss this any further. A more interesting result, though, is what both nationalities think about the item 'Women and men get equal opportunities concerning their careers'. The respondents from the UK marked a significantly lower score than their colleagues from Spain. A significant difference was also found on this item when comparing women and men. Women score substantially lower than men. This might be the reason for the lower score in the UK since 97 women from the UK completed the sur-

vey, compared to only 18 women in Spain. There was a significant difference between women and men on the ‘welcoming and integration’ and ‘superior’s openness to EO’ scales. Men perceive the welcoming and integration of newcomers less positively than women and women perceive less openness from their superior towards equal opportunities than men do. Another significant difference can be noted between hetero and LGB personnel on the scale about the influence of informal networks. LGB staff seems to experience more influence from informal networks than hetero staff does. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in how the different age categories experience the welcoming and integration of new co-workers. Personnel in the 31-40 age category are less positive about this than personnel from 18 to 24 years old. Details about these results can be found in table 1.12 in the Appendices.

4.4. Students at the European University College Brussels EHSAL

The student survey was also tested by one of the project partners in Brussels, EHSAL. The survey was announced by means of posters in the lifts, messages on the intranet and the official notice board and a reminder in the student newspaper. The survey followed the same outline as the one tested at the VUB, except for a few changes necessary to fit the setting (e.g. other services than the ones offered at the VUB). The EHSAL also added a few questions considering personal characteristics. An additional question was asked about parents’ educational level and two other questions about the extent to which studying represents a financial challenge for the student and his/her parents.

The survey was completed by 413 respondents. Below is a table with their characteristics. In the following paragraphs only fragments of the results will be discussed.

Table 16: Student characteristics at EHSAL

Characteristics	Absolute number N (%)
Gender	
Female	243 (63.8%)
Male	137 (36%)
Transgender	1 (0.3%)
Age	
<25 years	349 (93.1%)
25-29 years	17 (4.5%)
30-39 years	6 (1.6%)
40-49 years	3 (0.8%)
50-60 years	0 (0%)

Language at home	
Dutch	304 (73.6%)
Dutch + other language	61 (14.8%)
No Dutch	48 (11.6%)
Ethnic background	
Belgian background	330 (79.9%)
Background from neighbouring country	11 (2.7%)
Background from rest of EU	14 (3.4%)
TMA background	9 (2.2%)
Colonial background	5 (1.2%)
Other	8 (1.9%)
Disabilities	
	14.1%
Learning disorder	31 (8.9%)
Physical disability	5 (1.4%)
Chronic, medical condition	8 (2.3%)
Impairment due to mental disorders	5 (1.4%)
Special status	
Working student	11 (2.7%)
Top-class sport student	3 (0.7%)
Artist	
Student with medical background	7 (1.7%)
Student representative or student with political mandate	16 (3.9%)
Sexual orientation	
Hetero	369 (89.3%)
LGB	44 (10.7%)
Highest education parents	
No school education	
Primary education	
Special education	
Lower secondary education	
Higher secondary education	
Technical secondary education	
Higher education (1 cycle)	
Higher education (2 cycles)	
University	
No idea	
No answer	

Almost 25% of the respondents indicated that studying is a financial challenge for them. Half of the respondents (48.5%) stated that studying is a financial challenge for their parents. Parents with a higher education of 1 cycle are most represented. Another striking result is the number of students with a learning disability (8.9%), which is much higher than the number at the VUB (3.3%).

The researchers at EHSAL⁷³ included the variables from part two and three for their factor analysis. This resulted in a 'tolerance' scale (with items from part three) and a 'climate' scale (with items from part one and two). Reliability analyses showed that the climate scale had a reliability of $\alpha = 0.894$ and the tolerance scale scored $\alpha = 0.869$, which indicated a very good reliability. Refer to table 1.13 in the Appendices for a detailed factor analysis and an overview of the items that constitute the scales. Scores ranging from 0 (low) to 100 (high) were calculated for each respondent on the two scales. The mean of all respondents for the tolerance scale is 65.4 out of 100 which can be considered sufficient. The mean of the climate scale is 73.8 out of 100.

This survey also measured the extent to which some groups are subject to laughter and offensive remarks. The results are listed below.

Table 17: The extent to which some groups are subject to laughter or offensive remarks (EHSAL)

Offensive remarks or jokes about	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Women	164 (40.8%)	149 (37.1%)	80 (19.9%)	9 (2.2%)
LGB persons	180 (44.6%)	150 (37.1%)	61 (15.1%)	32 (7.9%)
Persons from other ethnic backgrounds	139 (34.3%)	155 (38.3%)	79 (19.5%)	32 (7.9%)
Persons with disabilities	209 (51.9%)	150 (37.2%)	36 (8.9%)	8 (2%)
Others	47 (67.1%)	12 (17.1%)	4 (5.7%)	7 (1%)

We notice that, like at the VUB, most insulting remarks or jokes are made about people from another ethnic background. A majority of the respondents (89%) report that jokes about persons with disabilities are rarely ever made. Here also, other students make insulting remarks or jokes about French-speaking people, about students who do well in their studies or students with bad points, or about teachers.

We checked to what extent students have contact with other students who are different from them. An overview is given below.

Table 18: The extent to which students have contact with other students different from themselves (EHSAL)

How often contact with	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
LGBT students	112 (27.6%)	76 (18.7%)	27 (6.7%)	115 (28.3%)	76 (18.7%)
Students from other ethnic background	96 (23.6%)	86 (21.2%)	42 (10.3%)	132 (32.5%)	50 (12.3%)
Students with disabilities	21 (5.2%)	22 (5.5%)	28 (7%)	191 (47.5%)	140 (34.8%)
Students from other social background	160 (39.6%)	90 (22.3%)	56 (13.9%)	80 (19.8%)	18 (4.5%)

⁷³ Dries Berings, Tom Colpaert.

Students have most contact with students from another social background. Students have the least contact with students with disabilities. Another striking result is that there is an equal amount of students who have daily contact with LGB students and of those who seldom have contact with LGB students.

The analysis of **part two on well-being** revealed that students feel moderately good, with a score of 8.03/10. Like at the VUB, just over 9% of the students report discrimination, intimidation and/or aggression. Intimidation on grounds of appearance and ideas are most common. Aggression was reported once, on unknown grounds. Mostly fellow students seem to discriminate and intimidate (44%), compared to teaching staff (30%) and administrative staff (25.7%).

On the scale about **attitude towards projects and initiatives**, students of EHSAL (N = 165) score an average of 21.8, which shows that the respondents find the projects and initiatives moderately important since it is closer to 9 (best score = respondents find all the projects very important) than to 36 (worst score = respondents find all the projects very unimportant). As sixty percent of the respondents declared having 'no opinion' at least once, only 40% is included in the score mentioned above. A significant difference was found between the sexes when comparing this score. Women attach more importance to these initiatives than men do. Hetero and LGB students also differ significantly in the extent to which they attach importance to initiatives. LGB students consider them more important. When we look at some items separately, we find that female students find the 1/3-2/3 gender directive on boards and committees significantly more important than male students. Like at the VUB, an overwhelming majority (91.8%) considers language lessons to be important to very important. They attach the least importance to the LGB guide.

Concerning **student services at EHSAL**, study support and the use of laptops are most commonly known to students: 75% and 72.6% of the respondents respectively know these facilities. The service least known to respondents is the possibility to check for a learning disability: only 27.6% of the respondents know this facility. The service that is most used by the respondents are the computer facilities (94.4% of the respondents use them). It is also the facility that gets the most importance. A lot of importance is also attached to the centre for study and psychological support. The least importance is attached to the vegetarian menu.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

After several tests of the personnel survey as well as the student survey, we can conclude that this is an instrument that takes into account the different aspects of diversity in an organization. It indicates the level of equal opportunities and diversity matters the organization has reached. It also raises the respondents' awareness since they have to think about issues they may not have thought about before. However, the first part

about organizational climate seems more reliable in the personnel survey than in the student survey. This may be explained by the fact that a working climate differs from a studying climate, even if it is part of the same organization.

The researchers at EHSAL experimented with the student survey for grouping scales into a climate scale. Future users of this instrument are free to adapt it in the way it would best fit their organization and the way they think about diversity.

5.1. Transferability to other organizations and settings

The test at EHSAL perfectly illustrates the fact that the survey can be used in every higher education setting after adapting some items to the setting. We do not recommend adding more parts considering the substantial length of the survey. Parts of the survey can also be omitted. Concerning part one of the personnel survey however, prudence is called for as regards deleting items since it will influence the reliability of the scales. In our test with VUB personnel, we only deleted the items about flexible working hours and working at home for some groups of personnel since we knew the items did not apply to them. Reliability analyses showed that this scale was still reliable, so these items can be deleted if necessary. Other than that, users are free to adapt the other parts (e.g. attitudes to diversity and equal opportunities). Some parts will have to be changed, like those about projects and initiatives and about facilities at the organization. In our opinion, the personnel survey can be used in other non-profit or even profit organizations. What matters more is the size of the organization because a small amount of respondents will hamper the comparison of groups of people, especially since this instrument is also about minority groups like, for example, LGB personnel.

Despite its flexibility one should also not blindly take over the instrument when performing the survey in another organization. The fact that very personal and private information is being asked may cause a problem in certain organizations. Therefore it is important to explain very carefully why the survey is being held and to emphasize the anonymity of the personal information gathered. One may consider running the survey in a larger framework of initiatives or activities concerning equal opportunities and diversity in the organization.

Finally, it is important to get as many responses as possible to come to a general view of the organization. The non-responses should also be taken into account. Reasons for not filling out the survey may be a lack of time and too much work already. But it may also be a sign that the people in the organization are not concerned with the theme of diversity and equal opportunities.

Chapter 2

Career paths: recruitment – promotion – dismissal

Sigried Lievens (UGent)
Hanneke Pyck (UGent)
Liselotte Vandebussche (UGent)

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to study the inflow, through-flow and outflow of female and male academics at Ghent University (UGent). This kind of research is still in its early stages at UGent. To be able to use the results as a basis for further research about the career development of men and women at UGent, it was therefore important for the researchers to focus on a broad research population.

Sigried Lievens studied the inflow at UGent (part 2 Inflow: Survey of final-year students). Since a large part of the inflow into the academic staff of Ghent University comes directly from the student population, a large-scale survey was organized among final-year students. This chapter will examine the students' wishes and expectations with respect to academic careers as well as the existing perceptions of scientists and their career patterns. Lievens further analysed the potential opportunities for inflow and through-flow by screening the vacancy policy at Ghent University (part 3 Inflow/through-flow: Vacancies).

The real opportunities for through-flow were further studied by Hanneke Pyck (part 4 Through-flow: Promotion of women). She conducted a survey among the personnel of UGent into the various aspects of a (scientific) career. This survey contains questions about the general experiences of male and female staff and about their experiences with and perception of the existence of a gender problem at Ghent University.

Finally, Liselotte Vandebussche explored the outflow at UGent (part 5 Outflow: Exit interviews). She developed a guideline for exit interviews, enabling the analysis of the reasons why men and women end their careers at universities in general and at UGent in particular.

1.1. Problem definition

The number of female students has increased faster than the number of male students over the past few years. Moreover, the students with the highest grades are often women. In medical and social sciences and human sciences in particular, it is no longer exceptional for female students to outnumber male students. However, only a few of the best female students are recruited as academic staff while the smaller population of male students produces the majority of academic staff members.

Both national and international statistics have proven that the number of female academic staff decreases as the academic career progresses. In other words, the higher the level of the academic career, the smaller the number of female staff members (also referred to as ‘the leaky pipeline’)⁷⁴. Therefore, there is no question about the dissimilarity in the distribution of the sexes throughout the hierarchical system. The undeniable consequence of the current reward and recognition systems is a loss of knowledge and quality. In order to both increase and preserve the level of knowledge and quality within Ghent University and other universities, this project wants to stimulate the inflow and through-flow of female academics on all levels and within all disciplines.

This module mainly aims at creating a research methodology and policy tool that will enable researchers at UGent and other institutions to carry out comparative studies about the career chances of women, both repeatedly and on a long-term basis. By providing more insight into the problems of female academics, the reasons why men/women apply for certain positions/grants and the factors that can stimulate women to apply more often, will facilitate the implementation of the guidelines which are to emerge from this research.

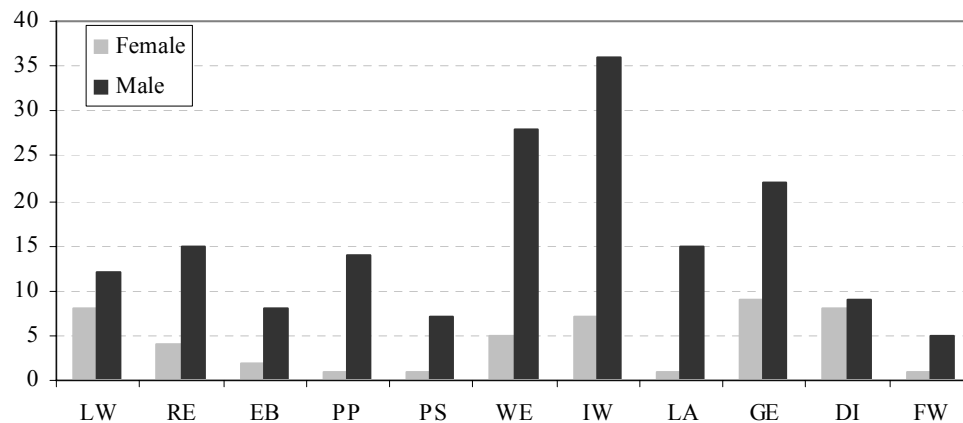
1.2. Context UGent

Research into the inflow, through-flow and outflow of women is still in its early stages at UGent. In 2007, the university’s academic staff consists of 40% women and 60% men. However, the percentage of female researchers differs strongly depending on the various academic statutes and ranks. An equal proportion of men (52%) and women (48%) is found within the pre-doctoral group (this is the total group of junior researchers who do not have a PhD degree). The percentage of women declines to 36% in the

⁷⁴ Although the writers of the parts of this chapter have used a very different set of references, there were a number of studies that could be used as a background for the module as a whole. These studies focus among other things on the international comparison of the number of women in academic circles, the influence of scientific excellence, the academic policy concerning publications, the experiences of female academics and the glass ceiling. A number of these studies are well known and are repeatedly used as a background for research about the academic world: She Figures (2003, 2006), the Etan-report (2000), the Enwise-report (2003), the Helsinki-report (2002), Gender and Excellence in the Making (2004) en the Gender Equality-report (2005).

postdoctoral group and 17% in the ZAP⁷⁵ group (i.e. the top of the academic ladder; namely all lecturers, senior lecturers, full professors and senior full professors). Consequently, women are underrepresented at the top levels of UGent.

A strong gender imbalance is also found among young professors (up to 40 years old): only 22% of them are women. So even in this younger age cohort, gender still makes a big difference. An exception to the rule is the faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Unlike the other faculties, this one has a more or less balanced proportion of young male and female professors. Although the percentage of female graduates is very high (at least 75%) in the faculties of Psychology and Educational Sciences and Pharmaceutical Sciences, there is no new generation of young female professors. Thus, the under-representation of female researchers at UGent is not merely a matter of time, there is a promotion problem for women at UGent as well.



Faculties at Ghent University:

LW: Arts and Philosophy, RE: Law, EB: Economics and Business Administration, PP: Psychology and Educational Sciences, PS: Political and Social Sciences, WE: Sciences, IW: Engineering, LA: Bioscience Engineering, GE: Medicine and Health Sciences, DI: Veterinary Medicine, & FW: Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Figure 1: Professors at UGent 40 years and younger, by faculty and sex (head count on March 12, 2007)

⁷⁵ Autonomous Academic Staff (*Zelfstandig Academisch Personeel* in Dutch). This includes all (senior) full professors and (senior) lecturers.

2. Inflow: survey of final-year students

Sigried Lievens

2.1. Introduction

Whereas the inflow at Ghent University has already been examined in Verlinden & Pyck's research on PhD-students (2005)⁷⁶, no scientific research has been conducted on the phase preceding this commencement of employment. Since a large part of the inflow into the academic staff of Ghent University comes directly from the student population, it is extremely important to explore the wishes and expectations of this group of potential researchers. Consequently, the research population has to include students who are interested in an academic career, but who do not achieve this goal for various reasons. Hence, this study is a supplement to the research on PhD-students, which only examined students who were actually taking a doctor's degree. Given the fact that male or female students may not aspire to a job at Ghent University because they have the wrong perceptions or because they are misinformed, corrective measures can and should be taken.

This part of the module aims at analysing the wishes and expectations of the university's final-year students regarding their future careers. Additionally, the study focuses on the extent to which the students' expectations correspond with the reality of an academic career.

2.2. Literature study

Each university's corporate culture is strongly influenced by national trends and practices. To develop the survey it was therefore of great importance to analyse national studies and studies in Dutch. Obviously, the existing international studies were useful both as background information for the general gender problems in the academic world and as a point of comparison with the Flemish situation. The studies used to develop and analyse the survey can be divided into three groups:

1. studies on the ways in which boys and girls choose disciplines;
2. studies on the career policies (in-, through- and outflow) in the academic world;
3. studies on the positions of women at universities or research centres.

The first group of studies focuses on **the study choices of boys and girls in grammar schools**. Hence, the focal point is the horizontal segregation in the educational system. However, this module does not seek to offer solutions for the under-representation of women or men in certain disciplines as such. The aim is rather to paint a

⁷⁶ Verlinden, A. e.a. (2005). *Doctoreren in Vlaanderen: Verslag van de survey aan de Universiteit Gent en de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*.

broader picture of the students' expectations with respect to a career at Ghent University. Even though the gender issue will be used as the basic principle, attention was also paid to the relevant differences between the various faculties. This first group of studies is mainly relevant as background information for policymaking. Additionally, most of these studies enquire into the personal and social structures determining the choices people make. Since these structures may play a decisive role in students' job choices, this group of studies also constitutes a valuable addition to the other two types of research. Consequently, several aspects of the motivation psychology and sociology of Van Aerschot⁷⁷, Hooimaert⁷⁸ and Lacante⁷⁹ were taken into consideration during the development of the survey.

Personal motives for choosing a specific discipline include: personal advantages (high salary), social success (prestige, appreciation from friends and family), and sense of duty and anxiety for punishment or failure⁸⁰. In order to find out which personal factors are decisive, these aspects have to be analysed in the survey on the students' career expectations. One hypothesis is that male students may be led more easily by the material advantages of a career, while female students value social motives and opportunities for self-fulfilment higher⁸¹.

The second group of studies focuses on **the advantages and disadvantages of an academic career**. Generally, attention is paid to various target groups, such as men and women, various personnel statutes, new employees, through-flow and outflow. Consequently, these studies cannot be listed as specific gender research. In the last decennia, this type of research has been conducted in almost all European countries. However, because of the cultural context of Ghent University, two Flemish studies have been chosen as basic literature to shed more light on the academic problems in Flanders, i.e. the research on PhD-students by Verlinden et al.⁸² and the research 'Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep'⁸³ (own translation: 'Science between Vocation and Profession').

The PhD-research investigated beginning researchers and PhD-students at Ghent University and the K.U.Leuven. One of the objectives was to map the inflow at Flemish universities. By means of a survey, the researchers also examined the wishes, expecta-

⁷⁷ Van Aerschot, M. e.a. (2003). *Gezocht: ingenieur (m/v): een onderzoek naar studiekeuze vanuit genderperspectief*. Antwerpen: Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid UA-LUC.

⁷⁸ Hooimaert, J. (1999). *Keuzebegeleiding bij de overstap van secundair naar hoger onderwijs*. Deurne: Wolters Plantyn Educatieve Uitgevers.

⁷⁹ Janssens, R. (2003). *De relatie tussen geslacht/gender en onderwijs*, In: De metsenaere, M. en K. Celis, *Gegenderd onderwijs*. Brussel: VUBPress: 59-102.

⁸⁰ Hooimaert, *op. cit.*, p. 11-12.

⁸¹ Deleu, L.. *Studiekeuze door een genderbril: Man wil verdienen, vrouw wil dienen*, [www.veto.be/veto](http://www.veto.be/veto;); Janssens (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 82.

⁸² Verlinden et al. (2005), *op. cit.*

⁸³ De Gier, E. e.a. (2001). *Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep. Verslag van een verkennend onderzoek naar de (on)aantrekkelijkheid van een loopbaan in wetenschappelijk onderzoek*. Amsterdam.

tions and experiences of their research population. A couple of years prior to the PhD-research, the SISWO (the institute for social studies) performed a tentative study on the various aspects of an academic career⁸⁴. In addition to the inflow, the researchers studied the through- and outflow at universities and research centres. Furthermore, special attention was paid to the position of female researchers in each phase of the academic career. Even though the method used was mainly qualitative, this research was very valuable for our survey. After all, the results on the terms of employment, the working conditions, the employer-employee relation, the personal motivation and the content of an academic position could be used to draw up a list of the advantages and disadvantages of an academic career.

Contrary to these studies, the third group of studies explicitly focuses on **the gender issues in the academic world**. Apart from several international comparative studies, various national studies were used as background information for the survey. Margo Brouns, among others, has repeatedly denounced the issues faced by female researchers at Dutch universities⁸⁵. Equally important for this chapter are the reports on equal opportunities from the Catholic University of Leuven (1999 and 2004)⁸⁶.

Whereas the results of the second and third group of studies shed light on the reality of an academic career, the student survey focuses on their ideas about an ideal working environment and employer. By comparing both results, an analysis can be made of the discrepancy between the students' expectations on the one hand and the actual experiences of academic researchers on the other.

2.3. Process report

Ghent University's Advisory Centre for Students is responsible for general study and career advice⁸⁷. The Centre organizes workshops about study advice and future career opportunities for students from various faculties. Another task of the Centre is permanent evaluation, surveying students on various themes and creating statistics on the student population. Nevertheless, no research had yet been done on the way in which male and female students make their study and career choices. Although the Centre both publishes a brochure on taking a doctor's degree and organizes annual information sessions on the prospects of writing a PhD, the matter had not yet been studied from a gender perspective either. As a result, there were no current data available on the students' wishes and expectations with respect to an academic career. Hence, the

⁸⁴ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*

⁸⁵ Benschop, Y. & M. Brouns (2003). 'Crumbling Ivory Towers: Academic Organizing and its Gender Effects'. In: *Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 10, nr. 2; Hoving & Brouns (1998). *Women in Science and Humanities: the Difference that Makes the Difference*. Utrecht: NVG.

⁸⁶ Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid, K.U.Leuven (1999 and 2004).

⁸⁷ <http://www.ugent.be/en/prospectstud/studycareerservice.htm>.

best method was a large-scale survey into different themes relating to an academic career.

2.3.1. Choice of methodology

In order to reach as many students as possible, the survey was conducted in close co-operation with the Information and Communication Technology Department (DICT) and, more specifically, with the Curios-team responsible for Minerva. Minerva is the internal Internet learning environment, used by lecturers to post messages, teaching materials and tests for their students. Since Minerva is used regularly to conduct surveys, the students are familiar with the system. The disadvantages of this system are outweighed by the advantage of a quicker and more accurate processing of the data.

Advantages

1. Because students have to work with Minerva outside the lessons, it is possible to reach a large group of students without giving up teaching time.
2. As Minerva is both available and widely used at Ghent University, it is possible to reach students from all faculties at the same time.
3. The results are immediately available in an Excel table. As the data can easily be converted to SPSS⁸⁸, this substantially simplifies the data processing compared to the analysis of paper surveys.
4. Throughout the period in which the survey is available for students, the IT specialists can monitor the state of affairs. If the response were to fall short, alternative ways of questioning can quickly be implemented.
5. In contrast to other on-line systems, surveys using Minerva are free of charge for employees at Ghent University.
6. In contrast to other on-line systems, the IT specialists are permanently available to provide more information or technical assistance.
7. The questions of the survey can be answered through a link on the website of Ghent University. As a result, no e-mail addresses were used, thus guaranteeing the respondents' anonymity.
8. Most previous surveys through Minerva have proven to generate a sufficiently high response to come up with representative results.

Disadvantages

1. Minerva is not used equally intensively in each field or year of study. Consequently, not all students are as familiar with the system as they should be. It is therefore quite conceivable that not all students of the research population are in fact addressed. Nonetheless, not all students can be reached either by distributing paper versions of a survey during the lectures or through student organisations. Furthermore, Minerva is increasingly being used in most faculties for the annual evaluation of lecturers. Most professors encourage students to present papers and exercises this way as well. It is therefore most likely that final-year students (i.e. the research pop-

⁸⁸ Superior Performing Software Systems: software package for statistical analysis.

ulation of this survey) have already used Minerva to hand in homework, evaluations, etc. Therefore, it can be assumed that they are familiar enough with the system to answer the survey adequately.

2. Since developing and sending surveys through Minerva is still in its early stages, not all potential types of questions are available in the existing model. While developing the survey, a close cooperation with DICT was therefore imperative.
3. Because the survey is only accessible through a link from the Ghent University website, it is not possible to increase the number of responses by sending a second reminder.

2.3.2. Target group

This study focuses on the extent to which the students' expectations correspond with the reality of an academic career. Because these questions could only be answered by students who already had a certain knowledge of the working principles and structure of Ghent University, it was decided to address only students in their second to last year of study (from here referred to as 'final-year students'). This choice can also be motivated by the following arguments:

- A lot of students end their study prematurely after the first or (to a lesser degree second) year of study.
- The final-year students have a certain familiarity with Ghent University and are thus able to hold an opinion on its academic system. They make contacts with the academic staff during the lectures or during office hours. A majority of this research population has already had personal contacts with lecturers regarding their dissertation. Therefore, they are able to give a balanced judgement on the academic staff's daily tasks.
- Many final-year students have already contemplated their various career opportunities. Some of them might even have taken steps for or made thorough inquiry into a potential (academic) career.
- The majority of the inflow into PhD's or academic projects comes directly from final-year students. Consequently, professors already may have approached certain students from the research population about a future cooperation. Furthermore, the Advisory Centre for Students organizes information sessions on various career opportunities for this target group.
- It was decided to include students in their second to last year of study, because the students have to determine the subject of their dissertation in the course of this year. Most students approach lecturers in this phase, which means that this is the best moment to alert them to their options on an academic level.
- Finally, final-year students are more acquainted with Minerva than students in the first years, which is a decisive factor for the survey's success.

Since the distribution of male and female academic staff strongly depends on the faculty in question, the students of all eleven faculties of Ghent University were questioned.

2.3.3. Timing

Because the research group consisted exclusively of students, the academic calendar had to be taken into account when determining the start and end date of the survey. It was decided to make the survey available from 14 November 2006 till 18 December 2006. This period was chosen because:

1. The academic year has progressed sufficiently to acquaint the students with Minerva.
2. It precedes the Christmas holiday. Hence, the students can still use the university's IT facilities.
3. It precedes the first study and examination period. During this period, Minerva is extensively used by students to catch up with the lectures or to improve their notes.

The expected end date was 18 December 2006, but a large-scale survey from the Central Administration on the students' restaurants ended all small-scale surveys early.

The surveys had their highest response rate in the initial period. In the beginning of December, we still received about thirty new completed surveys a day. Nonetheless, the survey was definitively closed on 4 December. The results were gathered in an Excel table by the IT experts and sent to the project researcher by e-mail.

2.3.4. Analysis

Knowledge about the real number of students was needed to calculate the respondents' representativeness. The Department of Educational Affairs of UGent was asked to provide the student statistics of the academic year 2006-2007, sex-segregated and divided into study levels (i.e. bachelors and masters) and into the various faculties.

2.4. Instrument and case study results

2.4.1. Instrument: Survey of final-year students

For the instrument: see Tool Annex.

The development and division of the questions was preceded by a thorough reading of the aforementioned studies (see 2.2. Literature Study). To limit the time needed to fill in the survey, it was decided to use mainly closed questions. The survey was subdivided into a number of themes, including the choice of a certain discipline and the choice to study at Ghent University, as well as the students' perceptions and expectations about an academic career. These themes were preceded by a number of general questions concerning the respondents' sex, nationality, age, year of study and field of study. Because the new BaMa-reform creates a whole range of possible subject combi-

nations, it was decided to use the factor 'faculty' instead of 'discipline'. This option still enables the division of students into 'typically' male and female fields of study. Moreover, it facilitates the comparison with the real number of male and female students in each faculty.

2.4.1.1. Studying at Ghent University

The first theme deals with the experience of studying at Ghent University. The specific questions were based on a thorough reading of studies with reference to the study and career choices of boys and girls. Marlies Lacante divides young people's motivation to choose a certain discipline or career into three groups, viz. personal motives, economic motives, and social/altruistic motives⁸⁹. According to Lacante, the deciding factors in choosing a discipline are the personal beliefs and the urge to develop one's personality, talents and abilities. Although these factors re-occur in Van Aerschot's study, other motives are thought to play a more significant role, such as a clear interest in the subjects, talents, job security and a childhood dream⁹⁰. Van Aerschot also analysed the motives behind the choices male and female students make. In her opinion, girls are on the look-out for disciplines or jobs with an emphasis on social aspects (e.g. direct contact with people, helping others), whereas boys are rather led by promotion prospects. Furthermore, boys take into account – more than girls do – their grammar school's study results and the status of a certain discipline or career⁹¹.

Hoornaert distinguishes between individual (internal) and social (external) factors⁹². The choices one makes are largely determined by the internal aspects one attributes to a discipline or career – such as the opportunities for self-fulfilment – as well as the accordance with one's world view and principles. Additionally, certain external factors cannot be ignored, such as the expectations of friends and family, the status of a job, the careers of parents and the attention the job gets in grammar school. Hoornaert states that, for girls, the combination of internal and external factors often results in an inner struggle, because their interests in 'softer' disciplines do not correspond with the social pressure to succeed. Likewise, boys experience more pressure to choose 'harder' disciplines leading to job opportunities with a high status. Our survey also examines to what extent these individual and social factors really influence the study choices of the students at Ghent University.

In Flanders, the academic staff is often employed in the university that they attended as students themselves. Therefore, the survey not only contains questions about the interest in an academic career, but also probes the students' expectations and wishes of Ghent University as an employer. Obviously, the results were sex-segregated in order

⁸⁹ Deleu (2005), *op. cit.*: Lacante.

⁹⁰ Van Aerschot et al. (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 65-66.

⁹¹ Van Aerschot et al. (2003), *op. cit.*, p. 68-70.

⁹² Hoornaert (1999), *op. cit.*, p. 18-20.

to explore whether the choices of the male and female students are in fact determined by different motives and factors.

2.4.1.2. Career expectations

The various theories on personal and social motives could also be applied to the survey's second section 'career expectations'. To develop the second theme, the results from the research on PhD-students⁹³ and the study 'Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep'⁹⁴ were taken into account. That way, the students' general expectations concerning job opportunities could be compared to their perception of a career at Ghent University. The study 'Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep' noted that young researchers, though very motivated at the beginning of their career, often feel disappointed with the daily routine. The discouragement is not so much the result of the nature or content of the job, but rather of the disappointing terms of employment, the working conditions and the competitive atmosphere⁹⁵.

Both studies discuss the advantages and disadvantages of an academic career in great detail. To summarize, it may be stated that scientists choose an academic career for various reasons:

- fascination for a specific research subject;
- the freedom to develop an idea;
- the freedom to plan one's day (e.g. flexibility, gliding office hours, teleworking) enables a satisfying work-family combination;
- the social recognition of scientific research.

Potential bottlenecks, on the other hand, are:

- the ambiguous interpretation of the working conditions (in contrast to other sectors);
- the uncertain career perspective;
- the poor coaching of PhD students;
- the fierce competition between colleagues;
- the monotony of the work;
- the unexpected lack of freedom with respect to the research content;
- the lack of sufficient office space and solid office supplies;
- the publish-or-perish attitude.

Both studies also examined the best way to obtain an academic career. They unanimously list the following ways: applying for a vacant position, contacting lecturers or other staff members, excelling during lectures and thus being asked to write a PhD. In the following part, it will be examined whether the conceptualization of the students of Ghent University conforms to the findings of the aforementioned studies.

⁹³ Verlinden et al. (2005), *op. cit.*

⁹⁴ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*

⁹⁵ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*, p. 9.

2.4.2. Case study results

2.4.2.1. General observations

The first part of the survey focuses on general information, such as the students' demographical data, their faculty, the year of study and the level of commitment to student activities. The research population is composed of 9,530 students from the eleven faculties at Ghent University. Even though there is a total of 43% male and 57% female students at Ghent University, the percentage of female students increases in the last years of study. Consequently, the actual research population consists of 60% women and 40% men. On 4 December 2006, 2,691 completed surveys were registered (response of 28%). 56% of the surveys were answered by female students, 44% by male students. The 'typically female' faculties, such as the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, keep their preponderance of female students in the response group. The group of respondents belonging to the Faculty of Engineering, on the other hand, consists of 75% male and 25% female students, which corresponds with the real number of students.

It may be concluded that the response group is representative of the actual balance between male and female students. Furthermore, there is also a correspondence with the faculty's size. According to the number of students, the faculties can be divided into large (Faculties of Arts and Philosophy, of Psychology and Educational Sciences, of Medicine and Health Sciences and of Law), medium (faculties of Engineering, of Veterinary Medicine, of Political and Social Sciences and of Sciences) and small (faculties of Bioscience Engineering, of Economics and Business Administration and of Pharmaceutical Sciences) faculties. Although the response group is not an exact reproduction of the reality, this division remains largely intact.

2.4.2.2. Studying at Ghent University

The second part of the survey pays attention to both **the choice for a certain discipline** and to **the choice for Ghent University** as an institute for higher education. More than 90% of the respondents declare to be pleased with their current choice of study and believe that they are sufficiently prepared for the labour market. The students' motivations for choosing a certain discipline can be subdivided into four categories:

- external factors: teachers, family and friends have recommended this study;
- factors concerning content: interest in a certain subject or the whole discipline;
- factors concerning future opportunities: career opportunities and international mobility;
- individual factors: the prestige of the discipline, the general interests, the opportunity to develop one's personality.

The analysis shows a striking unanimity among the respondents. Consequently, the

gender differences are minimal and in most cases even insignificant. In broad terms, it can be observed that the decisive factors are those concerning the content of the study. Students mainly choose a certain discipline because they are interested in the content, not so much because someone has recommended it to them or because of promising career opportunities. These matters are closely linked to the important correlation between a certain discipline on the one hand and the student's personal interests and private life on the other. However, female students rank the opportunity to develop one's personality higher than male students. With respect to the individual factors, 'the prestige of the discipline' turns out to be the least significant; only 25% of the male and 19% of the female students confirm that this factor has played a role in their choice of study. However, the importance attached to it depends largely on the faculty to which the respondent belongs. According to 30% of the respondents from the faculties of Law, Engineering, Bioscience Engineering and Economics and Business Administration, the status and prestige of the discipline did play an important role in their final choice. Students from the faculties of Arts and Humanities, Veterinary Medicine, Psychology and Educational Sciences and the faculty of Political and Social Sciences, on the other hand, set little store by the status of their discipline.

The majority of the students mention that the factors concerning future opportunities had a relatively large impact on their study choice. The job opportunities played a more important role than the international possibilities the study has to offer. Male students value these factors significantly more, whereas the female students adopt a rather neutral attitude. This tendency is seen in all faculties. Yet, the students of the faculty of Arts and Humanities tend to put the importance of the future opportunities of their field of study more into perspective than other students do. The aspect 'international possibilities' is the least significant for the respondents from the faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. Students from the faculties of Law, of Medicine and Health Sciences and of Engineering rate aspects such as 'promotional opportunities', 'the possibility of earning high wages' and 'the chance to fulfil an executive function' much higher than the other respondents. Although more male students (20%) claim to have chosen a certain discipline because of the possible high wages, the difference with female students (18%) is negligible.

Various studies have pointed out that the study choices made by grammar school students are often determined by the advice given by friends, family and teachers. However, this cannot be confirmed by our survey's data. 95 % of all respondents (96% girls and 93% boys) indicate that their friends' study choices had no influence at all on their own choice. The same is true for the influence of grammar school teachers: only 15% of the students took the advice given to them by teachers into consideration. Although the expectations of parents and family may affect the choices students make, almost half of the respondents remark that it did not play a decisive role.

The students were also able to fill in other aspects that might have determined their choice of discipline (open question). The answers from both male and female students show that coincidence had an important part in their final decision. Additionally, a lot of students deliberately opt for a discipline that offers a wide range of career opportuni-

ties. Thus, faculties such as Arts and Humanities and Political and Social Sciences are very popular. Only female students claim to have chosen a certain discipline because it was in line with their grammar school's studies. Nine students – eight of whom were female – have chosen a certain discipline because it will lead to a career that enables them to help others. Other aspects mentioned in this open question were: getting more insight in society's mechanisms, the study/career is a childhood dream, few lectures, the creativity of the study and the fact that the study offers good prospects for other studies or for scientific research.

98% of the respondents are pleased to study at Ghent University. Most of them (79%) make conscious attempts to belong to the better students and believe that high grades are important. 90% see studying as a way to reach their goal in life. These (positive) conclusions may result from the fact that most of the respondents are almost certainly those students who work with Minerva most intensively and take a strong interest in their study.

The reasons for choosing Ghent University as an institution of higher education can be divided into three groups:

- social factors: teachers, family and friends have recommended this study, friends have already attended Ghent University;
- urban factors: the reputation of Ghent as a dynamic city, the distance from home, the university life in Ghent;
- educational factors: the reputation of Ghent University's education and research, its lecturers, its wide range of disciplines.

With regard to the choice of Ghent University, students seem to attach great importance to the reputation of their university: this was a decisive factor for over 90% of all respondents. Although half of the students have taken the recommendations of friends and family into account, they set greater store by the urban factors. Once more, the unanimity between male and female students is striking.

The good reputation of Ghent University among its students is particularly characterized by the quality of the education and the versatility of the study programme. On the other hand, aspects such as 'the quality of research' and 'the presence of certain lecturers' did not have any influence at all. The most important urban factor turns out to be the distance between Ghent University and the students' home town; almost 90% of the male and female students considered the advantages of the accessibility of the university. Although the male respondents make more of the life as a student in Ghent, the difference with female respondents is not significant. However, the difference between the sexes is notable in reference to the social factors. Whereas 62% of the male students claim to follow the recommendations made by family and friends, only 50% of the female respondents admit that this factor was of high importance to them. The same can be said with regard to the presence of friends at Ghent University; 56% of the male and only 44% of the female students indicate that older friends who chose Ghent University have influenced their own decision. In an open question, other reasons to choose Ghent University could be mentioned: coincidence, a liberal university (in comparison to the other big Flemish university, K.U.Leuven, which is catholic) and

a previous study at Ghent University. Not insignificantly, some respondents also mentioned that their discipline is not offered by other Flemish universities and could thus only be studied at Ghent University. This is especially true for certain study fields of the faculty of Arts and Humanities and of the faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

2.4.2.3. *Career expectations*

In the previous part of the survey, the relation between the students' choice of study and their views on a potential career were analysed. This part will focus on their career expectations and, more specifically, on their concept of the ideal job.

The analysis shows that female final-year students consider **potential career prospects** more consciously than male respondents do. Nevertheless, more than 50% of male students state that they choose their subjects and activities (such as holiday jobs and hobbies) in relation to their professional plans for the future. As mentioned above, some disciplines more than others lead to a specific career. Thus, a student from the faculty of Veterinary Medicine will most probably have a clearer view on his/her future career pattern than a student from the faculty of Arts and Humanities or the faculty of Political and Social Sciences. The data with reference to the sector the final-year students prefer to be employed in, also confirm that certain disciplines enhance the inflow into the private or industrial sector more than others. In general, students choose a career at universities or research centres and in the industrial sector (16%), followed closely by a career in the private sector (13%) or the government sector (11%). Only 10% of the students hope to have a teaching job one day. The male students seem to aspire to a career in the industrial sector, whereas female students rather prefer an academic career or a job in the private sector. Teaching jobs also score significantly better with female students. The students that were questioned are remarkably optimistic about their chances on the labour market; 8% of the male and 4% of the female respondents assess their chances as very good. 89% declare to have a good chance of finding a job quickly after graduation.

Almost all students (96% of women and 97% of men) would prefer to work full-time the first years after graduation. In comparison to 15% of the male students, 40% of the female respondents say that it should be possible to work part-time, in order to be able to transfer to this system in their later career. Half of the students are prepared to work 40-45 hours a week, followed by 35-39 hours a week (15%). There are no significant gender differences. Nor are there any gender differences with respect to the opinions on flexible working hours and on the possibility of teleworking, although the female students seem to be somewhat more positive about both programmes. Three quarters of the respondents think a system with flexible hours is important to very important, whereas only half of the students would like the possibility of teleworking. Almost all students (95%) point out that overtime should be compensated financially. The option of compensating overtime with extra holidays is well received only by female students (53% women in comparison to 32% men).

On the basis of certain aspects, **the students' view of the ideal job** was analysed.

The aspects were classified as follows:

- immaterial working conditions: transparent promotional opportunities, the opportunity to study within the scope of the job, substantial mentoring during the first months/years, diversity in the staff, equality between men and women;
- material working conditions: sport facilities, private office space, child care, a healthy working environment;
- terms of employment: decent holiday arrangements, job security;
- job content: a wide variety of assignments, well-defined job responsibilities, creative and intellectual freedom;
- industrial relations: the employer's good reputation, a pleasant atmosphere among colleagues, good communication with the employer.

The male and female respondents agree on the importance of well-defined and transparent promotional opportunities (88%) and on the necessity of substantial mentoring during the first months or years of their career (99%). The female students (86%) value the opportunity to study within the scope of the job higher than the male students (79%). Although the policy on diversity is not one of the students' priorities, a certain consensus among the respondents can be detected, as 62% of the men and 65% of the women consider this a fairly important item. The most significant gender difference can be found with regard to the equality between men and women on the shop floor. Almost half of the male students did not indicate the extent to which equality is important to them when looking for a job. 14% gave a neutral answer and only 34% think this item deserves special attention. These results contrast sharply with the 67% female respondents who state that this is an important to very important aspect in a job. The fact that 23% of the female students did not answer this question may indicate that the equality issue is still somewhat of a taboo.

Of all the aforementioned categories, the students think that they will mostly take the terms of employment into consideration while looking for the ideal job. More than 90% of the male and female respondents state that job security and a good holiday arrangement give a surplus value to a job. On the other hand, they set little store on the material working conditions. Although almost all students consider a healthy working environment (natural light, air, ergonomic furniture) and decent equipment (computers, printers) of paramount importance, three in four students say that sport facilities and private office space is of no importance at all. The respondents' opinions differ on the issue of child care: half of the students (48% men and 55% women) report that child care combined with the working environment is a real asset.

2.4.2.4. An academic career

This chapter discusses the correspondence between the students' opinions on the ideal job and their expectations of an academic career at Ghent University. Attention will be given to both Ghent University as an employer and to the advantages and disadvantages of an academic career. Finally, the respondents' views on scientists will be analysed as well.

The previous part has proven that the majority of students have already considered **the prospects of a future career**. However, 80% of them declared having no overall picture of the career opportunities at Ghent University. Very few students have made inquiries about Ghent University as an employer. More than half of the students who were questioned – significantly more men than women – claim to have no knowledge of the brochure ‘PhD-research at Ghent University’, which is available both in paper and on-line. Only 12% of the male and 16% of the female final-year students have already read the brochure. Consequently, the students find it difficult to assess their career opportunities at Ghent University. Only 8% have an optimistic view on the matter. Moreover, the female students tend to have a more pessimistic attitude towards their career opportunities at Ghent University. The same is true for the answers to the question ‘Are you interested in an academic career?’, which 27% of the female and 13% of the male respondents answered negatively. 17% of the students answered this question affirmatively and more men (69%) than women (57%) indicated to be indecisive.

The students are more united on **the manner in which to obtain an academic career**. 47% say they would apply for a vacant position. 21% believe that one has to be asked by a member of the academic staff and – related to this – 16% claim that attracting attention with high marks and dedication during the lectures is the best way to go. According to 9% of the students, it is of paramount importance to know ‘the right people’ of the academic staff. Both male and female respondents put the option ‘step up to a member of the academic staff’ last. Although the options’ order is the same in the answers of male and female students, more than half of the male to 40% of the female students rank ‘applying for a job’ first. Only 18% of the men, compared to 23% of the women, believe they have to be asked by a lecturer. Despite the lack of own initiative, the large majority of students (99%) believe Ghent University to be a good employer. The central words that come to mind are ‘innovative’, ‘friendly atmosphere’ and ‘efficiency’. Only one in four respondents think the atmosphere among colleagues is rather competitive.

The students who said to be interested in or indecisive about an academic career were asked to indicate **which factors stimulate their interest**. These positive factors can be classified into three categories:

- the job content: a fascinating career, interest in research, international possibilities, creative and intellectual freedom, income, fascination for a certain subject matter, the freedom to plan one’s day, the combination research-education;
- personal factors: a childhood dream, the opportunity to study within the scope of the job, the intellectual challenge, preparation for the industrial sector;
- external factors: family or friends are academics, prestige, recommended by a third party.

According to the majority of respondents, the main factors are ‘a fascinating career’, ‘interest in research’, ‘the creative and intellectual freedom’, ‘the fascination for a certain subject matter’ and ‘the intellectual challenge’. Only 9% of the students see an academic career as the fulfilment of a childhood dream. The influence of friends and

family turns out to be a negligible factor in the choice of career as well as in the study choice. Factors such as ‘the prestige of an academic career’ and ‘the preparation for the industrial sector’ also receive a very low score; respectively 4% and 11% of the students agree that these factors are advantages of an academic career. As mentioned above, these factors are faculty-specific rather than gender-specific. However, a number of factors get a higher score from female students than from male students, viz. ‘the opportunity to study within the scope of the job’, ‘the freedom to plan one’s day’, ‘the combination research-education’ and ‘the income’. Nevertheless, these factors are neither for women nor for men of overriding importance. Another blatant gender contrast is the fact that 40% of the female respondents (compared to 25% of the male respondents) regard the international possibilities of an academic career as a considerable advantage. Some respondents also pointed out that an academic career will be the only way to set to work in their discipline. This is especially the case for the respondents who study archaeology. Others mentioned the importance of amassing knowledge to the benefit of society in general and of political policies in particular.

The disadvantages of an academic career were analysed in relation to those students who claimed **not to be interested in an academic career**. Students who were indecisive about this choice were asked to answer this part of the survey as well. The negative factors were listed as follows:

- the job content: no interest in a certain subject matter, the income, the difficulty to get tenure, the competitive atmosphere, the lack of mentoring, tedious work, the vagueness of the career content, the non-transparency of the university’s structures, a man’s world;
- personal factors: insufficient study results, ‘I don’t think I meet the requirements’, a difficult/impossible combination with family life, the sacrifice of a social life;
- external factors: low recognition, ‘nobody has addressed me so far’.

The main reasons to reject an academic career at Ghent University are, on the one hand, the fact that nobody has addressed the respondent (95%) and, on the other hand, the idea that the respondent does not meet the requirements (91%). Despite the unanimity about the most important disadvantages – ‘the vagueness of the career content’ (88%), ‘the non-transparency of the university’s structures’ (85%), and ‘insufficient study results’ (77%) – there are considerably more significant gender differences within this group of respondents than within the group of students who are interested in an academic career.

The first striking conclusion is that especially male students find the lack of mentoring disturbing. Secondly, more male than female respondents don’t aspire to an academic career because they are not interested enough in a certain research subject. Furthermore, one third of female students fear to enter a man’s world. They believe that the combination with a family life is very difficult and that they would have to sacrifice their social life in favour of their professional life. Consequently, especially the female students declare that the life of a successful scientist must be very lonely. 38% of the male and 21% of the female students do not consider an academic career because they think that it would be a tedious career. Although the competitive aspect deters more

women (41%) than men (18%), the previous part of the survey showed that students label the atmosphere at Ghent University as friendly rather than competitive. The study ‘Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep’⁹⁶ also postulates that the competition between colleagues is one of the main causes of the early outflow at universities. The low percentage of students who regard the competitive aspect of an academic career as a disadvantage can be explained by the assumption that most students underestimate the rivalry between scientists. Consequently, it only becomes a negative factor as one climbs the academic ladder. Finally, the respondents consider neither the income nor the lack of recognition as major obstacles.

The last part of the survey focuses on **the representation of scientists**. The respondents had to indicate to what extent they agree with a list of (positive and negative) characteristics. More than 90% of the respondents label scientists as passionate, enthusiastic, intelligent, ambitious, immune to stress and efficient. As became apparent from previous data, most students seem to believe that scientists earn high wages. The image of the male scientist in an ivory tower no longer applies. Only 11% of the male and 17% of the female students consider the practice of science as a purely male activity. Furthermore, according to the respondents, scientists are anything but unworldly since they keep abreast of topical matters. Scientists are also seen as leaders rather than team-players. Notwithstanding the apparent unanimity about a scientist’s characteristics, the male respondents prove to have a somewhat more positive image. Thus, more male than female students assign characteristics such as flexibility and creativity to scientists. Although female respondents have a positive image of scientists in general, they describe scientists more often as boring, grave people with a high ‘nerd’ level. The most striking and significant gender difference is that 31% of female and only 18% of male respondents believe that scientists have to sacrifice a lot of their social life in general and family life in particular to succeed in their job. Quite contradictorily, at least 95% of the respondents picture a scientist as a man or a woman with children.

2.5. Conclusions and recommendations

2.5.1. General conclusions

The results of the survey largely correspond to the findings of the research on PhD-students⁹⁷ and the study ‘Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep’⁹⁸. In contrast to the students questioned in the study ‘Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep’, the students at Ghent University believe that scientists earn high wages. Consequently, this is expe-

⁹⁶ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*

⁹⁷ Verlinden et al. (2005), *op. cit.*

⁹⁸ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*

rienced as an advantage rather than a disadvantage of an academic career. All studies also point out that the atmosphere at the shop floor and a fascinating job with respect to content play a decisive part in the hunt for the perfect job.

When comparing the results of the various survey parts, it becomes apparent that the students' perceptions about an academic career are closely in line with their expectations regarding the ideal job. However, this raises the question whether this perception conforms to reality. Among other studies, 'Wetenschap tussen roeping en beroep'⁹⁹ has shown that many researchers feel disappointed during their careers, because they misjudged the atmosphere, the pressure of work and the creative freedom. Furthermore, the analysis of the survey proves that most students have no clear ideas about the opportunities Ghent University has to offer after their graduation. Nor do the majority of respondents seem to know how to edge their way through the university's structures. Thus, the university's task is not so much to glamorize an academic career, but rather to inform the students correctly and thoroughly about their future prospects and chances. Since a lot of the respondents claim to consider a future career as early as in their last year but one, it is important to give information early on.

When informing students (through workshops, information sessions, websites, newsletters, etc), both gender differences and differences between the faculties have to be taken into account. To be able to discuss the specific possibilities and problem areas of certain disciplines in detail, it might be more effective to address the students of each faculty separately. Furthermore, students should be stimulated more to take the initiative to discuss possible future research topics with members of the academic staff. This is especially true for female students, since the research on PhD-students¹⁰⁰ concluded that most female students wait until someone addresses them. Consequently, a large group of potentially excellent researchers goes to waste.

2.5.2. Prospects for further research

The survey has made it clear that the current ways in which students are given information about an academic career are not sufficient to give a thorough and balanced picture of the students' prospects. Therefore, research has to be done on the ways in which students can be reached, as well as on the possibility of painting a realistic picture of the advantages and disadvantages of an academic career. Furthermore, it might be interesting to follow up a group of students who are interested in becoming researchers during their final years as students and their first years as young academics. This way, the extent to which their expectations meet with everyday working life could be studied thoroughly.

⁹⁹ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁰ Verlinden et al. (2005), *op. cit.*

2.5.3. Transferability to other organizations and settings

This survey can also be used in other universities. The group of respondents can easily be expanded to the students in all the years, instead of taking only the final-year students. Moreover, the survey can be presented to students in secondary education in order to study the way in which young people on the verge of further education think about researchers and an academic career. In this case it will be necessary however to give added information about the working definitions used in the current survey.

3. Inflow/through-flow: vacancies

Sigfried Lievens

3.1. Introduction

In the last decades, more and more women have entered the academic world. Moreover, women are increasingly interested in exact sciences and have become visible in the faculties that were previously characterized by a preponderance of male researchers. This evolution is also noticeable on the labour market in general. A consequence of the growing female presence in 'typically male professions' and vice versa could be that the job titles of these professions have been adapted to the new social context. However, this does not appear to be the case in Flanders. After all, various studies have established that vacancies often contain a (subconscious) gender connotation; a lot of Dutch job titles are exclusively male or have an undeniably male overtone.

The survey among final-year students has shown that both male and female students believe that the best way to start an academic career is to respond to vacancies. Hence, the logical next step in the study on the inflow, through-flow and outflow at Ghent University is to develop a checklist that enables people to screen (academic) vacancies on potential gender connotations.

3.2. Literature study

Whereas gender discrimination in vacancies has been forbidden by Belgian law since 1978, an increasing interest in the grammatical and social aspects of job ads has only been noticeable since the mid-nineties. Most research has demonstrated that Dutch job titles are often characterized by horizontal and vertical segregation. In typically male sectors, gender indications are rarely used, thus enhancing the idea that those job ads focus solely or primarily on male employees (e.g. timmerman [carpenter], meubelmaker [cabinetmaker], stukadoor [plasterer]). When female job titles are used explicitly, it

is often for part-time jobs or positions in the social or service sector¹⁰¹. Consequently, some job titles are systematically used with an explicit feminine gender (e.g. *verkoopsters* (in *kledingwinkels*) [shop assistant], *huishoudster* [housekeeper] and *kamermeisje* [chambermaid]). However, the problem exists not only on a social level, but on a grammatical level as well. Therefore, it would be too simple to attribute the use of male and female job titles to a pure and conscious gender division.

3.2.1. Grammatical problems

Dutch words have either the feminine, masculine or neuter gender. Most job titles without a masculine or feminine suffix are unmarked or generic forms. The derivatives of the generic forms are masculine or feminine marked job titles, and are thus no longer useful to refer to both biological sexes. When writing a job ad, one has to choose between the use of a neutral name and the use of a masculine/feminine form of the job title (juxtaposed or not). The complexity of this choice is related to the fact that most job titles are given a masculine connotation by the language user, even though they are grammatically neutral (unmarked). Examples of job titles that don't refer to men explicitly, but are experienced as such by a lot of women are *expert*, *dirigent* [conductor], *loodgieter* [plumber] and *inkoper* [purchasing agent]. Since the symbolic value of language is strongly embedded in the discussion on job titles, opinions on the usage of a more consistent form of job titles in job ads differ greatly. More specifically, two movements are in flat contradiction, viz. neutralization and differentiation. The supporters and opponents of both movements use grammatical as well as social arguments to plead their case¹⁰².

The supporters of neutralization are in favour of using one job title only, without any gender distinction. The supporters of neutralization use the following arguments:

- Since one expression can be used to refer to both sexes, texts will become terser.
- An unmarked form already exists in most cases. Furthermore, the usage of this unmarked name corresponds with the Anglicization of job titles (i.e. English job titles mostly have only one neutral form).
- The language user does not have to make a choice and can therefore not show a preference for male or female employees.
- Despite the grammatical gender, in time, the unmarked job titles will no longer refer to a specific biological gender (e.g. *minister*).
- When it is necessary to specify the biological gender of a job title, one can always place the adjectives 'male' or 'female' in front of the noun (e.g. *male* or *female minister*).

The disadvantages of neutralization are:

¹⁰¹ *V/m – krantenscreening 2006 – de onderzoeksresultaten van een nationale en regionale krantenscreening*, Zij-kant, de progressieve vrouwenbeweging, 2006, p. 7.

¹⁰² Lutjeharms M.(red.) (1998). *Feminisering van beroepsnamen: een juiste keuze?* Brussel: Vrije Universiteit Brussel, p.105.

- Women are not explicitly addressed and are therefore not visible in traditionally male professions.
- In most cases, the masculine unmarked noun is used as neutral job title. Therefore, some would argue that neutralization is only a diversion that maintains the situation as it stands¹⁰³.

Conversely, the supporters of differentiation dismiss the idea of having just one job title. They state that both masculine and feminine job titles should be used in vacancies and other profession-related texts. Consequently, differentiation is sometimes called feminization as well¹⁰⁴.

The advantages of differentiation can be listed as follows:

- Typically female job titles, such as *verpleegster* [nurse], *vroedvrouw* [midwife] en *secretaresse* [secretary] have been adjusted when men started to enter the profession (respectively *verpleegkundige* [male nurse], *vroedkundige/-man* [obstetrician], *administratief bediende* [administrative officer]). Thus, the opposition to differentiation is caused by social rather than grammatical ideas¹⁰⁵.
- The unmarked job title generally has a grammatically masculine gender. Therefore, women will remain invisible in those posts.
- When women can't identify with a job title, they will not easily apply for that particular job. By addressing women explicitly for certain positions, traditionally male or female professions could become more approachable for the other sex.
- Language is permanently evolving. New words are developed and used by speakers all the time. The media play an important role in these trends and can be used to naturalize new or unusual feminine-marked job titles.
- Since the existing feminine-marked job titles mostly relate to 'subordinate' posts or sectors (i.e. horizontal and vertical segregation), young girls may misjudge their prospects.
- By not systematically using the female job titles, the masculine norm will remain dominant.

The opponents of differentiation appeal to the following arguments:

- The use of the feminine form strengthens the male character of generic terms. For example, one will use the term *bewindspersoon* [chair person] when referring to a woman, while still using the traditional term *bewindsman* [chairman] in all other cases.
- The creation of a feminine form is often morphologically impossible (e.g. *beambte*, *geleerde* [these words have the same ending (-e) as the feminine suffix]).
- Differentiation always forces the language user to make a gender distinction, even when this is not relevant or preferable¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³ De Caluwe, J. & A. Van Santen (2001). *Gezocht: functiebenamingen (m/v): wegwijzer voor vorming en gebruik van Nederlandse functiebenamingen*. Den Haag: Sdu, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴ Lutjehams (1998), *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁵ Lutjehams (1998), *op. cit.*, p. 105.

¹⁰⁶ De Caluwe (2001), *op. cit.* p. 57.

- The use of a male as well as a female job title makes a text illegible and complex (e.g. saleswoman/salesman, sales(wo)men, male or female nurse). Moreover, it is not clear whether the sequence of the male and female job title is important. Additionally, the use of two expressions is nearly impossible in spoken language.
- Problems also occur with compounds containing masculine terms (e.g. doktersjas [doctor's coat] or with compound nouns (e.g. directeur-generaal [director-general])¹⁰⁷.
- The creation of new derivatives and compounds goes against the tendency towards a more economical use of language.
- Since the feminine forms are often derivatives of masculine expressions, the feminine form can be seen as an explicit deviation from the norm.
- The masculine derivative of a female job title may not refer to the same interpretation of the position. Therefore a new masculine expression will have to be created, which may become confusing for the language user. In Dutch, the tasks of a secretaresse [secretary] are not identical to those of a secretaris [clerk], which is at first sight the masculine derivative of the feminine form.

The lack of consensus is mainly caused by the fact that both neutralization and differentiation involve the creation of new job titles. Newly created job titles may be laughable, difficult to pronounce or grammatically incorrect. In these cases, one might find it hard to convince the language users to use the new terms on a daily basis. A possible solution may be to refer to the activity rather than to the actual person (e.g. camera instead of cameraman, direction instead of director).

3.2.2. Legal provisions

Laws in favour of the advancement of feminization of job titles have been passed in Swiss, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Austria¹⁰⁸. In Belgium, several stages of the recruitment process have also been laid down by law. The law of 4 August 1978 forbids each form of gender discrimination with regards to the conditions for admission, the criteria for recruitment and selection and the content of a job, regardless of the sector or the employee's statute. The law also forbids "to refer to the sex of the employee in vacancies and job ads, or to add in those offers and advertisements conditions that may, even inexplicitly, mention or suggest the sex of the employee. This law concerns the public and private sector, and has to be applied to employees as well as to self-employed persons" [own translation of art. 121]. In practice, anyone writing a job ad has to consider this law and must follow the procedure that excludes each preference for a male or female employee.

The Belgian law does not mention any specific use of language. Therefore, the question remains whether the language user can freely choose which job title to use in a

¹⁰⁷ De Caluwe (2001), *op. cit.*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁸ Verbiest, A. (1997). *De oorbellen van de minister: taal en denken over vrouwen*. Amsterdam: Contact, p. 80.

vacancy. The foregoing has already showed that no consensus has yet been reached in the debate on neutralization or differentiation. Consequently, implicit discrimination in language remains possible. While the French-speaking Community decided on 21 June 1993 that all job titles should be feminized, the Flemish Community stated that the Language Union (de Taalunie) -rather than the government- had to make a decision in the matter. Because the gender issue concerning the Dutch-language vacancies is especially related to the labour market in Flanders and the Netherlands, a joined decision was made by the committee of ministers of the Language Union on 22 October 1996. They stated that there would be no compulsory feminization of the Dutch-language job titles. The members of the Language Union believe that language follows social evolutions spontaneously and that the language users can rarely be forced to change their everyday language. According to the Language Union, the language users will benefit more from well-organized sensitization that will help the neutral form to lose its male connotation in time.

3.2.3. Vacancy text

A vacancy can be perceived as a text consisting of two parts. Whereas the first part consists solely of the job title, the second part comprises the actual text, specifying the profile and the competences of the candidates, as well as giving more information about the position in question. Even when using a gender-neutral job title, the vacancy may seem to focus on men rather than women (or vice versa) by the way candidates are addressed or by the job description.

The first problem concerns the use of unmarked masculine job titles, because the form of address that is used may give a text unintentionally a masculine character (e.g. 'Van de expert (m/v) wordt verwacht dat hij zijn dossiers snel behandelt' [The expert (m/f) has to make sure that **he** deals with **his** documents swiftly]). The use of 'he/she' and 'his/her' would unnecessarily overload the text. The possessive pronouns should be replaced by an article (the documents). By addressing the candidates with 'you' (in Dutch one can use 'jij' or the more formal 'u'), one can avoid the use of a gender-specific pronoun (e.g. 'Er wordt verwacht dat u uw dossiers snel behandelt' [As an expert you have to make sure **you** deal with **your** documents swiftly]). A second solution is the use of plurals (e.g. 'Van experts wordt verwacht dat zij hun dossiers snel behandelen' [Experts are expected to deal with **their** documents swiftly]).

The second problem refers to the requirements (profile, competences) the candidates have to meet. It is now generally recognized that most women only tend to apply for a position when they meet the majority of the requirements. Consequently, a long list of high demands would indirectly exclude potential female candidates¹⁰⁹. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that men and women tend to be attracted to different aspects of requirements or working conditions. For instance, more women than men will

¹⁰⁹ Dienst Emancipatiezaken, *Genderneutrale functiebenamingen*:
<http://www.emancipatiezaken.be/page.asp?page=3>.

apply for a job emphasizing social skills, such as punctuality, being communicative or being helpful. These vacancies mostly concern jobs in which counselling and assistance are pivotal. Conversely, vacancies that put technical aspects and traditionally male characteristics first (e.g. know-how, management skills, initiative) may discourage female applicants. Thus, a gender-neutral vacancy is a vacancy that balances male and female skills and characteristics.

3.3. Process report

3.3.1. Choice of methodology

In order to ascertain to what extent the Ghent University's recruitment policy is gender-neutral, two questions had to be answered. The first question -'How are vacancies developed?'- refers to the preparations preceding the vacancies' publication. This question can be answered by analysing the regulations and legal stipulations relating to the recruitment of new employees. The second question -'Do the job titles and vacancy texts meet the requirements of a gender-neutral language'- refers to the actual vacancies published on the university website. By answering this question, the extent to which the university policy corresponds with the aforementioned theoretical findings can be analysed. As the vacancies on the website are easy to access and are updated on a regular basis, it was decided to screen only these vacancies (instead of those published in newspapers and magazines). By means of the available literature, a provisional checklist was developed to test the vacancies. This method permits screening a large number of vacancies within a relatively short period of time. Although this method makes it impossible to screen each and every vacancy exhaustively, it is still possible to paint a general picture of the recruitment policy at Ghent University - which is the aim of this study.

3.3.2. The GECO-project

The preparations for Ghent University's module in the VLIR-EQUAL project went hand in hand with the start-up of the GECO-project¹¹⁰, in which the Centre of Gender Studies at UGent was involved. The GECO-project was also financed by ESF and organized by the VDAB (the Flemish department for employment-finding and professional training). The aim of this project was to screen the professional index cards and the movies presenting various professional positions. The idea was to unlock these positions to the public by making them gender-neutral. The project was primarily practice-oriented. During the meetings with the various partners, the index cards containing the job descriptions were actively adapted, thus testing the user-friendliness of the theoretic-

¹¹⁰ Gender in Cobra.

cal findings to reality. From this point of view, the GECO-project was certainly an added value to UGent's research on vacancies. After all, many considerations regarding job titles in general can also be applied to positions connected to scientific institutions. This way, the GECO-project placed the issue in a broader social framework and could be seen as a practical guide to screen the vacancies at Ghent University.

3.3.3. Collection of vacancies

To examine the requirements the vacancies had to meet, the regulations could be downloaded from Ghent University's website. Additionally, the staff of the Department of Personnel and Organization was always willing to give extra information. The vacancies were collected from 1 March 2006 to 28 February 2007. The following criteria were included in the checklist: the statute (AAP [academic assistant staff], WP [research staff], ZAP [autonomous academic staff] and ATP [administrative and technical staff]), the positions, the faculties, the departments, the type of contract, the vacancy's language, the gender-neutrality of the job title and the gender-neutrality of the vacancy's text and terms of employment. A vacancy offering more than one vacant post was still considered as one vacancy when the basic data such as statutes and departments were the same. When several posts, departments or types of contract were offered in one vacancy, the various positions were analysed separately. The results were put in an SPSS-table weekly, thus enabling the production of a global analysis at the end of the research period.

3.4. Instrument and case study results

3.4.1. Instrument: Vacancies checklist

For the instrument: see Tool Annex.

The first aspect of the checklist is the job's statute. Because this study examines the inflow, through-flow and outflow of the academic staff, attention was paid to the AAP, WP and ZAP positions. However, it soon became apparent that the through-flow of the academic staff often occurs in the direction of the ATP and vice versa. Therefore, the ATP statute was also included in the checklist. Who qualifies for applying for a certain statute depends on the vacancy in question. Final-year students can apply for several AAP and WP positions (e.g. PhD-student, assistant, researcher). Conversely, some positions require specific diplomas or qualifications and are thus limited to a smaller group of applicants (e.g. doctor-assistant and lecturer).

In addition to vertical segregation, the personnel management also has to contend with horizontal segregation. The extent to which women are represented depends on the faculty or department in question. In order to examine whether faculties or depart-

ments with a large representation of female employees write more gender-friendly vacancies than faculties or departments which are preponderantly male, these criteria (i.e. faculty and department) were also included in the checklist. Since the study from *Zij-kant*¹¹¹ has shown that vacancies for part-time jobs often address women more explicitly than men, attention was paid to the type of contract (fulltime or part-time) as well.

English job titles are often applicable to both men and women (e.g. bookkeeper, dancer, executive, manager). Because the academic world is becoming increasingly internationally oriented, Flemish vacancies are more often written in English. In contrast to English job titles, the potential Dutch expressions for one position are extremely extensive. For each vacancy, it was analysed which choice (neutralization or differentiation) was made. In the actual vacancy text, the form of address was closely examined. As mentioned above, the use of 'he/she', 'you' or plural pronouns may give a text a different gender outlook. Finally, it was studied to what extent the terms of employment were mentioned in the vacancy and to what extent the traditionally male and female working conditions were taken into account.

3.4.2. Case study results

3.4.2.1. Regulations

The vacancies on the Ghent University website are subdivided according to statute (i.e. WP, AAP, ZAP and ATP). For each of the statutes, the regulations concerning the recruitment and selection procedures can be downloaded. This information is placed at the disposal of all applicants. Depending on the regulations in question, the writers of the vacancies are more or less free to use their own phrasing.

The positions regarding scientific employees and PhD-students leave the most freedom to adjust the vacancy texts and the job titles. In these cases, the supervisor writes a vacancy, after which it is presented to the governing body of Ghent University. The regulations do not mention any established lines or formulation for these types of vacancies. The applicants are always requested to send their CV and letter of application to the supervisor in question, who takes on the subsequent selection and recruitment¹¹².

Conversely, the vacancies for AAP-positions are written along established lines; they have to follow a fixed structure, design and phrasing. However, the departments, which draw up this type of vacancies, can add or erase some profile requirements and can fill up the job content. Although deviating from the fixed structure is sometimes allowed (e.g. to use a continuous text instead of an enumeration), this rarely happens. The vacancies have to be cleared both with the faculty in question and with the gov-

¹¹¹ *Zij-kant* (2006), *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹¹² Conclusion Governing body, chapter II – recruitment.

erning body of Ghent University before they can appear on the website. Since the vacancies also appear in the Belgian Bulletin of Acts, they have to comply with the laws of this institution as well. Specific requirements are applied, depending on the position in question¹¹³.

The ZAP-vacancies follow the same standard model. Furthermore, a fixed application form, which can be downloaded from the website, has to be used for this statute. The vacancies are published either as vacancies for (senior) lecturers or as vacancies for (senior) full professors. The governing body decides, at the suggestion of the faculty's council, whether or not a ZAP-position can be declared vacant. The vacancy is also published in the Belgian Bulletin of Acts. Therefore, the requirements concerning the applicants' diploma and profile have to be sufficiently extensive¹¹⁴. Depending on the job content, the importance of services may be underscored¹¹⁵. This may be of considerable importance, since there is much evidence to support the hypothesis that female researchers have an eye for services related to the support of students, as well as to internal and external matters.

The ATP-vacancies can be divided into two large segments. Some vacancies, on the one hand, are open to everybody. These vacancies are subdivided into contractual vacancies for a fixed duration and permanent statutory and contractual appointments. The internal vacancies, on the other hand, are related to promotion or mutation. Hence, the applicant has to have a certain number of years of working experience in a specific ATP-position. The structure of the vacancies is determined by the type of contract concerned. The contractual appointments with a fixed duration don't follow a standard model. Like the applicants for the WP-positions, the ATP-applicants have to address the author of the vacancy. Conversely, the vacancies for the permanent ATP-appointments have the same structure as the vacancies for the AAP-positions and are also recorded in the Belgian Bulletin of Acts. The candidates have to send their applications to an external selection agency that is responsible for the selection and recruitment of the permanent technical and administrative staff. However, the final selection is made by the department concerned. The internal vacancies are written by the department of Personnel and the Organization's Administration Office of Personnel Management. Of course, the head of the department concerned is closely involved. Subsequently, the vacancy is approved by Ghent University's governing body. These vacancies are written according to fixed rules and are very extensive. The ad has to contain features such as the job title, the job content, the position's level, the salary scale, the general requirements, the profile, the requirements related to the candidate's diploma, the required experience, the required seniority, the need for previous favourable evaluations, the duration of the trial period and the modalities concerning the applica-

¹¹³ Appointments' procedure, articles 4-9.

¹¹⁴ Appointment, promotion, evaluation and job description of the members of ZAP, article 5.

¹¹⁵ Article 6.

tions¹¹⁶. The vacancies also mention the regulations with respect to the selection procedure. For further information, the link to Ghent University's website is also offered. Because most of the aforementioned features are fixed, the contribution of the vacancy's author is limited to the candidate's profile and the job content. In practice, however, a standard phrasing is mostly used for these items as well.

3.4.2.2. Vacancies

During the research period, the eleven faculties and the Central Administration published 759 vacancies. Most vacancies concerned appointments for the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (18%), the Faculty of Sciences (15%) and the Central Administration (13%). The lowest number of vacancies could be found in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. They were each responsible for only 3% of the vacancies. In all faculties, there is a run on AAP-staff. In the Central Administration, the vacancies are of course mainly related to the technical and administrative staff. 19% of the AAP and 20% of the ZAP ended up in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Together, the faculties of Sciences and of Bioscience Engineering were responsible for nearly half of the WP-vacancies. Although all the examined regulations were very extensive, no rules were found concerning the language used in the vacancies. That raises the question to what extent the vacancies comply with a gender-neutral personnel management.

Since 97% of the vacancies are written in Dutch, chances are that in a lot of vacancies a gender-specific job title is used. However, there is a significant difference between the vacancies from the VDAB-database and the vacancies of Ghent University. Because the types of positions for each statute at Ghent University are very limited, there isn't much choice regarding job titles either. Consequently, the interaction with specific sectors is minimal. A large variety of job titles can only be used in relation to the administrative and technical staff. In most of these cases, the term 'senior assistant' or 'assistant' is used, followed by the specific job title between brackets.

The regulations concerning the recruitment and selection of WP and contractual ATP for a fixed duration allow the authors of these vacancies to use their own phrasing and structure. As a result, there is a lot of variety in relation to the vacancies' content, style and view. Within the WP statute, the vacancies focus mainly on scientific workers, (post-doctoral) researchers and PhD-students. 37% of the actual job titles used has an explicit gender indication. In comparison, only 17% of the job titles used for an external ATP-position is gender-specific. The other statutes rarely contain any explicit gender indication. One cannot refer to the recruitment policy as being disadvantageous to women, because most vacancies use a neutral job title (although it has a male connotation). In one vacancy for an ATP position with fixed duration, the job title 'secretaris' (m/v) [i.e. the male equivalent of secretary, followed by Male/Female] was used. How-

¹¹⁶ Declaration of Ghent University concerning the procedures of recruitment, evaluation and training of the ATP-staff, article 25.

ever, in the actual vacancy text, the explicitly female term ‘secretaresse’ [secretary] was used, thus giving away a clear gender preference.

The specific reference to both sexes is mainly realized by adding ‘(M/F)’ to the job title (e.g. researcher (M/F)) or by using brackets (e.g. onderzoek(st)er [researcher]). Few vacancies were found using both masculine and feminine job titles (e.g. onderzoeker/onderzoekster [male/female researcher]). The vacancy texts of ZAP, AAP and internal ATP-positions hardly ever use gender-specific expressions. In 12% of the WP-vacancies and 7% of the ATP-positions with fixed duration, constructions with ‘he/she’, brackets and double expressions could be found. Furthermore, each statute appears to have its own forms of address. The reader of AAP-vacancies is usually addressed with ‘the candidate’, whereas the authors of WP-vacancies generally use the direct form of address ‘you’ [in Dutch: *jij, u* or *jullie*]. Within the other vacancies (ZAP and ATP), a variety of forms is used to address the applicants. For example, in the enumeration of the profile’s requirements, a subject is rarely used, whereas expressions such as ‘the candidate’ or ‘the applicants’ are used in the continuous text. Despite the various forms of address used in one text, the gender-neutral language is striking; the authors consistently choose neutral forms of address and job titles. Conversely, the vacancies not bound by rules are mutually divergent. Some vacancies are limited to a couple of sentences, whereas others give an extensive overview of the job requirements, its content and/or the terms of employment. The terms of employment are always mentioned in the vacancies concerning internal ATP-positions as well as permanent ATP-positions.

The same tendency can be found in the AAP and ZAP vacancies. Although additions to the standard model are accepted, they hardly ever occur. Hence, the description of the profile and the position remain on the whole very limited and vague. Consequently, the profile is mostly restricted to the required diploma while the expression ‘assistance to the department’s service’ (always used in the job content) is not explained in detail. Furthermore, these vacancies seldom elaborate on the terms of employment. Although no information is given as to the specific requirements and expectations, the succinctness of these vacancies results in a gender-neutral text. When reference is made to a specific characteristic or level of experience, this is described as a recommendation rather than an explicit requirement (e.g. publications in this field of study are a surplus). Because it is generally believed that female applicants tend to be discouraged by a strictly defined list of requirements, this can be seen as a strategy to attain gender equality. Furthermore, the division between male and female characteristics is balanced in the majority of the vacancies. In the job content of AAP vacancies, for example, an interest in both research and teaching is stressed. Moreover, a distinct interest in supporting students is often mentioned as a plus, thus encouraging female researchers to apply. Finally, final-year students are often explicitly encouraged to apply for a certain position. This call is never specifically aimed at male or female candidates, but should be made possible in departments with a significant gender imbalance. Another option is to enter an expression in the standard model, stating that Ghent University’s personnel management is open to both male and female applicants.

3.5. Conclusions and recommendations

3.5.1. General conclusions

On the whole, the vacancies are drawn up in a gender-neutral way, both with regard to the job titles and the vacancy texts. Nevertheless, the inconsistent use of job titles may result in a feeling of gender inequality. For example, the position of academic assistant is used in the following ways: *wetenschappelijk medewerker*, *wetenschappelijk medewerker (m/v)*, *wetenschappelijk mederwerk(st)er* and the English term. Because of gender-specific additions to an originally gender-neutral term, female applicants may give this term a male connotation when used normally, thus unwillingly creating a gender bias in the recruitment system. Within the scope of this research, a checklist was developed that may serve as a guideline for the authors of vacancies (see Tool Annex). Moreover, the use of an unequivocal recruitment policy should be encouraged by reducing the inconsistent use of style, lay-out, phrasing and structure. When gender discrimination occurs, it is often done unconsciously. Therefore, general guidelines and training are of paramount importance for the authors of the vacancies. Since these corrective measures are time-consuming, the vacancies should at the very least be monitored by people with an eye for implicit and explicit gender inequalities.

3.5.2. Prospects for further research

The decision whether or not to use neutralization or differentiation in the vacancy policy of a university has to be made in collaboration with the personnel administration and in close connection with an extensive screening of the selection and recruitment policy. Therefore, the checklist must be seen temporarily as a permissive measure. Besides examining the global selection procedure, research has to be done into the establishment of an image of male and female staff at universities. Currently, the website with vacancies contains only one picture of a man in a pharmaceutical lab (white coat, glasses, tie, holding a test tube). Apart from the low level of relevancy for the content of the academic profession in general, this picture hardly breaks any social conventions. However, the GECO-project has proven that the correct use of visual material can nuance an otherwise stereotypical text. By presenting men as well as women in various professions, all applicants are addressed directly. The manner in which men and women are presented in the publications and on the website of a university may be important for the global interpretation of a gender-neutral personnel and student policy.

Consequently, this module should be seen as the first impetus to further qualitative and quantitative research. Potential fields of study concerning the selection and recruitment of staff are:

- Preparation: through which channels are the vacancies distributed, are potential applicants informed about vacant positions?

- Preparation: to what extent do certain positions appeal to men and women (a number of vacancies may be presented to a group of students)?
- Selection: who (men/women) applies for a vacant position, who is considered during the selection procedure, who is finally appointed?
- Procedure: how and by whom are the interviews prepared, how are people interviewed, who leads them, who is present at the interviews, how is the interview committee selected?
- Procedure: are there any other selection assignments apart from the interview (such as a trial lesson, the presentation of a potential research project, an exam), to what extent do female and male applicants succeed in the extra assignments?
- Screening of the application reports: is attention paid to a gender-neutral phrasing, is the same standard used for male and female candidates?
- The internal selection policy of the Flemish government provides a questionnaire that gives applicants the opportunity to give feedback on the application, the selection and the selection committee's decisions¹¹⁷. To offer more insight in the applicants' experience, this procedure could also be introduced in the personnel policy at Ghent University and other universities.

For each of these features, recommendations could be formulated, thus creating a renewed general approach to the selection and recruitment of university staff on the one hand, and to the training of the members of several selection committees on the other.

3.5.3. Transferability to other organizations and settings

Guidelines for a gender neutral vacancy policy are already used in many organizations and universities in Flanders as well as in other countries. The checklist presented in this chapter can be used in other universities, organizations, firms and countries provided that the working definitions are adjusted. The checklist can be expanded or limited according to the wishes of the organisations in question.

4. Through-flow: promotion of women

Hanneke Pyck

4.1. Introduction

In this part we discuss the development and the results of the survey parts 'promotion' and 'statements about UGent staff members', which are parts of the Survey UGender.

¹¹⁷ Policy report, Personnel policy of the Flemish government (2005), p. 61.

This survey was a research initiative of the UGender policy project and was sent to all staff members of Ghent University in 2006.

4.2. Literature study

Promotion of women at Flemish universities

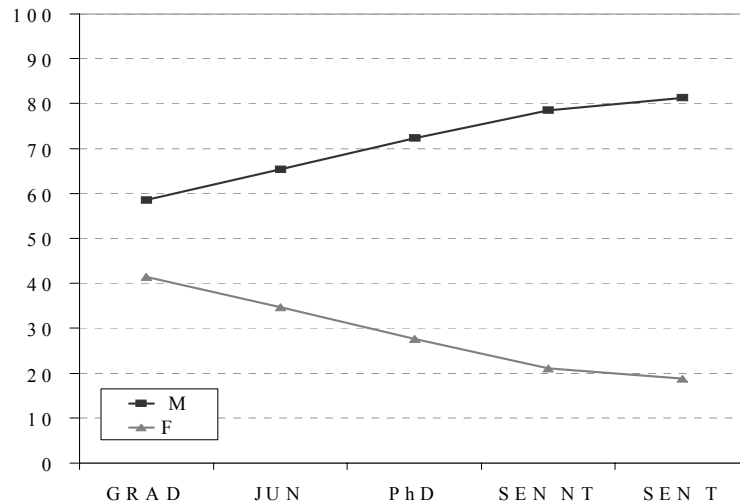
The underrepresentation of female researchers at universities is often explained by their relatively late entrance into the academic world, both as students and as staff. One way to investigate whether the female underrepresentation is – in part – just a matter of time, is to follow up a group of male and female researchers who started their academic career at the same point in time and look at the male/female ratio within this group throughout their careers.

Based on data of UGent and K.U.Leuven, the figure below clearly illustrates that there is in fact a promotion problem for women at these Flemish universities¹¹⁸. This figure shows the entire academic career of men and women who received a master's degree in the period 1983/84 – 1986/87. From the large group of 19.985 graduates (42% women, 58% men), 2.331 graduates start out as junior researchers in 1984/85 – 1987/88. Among these junior researchers 35% are women. Consequently, one may already notice a shift in the m/f ratio on the first step of the academic ladder. 859 researchers obtain a PhD degree before January 1998, 28% of whom are women. 294 researchers receive a senior position (not tenured), 21% are women. Thus, from the total group of 157 academics who finally obtain a senior tenured job, only 19% are women.

The percentage of female students at UGent in 2005/06 is 56%. The proportion of female graduates that same year is even higher (i.e. 61%). Despite this large pool of potential female researchers, female senior researchers (i.e. academics with a PhD degree) and professors are underrepresented in Flemish universities. Women researchers 'disappear' on each step of the academic career ladder. In other words, the academic pipeline leaks. Although some argue that this information is outdated, a recent follow-up study¹¹⁹ shows that the declining proportion of women throughout the academic career continues to exist.

¹¹⁸ Deschrijver, H., Van de Velde, M.C., Van der Beken, H., Page, H., Waeye, H., De Leenheer, A. (UGent), Verlinden, A., Houben, J., Billiet, J., Smedts, D., Vanden Berghe, H., Bouillon, R. (K.U.Leuven) (2001). *Kernelementen doctoreren in Vlaanderen, gebaseerd op het rapport 'Kwantitatieve analyse van het doctoreren aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven en de Universiteit Gent.*

¹¹⁹ Vlaamse Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (2006). *Doctoreren aan Vlaamse Universiteiten (1991-2002)*. Studiereeks 15, VRWB.



GRAD	university graduates (master's degree)	graduated in 1983/84 – 1986/87	19.985
JUN	junior researchers	inflow 1984/85 – 1987/88	2.331
PhD	obtained a PhD degree	obtained PhD before October 1, 1998	859
SEN NT	senior researchers – not tenured	1984/85 – 1997/98	294
SEN T	senior researchers – tenured	1984/85 – 1997/98	157

Figure 2: Measuring the leaky pipeline: from graduating to obtaining a senior tenured position at UGent and K.U.Leuven, by sex

4.3. Process report

4.3.1. The UGender project – the initiation of an Equal Opportunities Policy at UGent

The Centre for Gender Studies at Ghent University received the assignment to initiate an equal opportunities policy at the university in 2004¹²⁰. The project was named 'UGender – Equal Opportunities for Men and Women at Ghent University' (in short: UGender). UGender was based on the gender mainstreaming approach and consisted of three research initiatives in 2005 and 2006. Firstly, gender statistics were collected. Although the largest group of graduates are women, the results show that the largest group of junior researchers who start at UGent are men. So in comparison to women, more men begin a university career. But there is also a promotion problem for women:

¹²⁰ Decision Executive Board, October 26, 2004.

ever since 1994 women represent only 10% of the professors at the highest step of the academic ladder at UGent.

In the second phase, a gender screening of the different leave arrangements at UGent was carried out. The results showed that these differ depending on the various statutes. Another important finding from this screening was the fact that not all staff members can be replaced during their pregnancy leave.

The gender statistics were presented to all faculty board members¹²¹ of UGent. Many reactions reflected a high degree of gender blindness: there appeared to be a lot of ignorance about and resistance towards a solid equal opportunities policy. Men appeared to be unaware of the existence of gender-related problems at UGent. According to most men the project researchers spoke to during this faculty tour, the restricted promotion of women is due to the choices women make themselves. Men often refer to the (difficult) combination of work and family life. According to the women the researchers spoke to however, their restricted promotion is – among other things – due to the university culture and the informal ‘old boys networks’.

4.3.2. The development of the Survey UGender

The survey ‘Careers of Men and Women at Ghent University’ (in short: Survey UGender), was the last research phase in the UGender project. The aim of the UGender Survey was twofold. Firstly, to examine the existence of gender differences in the careers of men and women at this university. Secondly, to examine whether or not staff members perceive and experience gender-related problems.

4.3.2.1. *Choice of methodology*

By means of an online survey the entire population of UGent was reached. An online survey offers a lot of advantages, of which the following were crucial to this study:

- Faster and cheaper than sending out paper versions of a survey.
- By means of ‘branching’ respondents who answer differently are routed to different pages (without awareness of the respondent).
- By means of ‘required questions’ responses to the essential questions are received: if the respondent does not answer this question, he/she can not continue the survey.
- It is user-friendly for the respondent as well as for the researcher: the answers no longer have to be entered in a database manually. The analysis can start immediately: responses can be downloaded in a database of choice (in our case: SPSS fully labelled).

¹²¹ The 11 faculties at Ghent University are governed by faculty boards, chaired by the deans. Because of their rank, full professors are automatically members of this board, together with elected representatives of the (senior) lecturers, assistants, the administrative and technical staff and the students. The faculty boards are responsible for the organisation and coordination of the teaching and scientific study carried out in the various departments that come under its authority.

The online questionnaire was created and distributed with the tool from Checkmarket¹²².

4.3.2.2. Creation of the Survey UGender

The survey was created in the period May 2005 – March 2006. After consultation of existing (gender) questionnaires and literature on the subject, a first version of the survey was developed¹²³. In May the draft was presented to the interfaculty UGender Steering Committee (see text box). Since the steering committee had a lot of remarks and questions, a selection of steering committee members¹²⁴ assembled several times and guided the development process of the UGender Survey.

Steering Committee UGender: members and tasks
<p>The UGender Steering Committee was installed at the start of the UGender project. The Vice-Chancellor sent a letter to all deans of UGent asking them to nominate a f/m faculty board duo. This was done to make sure men as well as women would be involved in the initiation of an equal opportunities policy.</p> <p>The members of the Steering Committee UGender are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Faculty representatives: two representatives from each faculty (each time a man and a woman from the faculty board, at least one of whom is a professor); – Central Administration representatives: the Academic Administrator and a member of staff of the Vice-Chancellor's office; – Centre for Gender Studies representatives. <p>The Steering Committee UGender guided and advised the initiation of an equal opportunities policy at UGent. The faculty representatives are co-responsible for the development, stimulation and support of an equal opportunities policy at the UGent faculties¹²⁵.</p>

By the end of 2005, a new version of the Survey UGender was ready. A group of the Steering Committee decided to test this online survey within a small group of people. Each member asked five UGent staff members to collaborate in an online survey about their career at Ghent University. It was important to address a representative group: men, women, academic staff members (professors, post-doc researchers, assistants and pre-doctoral fellows), administrative and technical staff members, staff members from different faculties, staff from the central administration, staff members with children, staff members without children, younger and older members of staff. 33 of the 38 staff members who were asked to participate in this test phase filled out the online survey.

¹²² www.checkmarket.be.

¹²³ For an overview of the references that were an important source of information for the creation of the Survey UGender, see References.

¹²⁴ The 'working group Survey UGender' consisted of H. Pyck and S. Lievens (Centre for Genderstudies), prof. dr. M. Demoor (LW), dr. M.C. Van de Velde (IBBT), prof. dr. A. Aelterman (PP), T. Maes (PS), prof. dr. P. Bracke (PS) and prof. dr. J. De Maeseneer (GE).

¹²⁵ For more information about the current members, see: <http://www.cgs.ugent.be/UGender/stuurgroep> (in Dutch).

The test group was a representative sample of the features listed above.

The survey consisted of nine parts. After filling out a survey part, the respondents were asked to evaluate it by means of an evaluation form. For each part, the following questions were asked:

- How long did it take you to fill out this part? Considering the length of this part, do you think this part is too short/too long/good as it is?
- Are the questions formulated clearly? Are some of the questions difficult to interpret?
- Are there any questions you rather had not answered or did not answer because of privacy issues?
- Did you expect any other questions? Do you think that some important questions are missing?
- Considering your specific background, could you fill out all the questions?
- Do you have any other remarks about this part?

Using this information, the survey was revised in the following months. By the end of March 2006, the final version of the UGender Survey was ready.

4.3.2.3. *Privacy aspects*

The survey could be distributed in two ways: by hosting the survey on a webpage or by defining a panel of e-mail contacts. In the second option, each panel member receives a personalized e-mail that includes a unique link to the survey which enables the tool to track who has responded (and send reminder e-mails). Since hosting the survey on a webpage does not permit a non-response analysis, this option was dismissed.

It was opted for to define a panel of e-mail contacts because this made it possible to examine the entire UGent-population as well as to control the non-response. Because the e-mail addresses of the staff members would be used without informing them about this in advance, the federal privacy commission¹²⁶ advised to “make a declaration of the processing of non-coded personal details”. This declaration was made and a recommendation from the privacy commission was received in July 2006. This recommendation stated that the e-mail addresses could be used provided that certain conditions were met, among other things making a contract between UGent and the external company Checkmarket.

By the end of August 2006, the e-mail invitations with a link to the Survey UGender were distributed among all UGent staff members (see Tool Annex).

¹²⁶ ‘Commission for the protection of the personal privacy’ (*our own translation*). For more information about this federal commission, see: <http://www.privacycommission.be/overzicht.htm> (in Dutch or French).

4.4. Instrument and case study results

4.4.1. Instrument: 'Survey UGender'

For the instrument: see Tool Annex.

The survey started with questions about the respondents' background (gender, faculty, statute etc). These were followed by five survey parts about aspects that are important in career development: (1) career counselling and mentoring, (2) networks, (3) promotion, (4) meetings and (5) the combination of work and family/private life. Statements about UGent staff members were also presented to the respondents, and the desirability of potential policy advice was checked. The introduction to the survey (see Tool Annex) underlined the importance of having all staff members cooperate in the formulation of well-founded policy advices. It was also stressed that the responses were personal and would be kept strictly confidential. The survey could be stopped at any moment and finished at a later time. At the beginning of the new academic year (1 October 2006), everyone who had not yet responded to the survey received a reminder e-mail (see Tool Annex). The survey was closed on October 15th.

By means of this survey the entire population, namely everyone working at UGent in August 2006, received the opportunity to elaborate on their personal career at UGent. The research population consisted of all academic staff members (AP) and all administrative and technical staff members (ATP) of Ghent University. E-mail invitations were sent to all 6.152 contractual and statutory UGent staff members. 44% – 2.678 members of staff – filled out the survey. Given the size of the survey (116 questions), this was considered a good response rate. The average completion time was 32 minutes.

The survey statistics indicated that a third of the panel did not see the e-mail invitation. This may have been partly caused by spam filters. If this is taken into account and when looked solely at the staff members who did see the e-mail invitation, the response rate is much higher: within the group that looked at the e-mail invitation, 67% filled out the survey. Differences in non-response were found. In comparison to men, women were more willing to respond to the survey. Secondly, a higher response rate for ATP members compared to AP members was found. This selective non-response was corrected by reweighing the data on the basis of the variables 'sex' and 'statute group'. The survey responses were processed and analysed with the statistical programme SPSS (version SPSS 15.0.1). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the results.

4.4.2. Case study results

4.4.2.1. *Do gender-related problems exist at UGent?*

The survey part 'Statements about staff members of UGent' was used to examine

whether staff members perceive and experience gender-related problems at university. The respondents had to indicate to what extent they agreed with gender statements. The following significant gender differences were found:

In comparison to their female colleagues, male staff members agree to a larger extent to the following statements:

- men and women in my department are treated equally (see table 2.1 in the Appendices);
- the competence of men and women in my department is equally assessed.

In comparison to their male colleagues, female staff members agree to a larger extent to the following statements:

- in comparison to colleagues of the other sex I experience more obstacles in my career within UGent (see table 2.2 in the Appendices);
- men are more often than women with similar expertise asked to participate in projects, congresses, etc. (see table 2.3 in the Appendices);
- a higher number of women in boards and committees would have a positive impact on the careers and opportunities of women at UGent (see table 2.4 in the Appendices);
- a higher number of women in boards and committees would have a positive impact on the diversity of research and education at UGent.

In comparison to their male colleagues, female academic staff members agree to a larger extent with the following statements (this difference is not found in the administrative and technical staff):

- I believe that my gender influences my promotion opportunities (see table 2.5 in the Appendices);
- I believe that my gender influences the relationship with/the appreciation of colleagues and students.

4.4.2.2. *Promotion problems?*

The survey inquired about the extent to which staff members are informed about promotion opportunities, as well as to what extent they already came into contact with promotion opportunities at UGent. The largest group of staff members believes a promotion is possible in the next ten years. Men tend to be more convinced than women that promotion is possible. Women more often answer 'I don't know' to this question than men.

A remarkable result: only 6% strongly agrees with the statement 'there is sufficient information available about career and promotion prospects at UGent'. Gender differences are found within the AP, but not within the ATP: in proportion to their male colleagues, a larger group of female academic staff members (50%) does not agree with this statement.

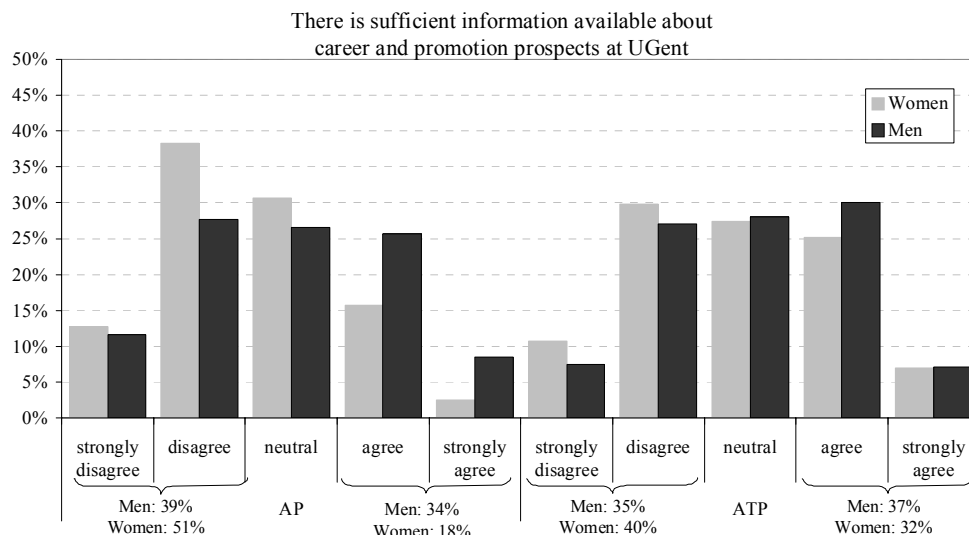


Figure 3: Answers to the statement 'There is sufficient information available about career and promotion prospects at UGent', by sex

Only one in three academic staff members thinks the appointment and promotion system for the academic staff is clear. Compared to their male colleagues, female academic staff members consider the system to be less clear: 27% of women as opposed to 38% of men think this system is clear. This gender difference is most explicit among professors.

Table 19: Transparency of promotion prospects and expectations

	AP men				AP women				χ^2	
	(+) +	+/-	(-) -	Number	(+) +	+/-	(-) -	Number		
I think my own promotion prospects to be ...	42%	20%	38%	597	28%	28%	44%	433	***	
I think the aspects of my dossier that are evaluated for appointments and promotion (the evaluation criteria) to be ...	47%	21%	32%	576	40%	27%	32%	377	*	
<i>I have a clear view of what is expected of me in order to promote about</i>	research tasks	72%	10%	18%	641	66%	13%	21%	428	-
	teaching tasks	60%	14%	27%	611	49%	21%	30%	408	**
	academic service tasks	37%	23%	39%	610	34%	28%	38%	403	-
	administrative tasks	36%	22%	42%	580	29%	30%	41%	366	*

(+) +: fairly to very clear; +/-: neither clear, nor unclear; (-) -: very to fairly unclear

42% of male academic staff have a fairly clear to very clear view of their own promotion prospects, as opposed to only 28% of female academic staff. Compared to

women, men also give more 'positive' answers to the questions about what is expected of them in order to promote. We see the largest gender difference with regard to teaching tasks. Nearly half of all UGent staff members say that they are (were) not informed about possible promotion conditions and criteria. A gender difference is found at the highest level: more female than male professors say they are not sufficiently informed. This gender difference is not found within the post-doc, pre-doc and ATP groups.

The majority of female academic staff and a third of male academic staff agrees that having children influences the promotion opportunities of women at UGent (see table 2.6 in the Appendices). This gender difference is also observed within the ATP staff, but to a smaller extent. Moreover, 17% of male academic staff members (as opposed to only 3% of their female colleagues) agree that having children influences the promotion opportunities of men at UGent. This clearly indicates that the combination of work and family is not merely a 'women's thing'.

4.4.2.3. Significance of the survey results within Ghent University: the initiation of an equal opportunities policy – policy advices

The results of the UGender project (i.e. gender statistics, gender screening of the leave arrangements and survey) were presented to the UGent Board of Governors. All staff members were informed about the results through the university staff magazine, the Monthly UGent Magazine and the website of the Centre for Gender Studies.

The UGender results formed the basis for the initiation of an equal opportunities policy at Ghent University. The results gave a detailed picture of the male/female situation at the university and were used as the basis for adapted policy advices for the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women at Ghent University. It is important to emphasize that these policy advices are relevant to all staff members in all ranks and grades at UGent: women as well as men, academic staff as well as administrative and technical staff. The policy advices relate to different areas: policy advices concerning promotion at UGent, objective and transparent criteria in selection and promotion, career counselling/mentoring, promotion of UGent as a family-friendly university, f/m composition of committees and boards, visibility of women and female role models, and structural initiatives. These policy advices were discussed and approved by the interfaculty Steering Committee UGender. The faculty board members also received the opportunity to inspect the policy advices. In each faculty the advices were explained by the faculty f/m duo of the UGender Steering Committee.

After inspection by the faculties, these advices formed the basis for a dedicated action plan¹²⁷ for the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women at UGent. This action plan contained an estimate of the costs for the implementation of the advices. The action plan and the UGender advices were put on the agenda of the Board of

¹²⁷ For more information about the advices and the action plan, visit our website www.cgs.ugent.be or contact the Centre for Genderstudies – Ghent University (+32 9 264 39 78).

Governors of UGent. Through this action plan the initial impetus was given to do something about the loss of (female) talent. The aim was to get the support from the faculties and university board for the start of a gender policy at UGent. After discussion in the Board of Governors, the advices together with the action plan and the survey results were published on the website of the Centre for Gender Studies. The complete UGent report can be consulted and downloaded by all UGent staff members on this website.

4.5. Conclusions and recommendations

4.5.1. Conclusions about the Survey UGent

The results clearly indicate a gender difference in the perception of whether or not gender-related problems exist at Ghent University. Female pre-docs experience less gender-related problems than other academic women. Since this group is at the bottom of the academic ladder, most of them have not yet experienced promotion opportunities. Women higher on the academic ladder claim to experience gender-related problems, indicating that there is a promotion problem for women at the university. Moreover, the most 'negative' answers to the gender statements were given by the group of female post-docs, which is exactly the group in which a lot of women 'disappear' from an academic career. Subsequently, taking action by organizing mentoring programmes for female post-docs is a very important policy advice.

The survey results also show that a lot of women and men do not have a clear view on promotion at UGent. An effect of the old boys' networks and the glass ceiling is that gender differences are primarily found within the highest academic ranks. Within the ZAP a larger group of female professors answer that they are (were) not informed about possible promotion conditions and criteria (32% of the female professors as opposed to only 14% of the male professors). This gender difference is also found within the higher grades of the ATP. Yet another result from the survey is that only a third of the academic staff finds the appointment and promotion system clear. Again gender differences are found mainly within the highest ranks: the largest group of female professors thinks this system is 'neither clear, nor unclear'; the largest group of men thinks this system is fairly clear.

Making all the regulations available on the university's website alone is not transparent enough. At the same time the results of the promotion part show the significance of the old boys' network: in comparison to women, men think they are better informed about promotion, and they report a clearer view on the career and promotion policy at UGent as well as on their own promotion prospects.

4.5.2. Prospects for further research

It is advisable to monitor the action plan and the UGender policy advices by making their impact measurable. The impact of the advices could be made measurable by sending out the survey (or certain survey parts) every three to four years to all (or a selection of) staff members.

An important point of criticism is the fact that the UGender Survey was not sent to staff members who had (recently) left UGent. To correct this problem, focus groups could be set up.

At present, the gender statistics of the selection and promotion committees at UGent have not yet been investigated. It is recommended that not all members of these committees have the same sex, and that external evaluators are involved in these committees. It would also be interesting to take a closer look at the regulations concerning the composition of these committees. Another suggestion for further research is a gender screening of the reports from the selection and promotion committees.

4.5.3. Transferability to other organizations and settings

The UGender Survey shows a gender difference in the perception of gender-related problems. This difference is a very important policy result, and not only for Ghent University and other universities.

The mere presentation of the 'dry' gender statistics often leads to remarks and conclusions such as: women simply do not apply for job openings, women themselves take a step back from their career because of the difficult combination of work and children, women do not want to reach the top, etc. In other words, it is often assumed that women themselves choose not to promote or that the under-representation of women is merely a matter of time. The results show that there is more than meets the eye. Bringing forward this result next to presenting the statistics can be an eye-opener and can raise gender awareness. It can also raise the willingness from the top to do something about the female under-representation. The survey received a large response from staff members. The simple fact that two thirds of those who looked at the e-mail invitation actually filled out the survey, reflects that 'gender lives' among staff members at university. In other words, it is not a minority group's problem; therefore it can not be ignored by the top.

The discussed pieces of the UGender Survey about the existence of gender-related problems and promotion within Ghent University are immediately usable in other universities, organizations, firms and countries provided that the working definitions are adjusted (for instance, the definition of promotion in this or that setting, university, firm, non-profit organisation).

5. Outflow: exit interviews

Liselotte Vandebussche

5.1. Introduction

In addition to a quantitative study of the under-representation of women at a particular institution, in this case Ghent University, it is important to know how male and female employees who leave the institution, evaluate their former academic careers and future possibilities at the university or elsewhere. Therefore, it is necessary not only to focus on the ‘survivors’, but also on the women and men leaving an institution. To investigate whether there are gender differences in career expectations, work satisfaction, support and opportunities, a qualitative research based on semi-structured in-depth exit interviews with both male and female employees was carried out. Through 32 in-depth interviews with former employees, their reasons to leave, their personal aspirations, negative and positive career experiences and views on gender differences in academic circles were investigated. As became clear from the UGender survey, male employees considered the choice for a better work-life balance as the main factor for women to leave the academic world, whereas women pointed to the university culture and old boys’ networks as a reason to advance their careers elsewhere. In order to assess these results by means of qualitative data, individual exit interviews were chosen. In addition to the elements mentioned, other factors such as women’s alleged reticence to put themselves forward for promotion, their career planning and their need for a mentor’s support were questioned.

5.2. Literature study

To develop the instrument, several studies were consulted. A large-scale and nationwide qualitative research carried out in the Netherlands proved useful in this respect¹²⁸. It investigated the appeal of an academic career, especially for younger researchers and women, and focused on the inflow, advancement and outflow of younger and senior researchers in academic circles. The research analysed their views, expectations and experiences of scientific research in academic circles.

In addition, several studies focusing on the gender gap in academic circles were con-

¹²⁸ De Gier et al. (2001), *op. cit.*

sulted. According to Noordenbos¹²⁹, Portegijs¹³⁰, Brouns¹³¹, Van Haegendoren et al.¹³² and Timmers¹³³, factors that are of crucial importance to the advancement of women's careers, are:

- transparent criteria for recruitment and promotion;
- role models and mentor support;
- assistance in formal and informal networking and visibility;
- childcare facilities and other measures enabling an agreeable work-life balance;
- more flexibility with regard to international experience;
- more women involved in research applications and committees.

Useful introductions to qualitative research and its methodology, were: Maso¹³⁴, Kvale¹³⁵ and Silverman¹³⁶. A guide to work with the software program NVivo is Gibbs¹³⁷.

5.3. Process report

In January 2007, the Centre for Gender Studies of Ghent University obtained a list of former researchers and a list of PhD-students who left Ghent University in the academic year 2005-2006 from the personnel department. After sorting out all people who were re-employed in the meantime, 258 former employees were contacted. They were sent a letter explaining the purpose of this research, stressing the anonymity of the respondents, and asking for their co-operation (see Tool Annex). In addition, they also received a questionnaire (see Tool Annex). A stamped and addressed envelope was added, which led at least in part to the high response rate: 75 researchers returned the questionnaire, of which 65 wanted to co-operate. 10 researchers returned the filled-in questionnaire without completing their contact information. Three people e-mailed us

¹²⁹ Noordenbos, G. (1995). 'Genderasymmetrie in de aanvraag van onderzoekssubsidies'. In: *Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies* 2, nr. 4, p. 36-45.

¹³⁰ Portegijs, W. (1998). *Eerdaags Evenredig? Beleidsgerichte studies Hoger onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek* 54. Den Haag.

¹³¹ Brouns, M. (1999). *De kwaliteit van het oordeel. Een onderzoek naar sekse en beoordelingssystemen van NWO en KNAW*. Utrecht.

¹³² Van Haegendoren, M., Valgaeren, E. & Noelanders, S. (2000). *Gezocht: professor (v). Een onderzoek naar vrouwen in academia*. Diepenbeek.

¹³³ Timmers, T.M. (2007). *De Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam als smeltkroes van talent. Analyse van de personele ondervertegenwoordiging van vrouwen en etnische minderheden aan de EUR*. Rotterdam.

¹³⁴ Maso, I. (1987). *Kwalitatief onderzoek*. Boom.

¹³⁵ Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oakes.

¹³⁶ Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting Qualitative Data. Methods for Analysing Text, Talk and Interaction*. London.

¹³⁷ Gibbs, G.R. (2002). *Qualitative Data Analysis. Explorations with NVivo*. Buckingham-Philadelphia.

that they were permanently living abroad, what made it difficult to make an appointment for an interview. Three people working abroad but returning to Belgium now and then were included in the group of participants. Two people sent an e-mail that they once planned to start a research at Ghent University, but were never employed by this institution. As 65 respondents enabled us to select a well-balanced group of participants, this response rate was considered high enough. A second mailing was planned in case the response rate had been lower.

In order to select a well-balanced group of researchers in terms of gender, age, research domain and their desire to return to Ghent University, the potential respondents were sent a questionnaire, asking for their:

- gender;
- nationality;
- year of birth;
- years/months of employment;
- faculty of employment;
- full-time or part-time position;

and:

- whether Ghent University was their first employer;
- why they left Ghent University;
- whether they wanted to return to Ghent University.

In case they wanted to co-operate, they could complete their contact information and the day and place of their preference to meet for an interview.

Not all questions proved relevant for this research. E.g., the question whether Ghent University was their first employer was of no use. Some questions needed an extra option among the answers and others were not specific enough. E.g. the reason why they left Ghent University should also include the option that their contract with the institution was finished, and the question whether they would like to return to Ghent University also needed the optional answer 'Maybe'. The latter question, whether they wished to return or not, might be put more specifically, e.g. whether they wanted to pursue an academic career at Ghent University or not.

After receiving the completed questionnaires, a group of 32 researchers was selected. This number enabled us to conduct, transcribe, code and interpret the interviews in six months time and proved high enough to yield satisfying results. Sixteen men and 16 women were selected, half of them older than thirty and half of them younger, half of them wanting to return to university and half of them satisfied to have left the institution. Among them, 18 respondents came from the alpha sciences (Arts & Philosophy, Economy & Business Administration, Law, Political & Social Sciences, Psychology & Educational Sciences), 8 from the beta sciences (Sciences, Engineering, Bioscience Engineering) and 6 from the gamma sciences (Medicine & Health Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Veterinary Medicine). Eighteen respondents preferred to meet at the university (12 men, 6 women), 14 interviews were conducted at home (4 men, 10 women).

At the start of the interview, the purpose of this project was explained and the way in which the results would be handled was made clear. The respondents' strict anonymity was ensured and they were set at ease by asking to speak from their own experiences. The semi-structured interviews (see Tool Annex), of which the results are discussed below, dealt with eight topics:

- the motivations to stay or leave;
- the start of their career;
- their views on science and their personal expectations;
- the content and context of their research;
- the support & role models;
- the demands and difficulties;
- their views on the gender gap;
- their visibility.

The interviews lasted about 30 minutes to an hour and a half. They were digitally recorded and then transcribed in detail in NVivo 7 (QSR International), a software program used to organize qualitative data and facilitate analysis. This program proved useful because summaries of the consulted secondary SOURCES, 'ANNOTATIONS', i.e. the remarks made during and after the interview itself, and 'MEMOS', i.e. preliminary remarks made during the process of transcription, could be added or linked to the relevant parts of the transcripts. During the initial phase of the coding process, one analyst established a preliminary codebook of concepts, closely connected to the interview topics. The interviewer herself modified and completed this scheme while reading the interviews, which led to a codebook of twelve codes, divided into several sub-codes (see Tool Annex). This final version of the codebook was then applied to the 32 interviews by linking up one or more codes with the blocks of relevant text.

By means of simple and advanced QUERIES, the answers of women and men were separated per code, in order to get a better view on possible gender differences in the respondents' views. Using the codebook, the decisive reasons to leave Ghent University were complemented with the respondents' overall views on working at Ghent University and the negative and positive aspects that influenced their decisions. In addition to the explicitly mentioned reasons to leave, such as job insecurity, fundamental research, lack of support, competition and bureaucracy, other aspects were considered, such as:

- **job insecurity**
 - + **career path**
 - └ no vacancies: a lack of funding and no clear perspectives
 - └ current job: positive and negative details about their current job
 - └ position offered: a position inside or outside the institution was offered
 - └ application sent: they applied for funding;
- **fundamental research**
 - + **negative aspects**
 - └ lack of relevance: they considered their research project not relevant enough
 - └ ivory tower: university was considered as detached from the outside world
 - + **career path**

- └ current job;
- **lack of support**
 - + **career path**
 - └ necessary support: support was regarded indispensable for their careers
 - + **negative aspects**
 - └ feuds: respondents reported about ongoing quarrels among staff members
 - └ opposition: they experienced opposition to advance their careers;
- **competition**
 - + **negative aspects**
 - └ A1-fetishism: the focus on the quantity of publications, impact factor, ...
 - + **working conditions**
 - └ competition: rivalry and heavy competition among colleagues;
- **bureaucracy**
 - + **negative aspects**
 - └ feuds
 - + **working conditions**
 - └ co-operation: their colleagues were or were not co-operative
 - └ hierarchy: there was a strict hierarchy between the employees.

Comparably, the respondents' explicit views on gender differences with regard to the advancement of an academic career were complemented with their personal (gendered) experiences of several aspects of their former occupation:

- **gender views**
 - └ competition: gender differences connected to competition
 - + **career path**
 - └ ambition: whether they had ambition to advance their careers in academia
 - └ deliberate choice: whether they made a deliberate choice to stay or leave
 - └ self-image: whether they were self-confident or not
 - + **expectations**
 - └ obstacles: the (un)expected obstacles they were confronted with
 - + **working conditions**
 - └ competition;
- **gender views**
 - └ family life: whether family life affects men's or women's career choices
 - └ international experience: whether this is influenced by one's gender
 - └ output: whether their scientific output is influenced by gender issues
 - + **work-life balance**
 - └ caring tasks: whether they had enough time to take care of their family
 - └ spare time: whether they had an agreeable amount of spare time
 - └ workload: whether they could combine teaching, management and research;
- **gender views**
 - └ networks: whether their networks were influenced by their gender
 - └ recruitment: whether the recruitment was influenced by gender issues
 - + **career path**
 - └ lobby work: whether they did or felt they had to lobby to advance their careers

↳ necessary support.

Recommendations

- Asking for the respondents' views, expectations and possible disappointments with regard to several aspects of their career is a good means to avoid simple yes/no-answers and receive valid information on aspects you did not specifically ask for, such as self-image, working atmosphere, positive and negative elements etc. This latter remark also pertains to the enquiry into the respondents' ideal jobs: the answer is not a purpose in itself but provides valid information on their opinion on education, work-life balance etc.
- Since the interviews are sometimes a demanding experience, it is highly recommended to end the interview on a pleasant note. Asking for the agreeable aspects the interviewees look back upon is a perfect way to achieve this. Moreover, since they have overlooked all aspects of their former career during the interview, it also provides additional information on particular merits of research in academia and on the overall work experience.

5.4. Instrument and case study results

5.4.1. Instrument: semi-structured in-depth exit interviews

For the instrument: see Tool Annex.

The central question of this research is what kind of gender differences there are, both in the motives to leave a particular institution, in this case Ghent University, and in the overall working experience and career perspectives. In order to conduct this research, a semi-structured exit interview was developed, based on the consulted literature about the under-representation of women in academic circles and on the central questions of typical exit surveys used in other organisations (such as work content, job satisfaction, working conditions, terms of employment, co-operation, workload, motives to leave, future perspectives, new position). After explaining the purpose and strict anonymity of the interview, the opening question enquired into the reasons to leave Ghent University, the wish to stay or not and the efforts made to stay. Depending on the respondents' answers a further explanation was asked with regard to the specific reasons to leave and/or their desire to stay. Secondly, the interviewees' choices for an academic career and their expectations were questioned. Thirdly, the content and context of their research and possible disappointments were discussed. The following question dealt with the relationship with their supervisors and/or others and aspects of support and control. Next, the workload and work-life balance were discussed. After enquiring into their views on the influence of gender aspects, their visibility was touched. The final questions dealt with their career expectations, ideal profession and their happiest memories when looking back.

5.4.2. Case study results

5.4.2.1. Self-reported reasons to leave Ghent University

Table 20: Self-reported reasons to leave Ghent University. The numbers indicate how many times this reason was mentioned by the respondents. (For a more detailed table, see table 2.7 in the Appendices)

	Male employees	Female employees
Job insecurity	11	9
Fundamental research	5	10
Lack of support	4	4
Competition	3	3
Bureaucratic atmosphere	0	4
<i>Number of respondents</i>	16	16

5.4.2.1.1. Job insecurity and precarious perspectives

One of the main reasons to leave Ghent University for both women (11) and men (9), is the job insecurity and short-term contracts. Male and female employees mentioned that they had no perspectives to become permanently employed after staying another year or longer, and they often knew it from the start. In other words, a precarious and demanding continuation of their career did not seem to balance with the future reward and opportunities. When the profits and losses were weighed, a permanent position outside university was preferred to the difficulties of advancing an academic career, such as the heavy competition, obscure criteria for promotion, the importance of networks and the emphasis on the sheer number of publications. This motive is closely connected with the merits of a job outside the academic world, such as relevance, teamwork and new challenges.

More women (11) than men (7) obtained a permanent position after leaving Ghent University. Men as well as women expressed their negative feelings towards the reckless competition and scarcity of permanent positions, but men ventured to apply once more or were offered an opportunity to advance their careers. Among the nine men that are still working in an academic institution, five applied for a scholarship and four were explicitly asked. A fifth man refused the offer to stay. In comparison, only three women are still working in an academic institution, of which two applied for a scholarship and only one was asked. One woman was not granted funding and left university, two other women refused the offer to stay.

5.4.2.1.2. Fundamental research

Although at least ten women really liked their jobs, as many of them also expressed the

desire to (re)turn to the professional field itself, the private sector or the industry to broaden their horizon. They wanted to achieve more than merely publishing articles and wondered who could benefit from their research. They considered education, applied research and dissemination to the field as valid as fundamental research, yet regretted that this was less rewarded. They consider their new jobs as socially more relevant or try to design their professional activities for a relevant cause. Five women regarded the staff members as living in an ivory tower. Five of the eight women who are still involved in science have a position outside university and are doing applied research. Two women who applied for a scholarship with a more practically oriented type of research were not granted a scholarship at Ghent University.

Five of the interviewed men mentioned that they were not exclusively interested in fundamental research. As the women, they also wondered who was interested in their results, whether university was the place to be for them and whether their research would still be rewarding in two years time. Three of them never planned to stay after they had finished their PhD's. Three others still consider university as an ivory tower, its staff lacking the necessary sense of reality. Another man considered the content of his work not interesting enough and longed for some variation. Four of the twelve men who are still involved in scientific research, do applied research in private institutions and industry. The other four work as a teacher, surgeon or are unemployed.

5.4.2.1.3. Lack of support

Four men regretted the lack of support and called it a reason to leave the university. Two men are still working in an academic institution but do not want to return to their former university because of the lack of support in their specific research groups or departments. They were carrying out a specific research in which they felt to stand alone. Another man left university because he missed a particular research group in which he could function and was aware of the need of support to advance his career in the academic world. One man mentioned that he did not receive the key figures' support, which contributed to his doubts about pursuing an academic career. Personal animosities of the permanent staff also play a role in this respect. Talking to a particular colleague almost implied getting into trouble because one seemed to take part against another colleague. One man wondered whether he should have taken sides in an ongoing quarrel in order to gain some respect and support.

Four women pointed to the lack of support as a reason to leave Ghent University. One woman regretted that personal relations greatly influenced the decision process and considered it an additional motive to leave: goodwill and relationships were as important as intellectual merit. Another woman mentioned that her supervisor had left university due to an internal conflict, which made it difficult for her to get support and advance her career, since she could no longer count on any 'political connections'. A third woman's supervisor did not only advise her not to publish or attend congresses, but also used her veto against other departmental members in order not to choose her for a vacant position. The last woman said she did not fulfil additional tasks in her department, since it would harm her position as a result of the many animosities. For

three other women this hostility was not the main reason to leave the academic world, but they did regret the tough and tense atmosphere in which they had to stand up for themselves and could not put trust in people. Even so-called objective criteria could be twisted and turned to recruit the preferred candidate.

5.4.2.1.4. Competition

Three men called the relentless competition for a professorate and the political games involved in that process the motive to leave. One man added that he completely disagrees with the university policy of stimulating as many researchers as possible without offering them clear perspectives. In his opinion, this has nothing to do with ambition, but all with a blind struggle for survival. Four who left university for other reasons or even want to return, equally regretted this competitive aspect. According to them, competitive researchers are not always the best researchers. It forces people to focus on their colleagues' curricula and leads to paralysis: realizing that others have advanced more creates personal doubts. Although publications are considered important, the mere focus on quantity is regarded with contempt. At least half of the male researchers considered it demoralizing. Content is undervalued, results are published too quickly and ideas are endlessly recycled. Moreover, not all research is suitable for international, peer-reviewed journals, what makes it a subjective criterion for promotion. Six researchers did not think there was competition involved and three respondents called the competitive aspect a personal motivation.

This competitive aspect was also an important reason for three women to leave the academic world. They regretted that colleagues were in fierce competition with each other, started rumours and even stole work in order to advance their careers. They decided that they were too sensitive to work in their departments. Competition was considered paralyzing rather than stimulating. Seven women in total despised this competitive element, yet two of them admitted that it stimulated them to publish, be it in a very unhealthy way. Emphasizing performance meets approval, but competition at all costs is considered counterproductive and demoralizing. Three researchers said they were valued proportionally to the number of articles they had published and the journal's impact factor. To most women, scientific merit is not compatible with competition. Some researchers can easily deduct results, whereas other research is time-consuming. They regretted the mere focus on quantity and also pointed to the differences between or within scientific domains when candidates are compared. They consider co-operation far more stimulating and rewarding and think they would achieve as much. Moreover, because there are no clear criteria for promotion, competition creates jealousy and frustration. Six women, however, did not experience any competition.

5.4.2.1.5. Bureaucratic atmosphere

Four women, one from the humanities and three from sciences, mentioned the lethargic atmosphere in their departments. They were motivated at the start of their careers, but gradually became disappointed by the lack of dynamics, the endless meetings and inefficiency. They wanted to advance more quickly, stimulate innovation but were

confronted with the reluctance of the older staff and the shortage of funds. The productivity was hampered by feuds between departments and professors and nothing was done to mend matters. They did not have a say in certain matters and felt they needed new challenges.

Three men were also disappointed with the atmosphere at work, although it was not their main motive to leave. They complained about the absence of intellectual debate, their uninterested colleagues, the absence of an international network, the time-consuming meetings etc. Five men said the relationships with their superiors were very hierarchical and even dictatorial. Co-operation was not always appreciated.

5.4.2.2. *Views on gender in academic circles*¹³⁸

Most of the interviewed women (11) and men (10) think gender plays an important role in the advancement of an academic career, as they can derive from the low number of women at the academic top. However, very few people gave a circumstantial explanation. Most researchers think it is not due to overt discrimination, but point to individual choices, social and cultural factors and organizational aspects. Besides the explanations below, two men blame the patriarchal atmosphere between supervisors and PhD-students, others think women are less self-confident in a male-dominated world or have to fight more to advance to a higher position. Some women said that the prototype of a scientist is still male and strongly believe that female researchers have to be better than their male competitors.

5.4.2.2.1. Competitiveness and ambition

Three men and three women think women's restraints with regard to heavy competition are crucial for the under-representation of women. They think women are less competitive and withdraw more often from the race. However, as became clear above, as many men as women considered the fierce competition a motive to leave the university and seven male researchers equally regretted this aspect. Moreover, although eight men clearly chose to do a PhD, seven of the interviewed men did not aspire a professorship and six of them did not start their research with a clear goal of what they wanted to achieve. Three men were still in doubt whether to go on or not. What is striking, is a general absence of career planning and a dim view on the future.

This is different for the female researchers. Although slightly more women (8) than men said they did not aspire a professorship, only three women did not have a career planning in mind, and three would have liked to become a professor. As many women as men made a well-considered choice to do a PhD. Many more women (10) than men (4) emphasized the necessity of support in the advancement of a career, rather than ambition or merit. Comparably, eight women sometimes asked themselves whether they would be able to make it, whereas only three men doubted their capacities.

¹³⁸ See table 2.8 in the Appendices.

5.4.2.2.2. Pregnancy and work-life balance

Men hold different opinions with regard to pregnancy and family life. Some regard children as the main reason for women to leave university and consider it a deliberate choice. Some consider maternity leave as an important obstacle for advancing a career, because of the time women need to invest in this crucial phase of life. Others regard the three months of maternity leave of little importance to the advancement of a project and think it should not be taken into account when comparing two candidates. One man said that competence should always prevail, but added that men are often perceived as the most competent candidates because they did not 'lose' three months. One man emphasized the negative reactions to pregnant women in his department. Although the compulsory paternity leave was officially extended from three to ten days in Belgium, he also mentioned he was only allowed one day and a half off from work.

Many respondents remarked that women generally invest more time in their families. Some of them regretted this and some of them accepted the consequences. With regard to the often required international experience, four men regarded it as an obstacle that is definitely obstructing women's careers. Five men said it is as difficult for fathers as for mothers to leave their families behind for a while. However, two of the interviewed men with very small children went abroad. Three men occupy a position outside university that is easier to combine with children. Four men consider it a strictly personal choice and refer to women who are willing to go abroad.

Six women also mentioned their superiors' negative perceptions of pregnancy and maternity leave. They themselves consider maternity leave as an obstacle to their career advancement, since they are not publishing in the meantime, their research is out of sight and they cannot take part in social events. One woman thinks the workload is too heavy to combine with small children. Some of the interviewed women took a step back because their partners were not taking part in their households to advance their own careers. Much depends on one's partner, rather than on the mere fact of having children. One woman stated that men who are excelling in their fields often have a partner who is taking care of their households. She added that the way in which people run their households might be seen as a private matter, but thinks women are more often at a disadvantage in that respect. Two women said they would miss their children while going abroad or working late hours, while two other women, having three or more children, said they were perfectly able to manage their career and family life. An international stay seems difficult when it is for a couple of months or years, but many women pointed to other possibilities to gain international experience, such as short stays, conferences and joint publications.

5.4.2.2.3. Recruitment and networking

Four men think there used to be gender differences in **recruitment**, but they consider these obstacles gone now. More than half of the male researchers (9) do not think gender has an influence on that. Three men said personal preferences definitely have an impact: supervisors select the candidate of their choice and then motivate their preference in whatever way they want. One man thinks the recruitment of PhD-stu-

dents and postdoctoral students is gender-neutral, while there might be a preference for men when succession is concerned. Three men could think of examples in which their supervisors (m/f) wanted a male researcher. Among the women, less researchers (6) think recruitment is gender-neutral. Three women think personal bonds are important, irrespective of gender. Seven women think their departments prefer men. One of them thinks women have to excel men in order to be selected, others think the fear of a pregnancy and maternity leave makes supervisors recruit more men. Another woman stated that it was very clear that men were put forward when it came to promotion. One woman said that she was even discouraged to write an application. In addition, a member of a committee reviewing her application, said to her: *“So, Miss X., you want to write a doctoral dissertation? Do you realize you won’t have the chance to have a private life then? Are you comfortable with that?”*

Half of the male researchers (8) we interviewed do not think men’s **networks** are larger or more supportive. Two men said women are even more versed in building networks. Six men think gender does play a role in that respect. Three of them believe men create meaningful bonds after work whereas women are often excluded from these informal networks. Teambuilding often takes place when women are looking after their children, and the high proportion of men in formal networks affects the presence of women in those networks. Another man thinks women prefer to go to an early lecture at congresses to exploring the city at night with their colleagues. More women (10) than men do not believe gender plays a role in developing a network or building a reputation. Three of them think it depends on the gender ratio in their fields: two women in a masculine field said they were more easily known, one woman in a highly feminized domain added that the few men involved were quickly spotted. As many women as men (6) think gender definitely plays a role in networking. Five women said they only have half the time due to family commitments. One of them said she does not meet up with other researchers after work when she is abroad. A last respondent believes women have smaller egos and less self-confidence to make themselves known.

Four men realize it is necessary to search for **support** to be promoted, but do not look forward to it. Ten men said they had never invoked contacts to enhance their chances. One man has a small but very effective network that has led him to his current position. Four women also said it is important to find support to advance a career, but are not willing to play the game. They want to prove themselves through their work and refuse to invoke their contacts in advancing their careers. Two women said they consulted particular people to get support, but received the wrong advice, which eventually led to the contrary.

5.5. Conclusions and recommendations

One of the main reasons to leave Ghent University for both women and men is the work insecurity and short-term contracts. The heavy competition, obscure criteria,

importance of networks and the emphasis on quantity instead of quality are obstacles in sharp contrast with the relevance, teamwork and new challenges of working outside academic circles. More women than men opt for a permanent position outside the university. The second major motive for women to leave university is their desire for applied research that 'makes a difference'. A minority of men agrees with this aspect. Less women than men are still involved in research and the majority is involved in applied research. A quarter of the respondents regard university as an ivory tower. The third and fourth reason, reported by both women and men, are the lack of support and weight of personal animosities, and the competition and political games. Only women mention the bureaucratic atmosphere and inefficiency as a reason to leave, although many men are also disappointed with regard to this aspect.

Most women and men are aware of the gender gap in academic circles. They think it is due to women's reluctance to enter the game, though both women and men have their doubts about this heavy competition. More women than men have a clear ambition. In comparison to women, more men still have doubts about their future career. More women than men point to the necessity of supportive figures and say to doubt their capacities from time to time. With regard to maternity leave and the time invested in families, several opinions were expressed. Men and women agree that it is an important factor, but not all of them want to take it into account when comparing male and female candidates. Many former employees mention their superiors' negative perceptions of pregnancy. There were no women who considered family and household tasks as the main reason to leave university. Yet three women mentioned that the work-life balance is easier to keep in their new profession. Two women with three or more children stated they could combine their work with the care for their children. Men are equally interested in keeping a good work-life balance.

With regard to recruitment and promotion, six respondents answered that men were probably preferred to women. Networking proved to be important, but more women thought they were as good as men in developing supportive networks. More than a third of the respondents said women were at a disadvantage because men could more easily invest time in their networks.

We can conclude that the main reason for women to leave university is not their desire to have a more agreeable work-life balance, but the job insecurity, lack of support and heavy competition. Many men agree with these motives, but more of them are willing to play the game. Two motives that are more often mentioned by women are the lack of relevance and the bureaucratic atmosphere. They also encountered more obstacles in the advancement of their career: fewer women than men were asked for promotion, two women did not receive funding, two women had unpleasant experiences while asking for the necessary support and many supervisors were wary of pregnancy and maternity leave.

As exit interviews are an excellent opportunity to exchange knowledge on the former collaboration in a particular setting, it is highly recommended to interview all employees who leave an institution, academic or other, in order to get a better view on work satisfaction and gender obstacles in career development. Exit interviews are not only

an expression of respect towards the former employee but also provide the management with unique feedback on the lock, stock and barrel of the institution. As all institutions and organisations world-wide, especially highly competitive settings, are confronted with a gender gap in career advancement, exit-surveys prove to be a useful tool to pinpoint the obstacles women experience and can help to take apt measures to make highly talented employees stay.

5.5.1. Prospects for further research

- Although both PhD-students and other employees were contacted and the respondents differed greatly in age, only junior researchers and post-docs returned the completed questionnaire. In future applications of this instrument it would be advisable to try to reach former employees who held a professorship, but left the university nevertheless.
- In the questionnaire, the researchers were asked whether they wanted to return to Ghent University or not. The answers given during the interview sometimes differed from the filled-in answers. As mentioned above, it might be useful to put the question more specifically, e.g. whether they wish to advance their career in university or not.
- As the goal of this research was to obtain a general view of the reasons to leave Ghent University and the gender differences in work satisfaction and career development, both former employees who wanted to advance their career at Ghent University and researchers who voluntarily left Ghent University were interviewed. Future research could either deal with a selected group of respondents who did not think of an academic career from the start, in order to get a better view of the reasons to quit, or with a group of respondents who wanted to advance their careers in the academic world but could not, in order to get a better view of the obstacles they came across. However, the problem with the latter group is that many do not know whether they could or would make the efforts to stay. When a position would be offered to them, they would like to continue, but many are wary of the potential job insecurity afterwards. A quantitative survey, based on this qualitative research and addressed to all departing employees could provide a solution.
- As this qualitative survey primarily dealt with past experiences and opinions on gender in academic circles, it is advisable to complement this study with a quantitative research in order to study the importance of personal contacts, the number of publications, full-time work, international experience, role models or visibility for the advancement of a career in academic circles. In addition, it would be recommended to interview not only male and female employees who have left the institution, but also researchers who are still employed. In this way, issues such as the work-life balance and necessity of networks and support could be investigated from a different perspective.

Chapter 3

Career management

Esther Hiel (K.U.Leuven)

1. Introduction

The module of the K.U.Leuven will concentrate on researching the promotion opportunities and career management at the university. In this project the career opportunities of the entire university personnel database will be examined and clarified, entailing the Senior Academic Staff (ZAP)¹³⁸, Junior and Associate Academic Staff (ABAP) and Administrative and Technical Staff (ATP).

To meet the future standards of quality and quantity of research, education and service in Europe, universities need to maintain an optimally functioning staff. If universities continuously need to attract, employ and offer these outstanding co-workers maximum deployment opportunities, then an efficient career management is needed. Such a career management needs to bear quality tests concerning transparency, objectivity and effectiveness. Gender neutralism and diversity can be considered as indicators for a first test on transparency and objectivity.

Based on a brief literature study, the central problem definition will be further adapted to the specific needs of the different personnel categories. Obstacles will be identified and in-depth analyses will be made for each personnel category. The way the career and promotion opportunities were mapped is described in a first tool (see 4.1. Tool: Mapping career and promotion opportunities).

In close collaboration with diverse entities within the university, different smaller projects were elaborated within this module. A career management survey (see 4.2. Tool: Survey Career Management) was developed in collaboration with the Faculty of Theology. A tool on gender-aware job descriptions (see 4.3. Tool: Gender-aware job descriptions) was developed and tested in collaboration with the HR-department.

Within the structure of the K.U.Leuven, a network of Mainstreaming Promoters was founded. These Mainstreaming Promoters are responsible for actions concerning the gender issue in their own faculties or services. In the scope of of the VLIR-EQUAL Project the mainstreaming promoters were asked to propose some actions for the module 'Career management' for the academic years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. These actions and their results served as pilot projects for the VLIR-EQUAL Project and are

¹³⁸ Zelfstandig Academisch Personeel: all lecturers, senior lecturers, full professors and senior full professors.

reported as good practices. The way to implement a structure of Mainstreaming Promoters and how to introduce them into the concepts of gender mainstreaming (and diversity) are described in a fourth and last tool (see 4.4. Toolkit: Mainstreaming Promoters).

The way these tools were developed can be found in part 3 'Process report'. The way to apply them in the own organization and the way they have been tested within the K.U.Leuven are described in part 4 'Instrument and case study'.

The entire report is written along the steps that were taken to conduct the different parts of the research. By this process approach the author hopes to acquire a maximum exchange of learning effects and experiences.

1.1. Problem definition

This module will study the career opportunities of all personnel members working at the University of Leuven, including both academic personnel and administrative and technical personnel.

1.1.1. Academic personnel

The training of young graduates towards independent researchers, rewarded by a PhD, is one of the main tasks of the universities. According to several studies at different Flemish universities, the interest for the doctoral process and doctoral efficiency has increased these past few years,

On the other hand, the harsh reality is that universities are characterized by a large number of temporary contracts. The VRWB¹³⁹ calculated that the number of FTE¹⁴⁰ junior researchers (JUNIOR) active at the Flemish universities increased by 80% in the 1992-2002 period, the number of FTE senior researchers on a temporary contract (SEN BD) increased by 300% in the same period, while the number of FTE senior researchers with a contract for an unlimited period of time (SEN OD) stayed more or less the same (see figure 4).

¹³⁹ Vlaamse Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (2006). *Doctoreren in Vlaanderen (1991-2002)*, *Synthesenota en aanbevelingen*, 63 p.

¹⁴⁰ FTE = full-time equivalents, the percentage of employment is expressed in decimals. A 80% employment for instance is pointed out in 0,8 FTE.

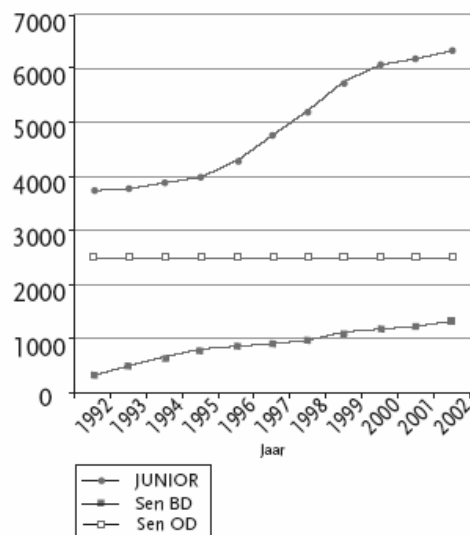


Figure 4: Evolution FTE junior and senior researchers at the Flemish universities (1992-2002)

In order to study the promotion opportunities of academic personnel, one and the same group of researchers has to be followed from the starting position at a certain point in time till the end position at a later time. The VRWB published such a cohort analysis where the graduates from five Flemish universities (K.U.Leuven, UGent, UA, VUB, UHasselt) were followed during their career within the institution. The results show that 43% of the junior researchers between 1991-1994 obtained a doctorate by 2002, 18% of those junior researchers got an appointment as a senior researcher for a limited period of time, 4% for an unlimited period of time (see table 21).

Table 21: Progress from graduation till senior researcher (1991-2002)¹⁴¹

Group	Total JUN	%total JUN	Code
- Graduates with initial second-cycle degree (obtained in academic years 1990-1993)	27813		STUD
- Of those who go on to become junior researchers (1991-1994)	3119	100%	JUN
- Of those who obtain a doctorate till 2002	1342	43%	DOC
- Of those who become senior researchers for a limited period of time (till 2002)	549	18%	SEN BD
- Of senior researchers for an unlimited period of time (till 2002)	138	4%	SEN OD

¹⁴¹ Vlaamse Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (2006), *op. cit.*

The data of the K.U.Leuven show that the share of women over the different groups declines as people move up the academic career. Among the graduates are approximately 50% women, where for the group senior research staff the percentage of female researchers drops till around 28% (see figure 5).

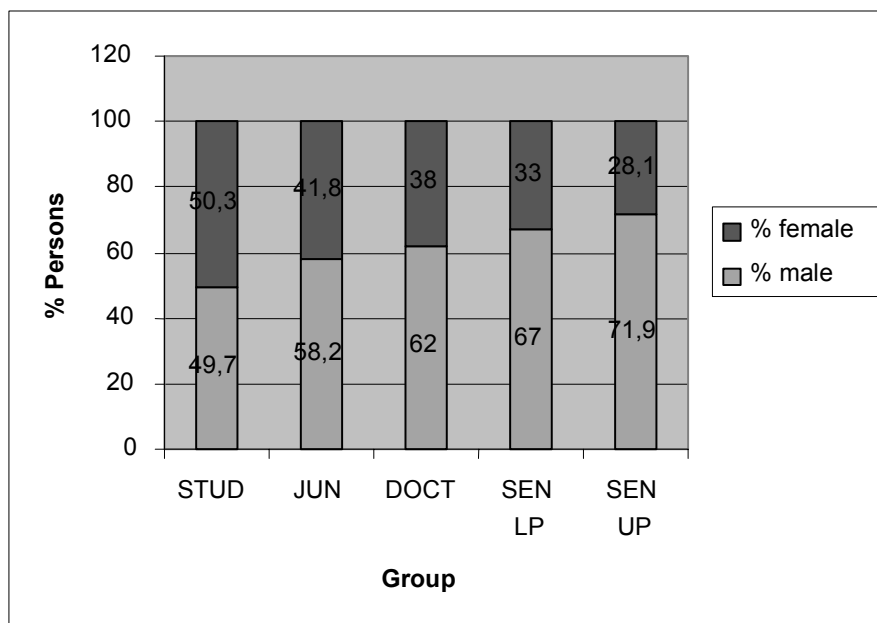


Figure 5: Career progression of inflow (1991 till 2002), by sex (data K.U.Leuven)¹⁴²

1.1.1.1. Junior researchers and post-doctoral researchers

The scissor diagrams show the male-female proportion for the different career steps. Those scissor diagrams are an internationally handled system in the evaluation of equal opportunities and gender policy. It is a strong visual technique: the opening of the “scissors” shows an obstacle in the career opportunities.

In figure 6 the evolution over time of the male-female proportions for the different statutes within the ABAP is shown.

¹⁴² Source: Data generated by the K.U.Leuven, for the VRWB.

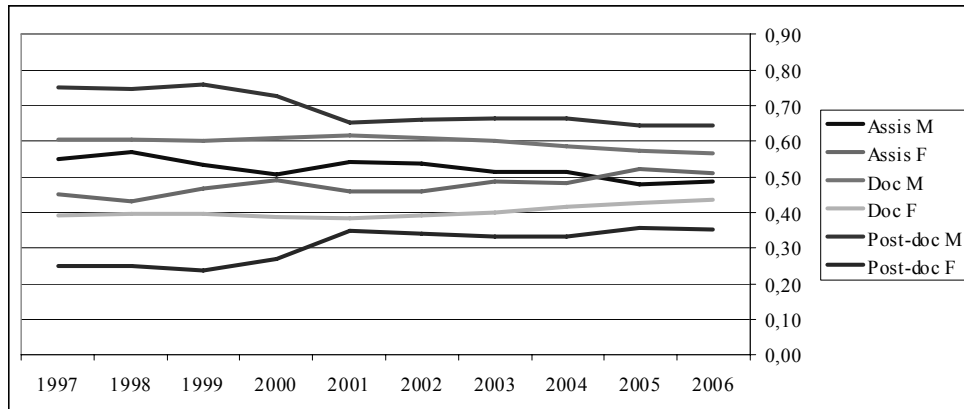


Figure 6: ABAP according to statute, sex and time in FTE¹⁴³

A difference is made between the assistants (assis), scientific personnel on a doctorate (doc) and scientific personnel with a doctoral degree (post-doc). The results show that over time, the male-female proportion of the assistants is approximately 50-50. The male-female proportion of doctoral researchers is slowly changing over time: around 55% is male, around 45% female. The male-female proportion of the post-doctoral researchers however has known a big change around 2001: there the 'scissors' are closing; still approximately 65% of the post-doctoral researchers is male and approximately 35% is female in 2006. This is a logical consequence of the fact that for every woman that obtains a PhD, two men do as well.

1.1.1.2. Senior researchers (ZAP)

The next possible step on the career ladder for a post-doctoral researcher is to become appointed as an Assistant Professor. From then on one can apply for promotion at least every three years to become an Associate Professor, then a Professor and finally a Full Professor.

Figure 7 shows that the scissors open themselves when one moves along the different career steps within the ZAP. Compared to 1997, one notices that the scissors are closing in 2006 but to a very little extent. The male-female proportion shows a large difference in the grades within the ZAP: a fall-back is noticed from more than 30% female Assistant Professors to less than 10% female Full Professors.

¹⁴³ Source: Data Jaarrapporten Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006.

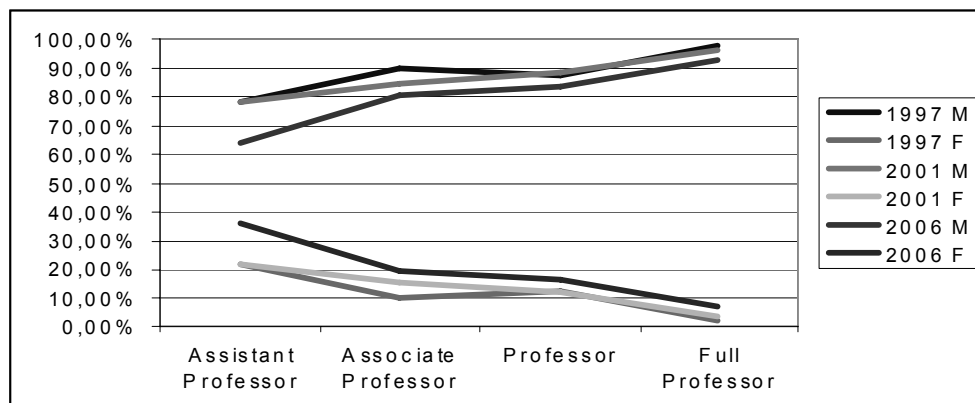


Figure 7: Male-female proportion FTE within ZAP, evolution 1997-2001-2006¹⁴⁴

1.1.2. Administrative and Technical Personnel (ATP)

The career structure of the ATP is indicated along different levels, grades and wage scales. The relation is shown in table 22.

There are six reference grades for the levels B, C and D and seven HAY-classes for the level A, pointed out in numbers (f.e. grade 3). A grade can contain one or more wage scales. Grade 1 is the lowest grade, grade 13 the highest¹⁴⁵.

Two kinds of promotions are possible:

1. promotion to a higher wage scale within a grade (if a grade contains several wage scales);
2. promotion to a higher grade.

Each kind of promotion has its own procedure and conditions. In this study the focus is the promotion to a higher grade. In the past, the focus within the equal opportunities policy of the university has been more on the academic personnel, as the promotion structure of the ATP is more transparent and perceived as more objectively.

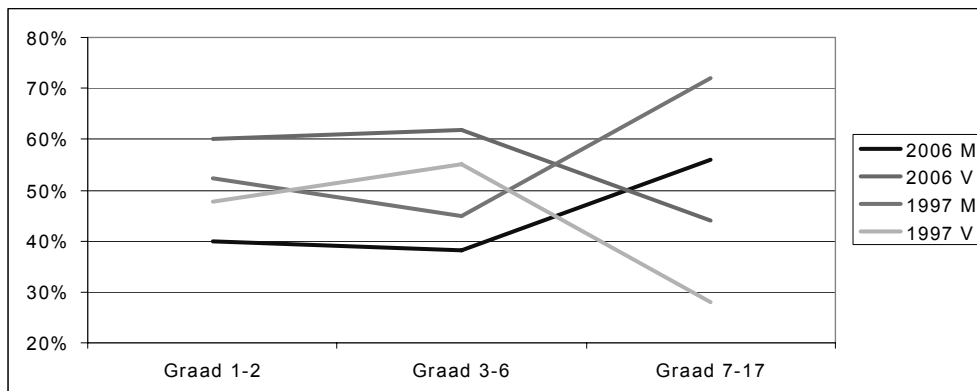
A closer look on figure 8, however, reveals that for the lower grades the 'scissors' are more open in 2006 than in 1997 with a majority of women working in those lower grades. When moving up the career step, more male ATP seems to work in the higher grades, though less than in 1997 (the point where the scissors cross has moved to the right).

¹⁴⁴ Source: Data Jaarrapporten Katholieke Universiteit Leuven 1997, 2001, 2006.

¹⁴⁵ Grade 14 to 17 also existed, but are no longer awarded. Few still have those grades from the past, as a transition phase.

Table 22: relation between level, grade and wage scale

Level	Grade	Wage scale			
		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4
	1	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4
	2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4
C	3	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
C/B	4	4.1	4.2	4.3	
B	5	5.1	5.2		
	6	6.1	6.2		
A	7	7.1	7.2		
	8	8.1	8.2		
	9	9.1	9.2		
	10	10.1	10.2		
	11	11.1			
	12	12.1			
	13	13.1			

Figure 8: Male-female proportion FTE within ATP, evolution 1997-2006¹⁴⁶

1.1.3. Approach

The figures of the K.U.Leuven show that in general more male personnel is to be found in the higher grades within each statute. As the promotion opportunities for the different target groups (ABAP, ZAP and ATP) seem to differ, different working plans were developed according to the needs of the groups.

¹⁴⁶ Source: Data Jaarrapporten Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1997, 2006.

In the scope of this project the K.U.Leuven was used as a case study to develop new tools or optimize existing tools concerning equal opportunities in the career management, in collaboration with diverse entities within the organization. The main HR-tools were identified and tested on transparency, objectivity and effectiveness.

The existing network of Mainstreaming Promoters was expanded and asked to propose some actions in the scope of the module 'Career management' for the academic years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. These actions and their results served as pilot projects for the VLIR-EQUAL Project and will be reported as good practices.

First the context of the university and its history on equal opportunities and diversity policy will be explained. Attention will be drawn towards the network of Mainstreaming Promoters as a good practice. A brief literature study will identify what is already known about this topic.

1.2. Context K.U.Leuven

The Diversity Policy Office of the K.U.Leuven was founded in 1999 under the wing of the Rectorial Offices by the Rectorial Advisor for Equal Opportunities as the Centre for Equal Opportunities and is responsible for the development and coordination of the equal opportunities and diversity policy. Over the years, two equal opportunities reports were published, as well as an explorative research on the career opportunities of the senior academic staff (see Literature study). Several projects were executed in collaboration with the city of Leuven, the county of Vlaams-Brabant, the college of Has-selt and several institutes of the Flemish and federal government.

The K.U.Leuven consists of 14 faculties and a campus in Kortrijk (KULAK), organized into three groups (Group Humanities, Group Science, Engineering and Technology and Group Biomedical Sciences) and 5 groups of offices (University Administration and Central Offices, Rectorial Offices, Research Policy, Educational Policy and Student Affairs).

Within this structure, a network of Mainstreaming Promoters was founded in order to create a basis for the implementation of the equal opportunities and diversity policy through their influence on the organizational culture and on the decision-making structures. Per faculty and within the offices a duo of one man and one woman is appointed by the dean or head. These duos are responsible for the development of an equal opportunities and diversity policy in their faculty or office, in collaboration with their dean or superior. Approximately three times a year, the Diversity Policy Office organizes network meetings for the Mainstreaming Promoters to exchange know-how and experience in developing and executing a decentralized diversity plan.

In the scope of the VLIR-EQUAL Project the Mainstreaming Promoters of the faculties (see figure 9) were asked during the first general meeting of the academic year 2005-2006 to propose some actions in the scope of this module for the academic years

2005-2006 and 2006-2007.

Good Practice: Equal Opportunities at the K.U.Leuven

In order to successfully implement and execute gender mainstreaming, a support basis in all policy phases and in the whole organization is necessary. At the one hand the organization needs somebody that stimulates, enthuses and guards the equal opportunities policy, at the other hand the development of a network is also necessary.

Some conditions have to be fulfilled to create such a basis and network:

- *goals*: the K.U.Leuven has short-term and long-term action plans concerning equal opportunities and diversity policy;
- *commitment from the top*: the top of the university recognizes the importance of equal opportunities and diversity and communicates this as such in the integrated strategic plan¹⁴⁷. A Steering Committee Diversity was founded to discuss, develop and implement the strategy;
- *plan of approach*: for each target group a specific plan of approach was developed and approved by the University Board;
- *means*: one Vice-Chancellor holds the portfolio of diversity, a Rectorial Advisor for Equal Opportunities and Diversity was appointed with a certain budget to develop a Rectorial office on Diversity with 1,0 FTE Staff Member and 0,5 FTE secretarial support;
- *instruments*: different researchers within the university work on the topic of equal opportunities and diversity and were welcomed to join a research centre (Centre for Equal Opportunities and Diversity¹⁴⁸).

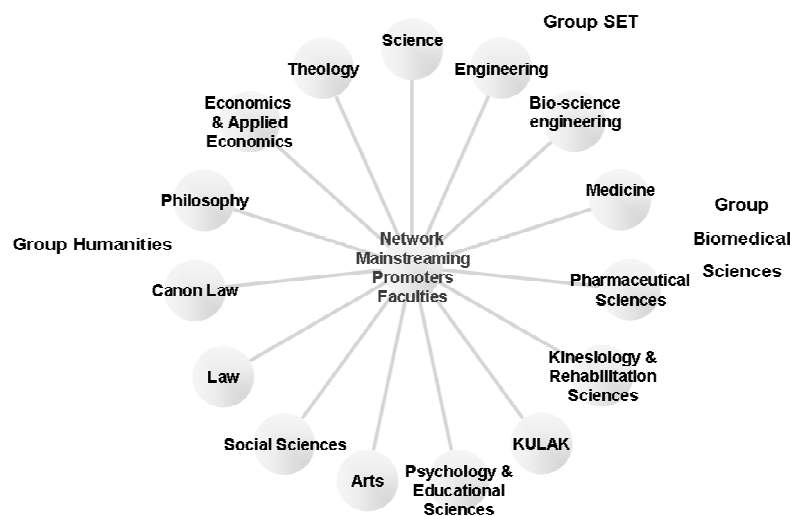


Figure 9: Network Mainstreaming Promoters Faculties

¹⁴⁷ Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. *De universiteit in beweging. Een geïntegreerd strategisch plan voor de K.U.Leuven, 2007-2012*, 36 blz.

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.kuleuven.be/diversiteit/cgkd.htm>.

The network of Mainstreaming Promoters in the Offices (see figure 10) has known a more difficult start: in 2005 the network of duos was expanded in order to reach more personnel.

The duos remained the engine of the equal opportunities and diversity policy, but the head of the office holds the end responsibility. Based on several debates held in 2001 to make an inventory of the different bottlenecks regarding equal opportunities for the ATP, a note was written concerning points of attention as an input for their decentralized action plans. The note was divided into six themes concerning career management: (1) HR Management, (2) Communication, (3) Training, (4) Coaching and Guidance, (5) Work-life Balance, (6) Promotion: the Job Classification-project.

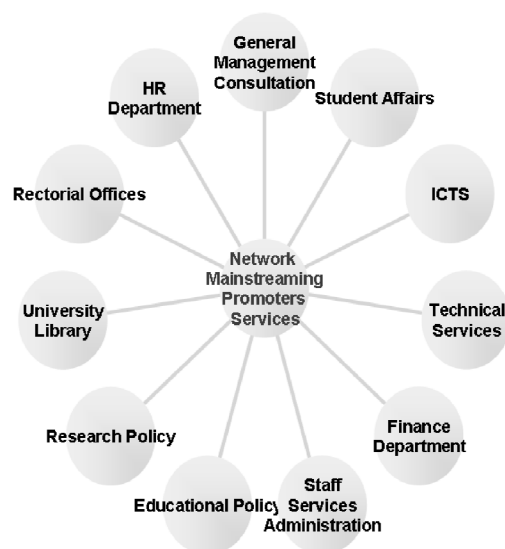


Figure 10: Network Mainstreaming Promoters Offices

The results of the decentralized action plans concerning career management will be reported as good practices in part 3 'Process report'.

2. Literature study

Until now, not much in-depth research has been done on the policy of career management at universities. On the other hand, there is concern about gender problems. Most reports written on this topic in Flanders concentrate on the lack of career opportunities for ABAP.

Two important reports on the subject were published in close collaboration between the K.U.Leuven and the UGent, which together represent 75% of the research potential in Flanders. The first research report ‘Kwantitatieve analyse van het doctoreren aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven en de Universiteit Gent’¹⁴⁹ entails analyses of the doctoral output based on data of the K.U.Leuven and the UGent in collaboration with CWTS, the Centre for Science and Technology Studies of the University of Leiden (The Netherlands). A summary was also published in a separate part ‘Kernelementen’¹⁵⁰. A follow-up study, with the participation of all Flemish universities, was published by the VRWB¹⁵¹.

A second report ‘Doctoreren in Vlaanderen’¹⁵² contained a survey analysing gender differences to try and explain why someone would or would not obtain a PhD. Policy recommendations included a demand to provide more information to potential doctoral researchers to avoid ‘wasting’ potential. The guidance by the promoter should be monitored as well; the importance of post-doctoral researchers and the culture of the research unit should not be underestimated in that sense. The research concluded with some figures that the doctoral degree pays off and has a personal as well as an economical value.

Vandemeulebroecke & De Munter¹⁵³ published an explorative research on ‘Women’s academic careers at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium’ in which some recommendations for the university management were formulated that entailed measures at the inflow, more respect for family life and the importance of supporting measures such as child care facilities.

Within the K.U.Leuven, the Diversity Policy Office published two reports on equal opportunities. In the First Report on Equal Opportunities¹⁵⁴ a provisional state-of-the-art was presented on the gender proportions within the K.U.Leuven. This pilot report explained how a vision on equal opportunities within the institute was created and how more equal opportunities would be created and guaranteed by means of the mainstreaming concept. The ‘Tweede Gelijke Kansenrapport’¹⁵⁵ presented statistical analyses in which (among others) the career trajectories from doctoral researcher till Full Professor were identified for every faculty.

Little in-depth research on the career opportunities of the male and female ZAP has been

¹⁴⁹ Moed, H.F.; Visser, M.S.; Luwel, M. (2000). *Kwantitatieve analyse van het doctoreren aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven en de Universiteit Gent*. Brussel, 30 p.

¹⁵⁰ *Kernelementen Doctoreren in Vlaanderen* (2001), gebaseerd op het rapport *Kwantitatieve analyse van het doctoreren aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven en de Universiteit Gent*.

¹⁵¹ Vlaamse Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (2006), *op. cit.*

¹⁵² Verlinden, A.; Billiet, J.; Pyck, H.; e.a. (2005). *Doctoreren in Vlaanderen*, 183 p.

¹⁵³ Vandemeulebroecke, L. & De Munter, A. (1999). *Women’s Academic Careers in the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium*.

¹⁵⁴ K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid (1999). *First Report on Equal Opportunities. Equal Opportunities at Universities, Towards a Mainstreaming Approach*, 97 p.

¹⁵⁵ K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid (2004). *Tweede Gelijke Kansenrapport. Gender Mainstreaming aan de K.U.Leuven. Stand van zaken en blik op de toekomst*, 98 p.

published. The Diversity Policy Office published an explorative research¹⁵⁶ that on the one hand analysed some figures on promotion and appointment and on the other hand revealed the results of qualitative interviews with female professors at the K.U.Leuven on equal opportunities and their careers. The figures on promotion and appointment were updated and can be found in 'Measurement and Monitoring' (see 3.2.). From the collected material in the explorative research it appeared that generally the university underappreciates and undervalues the female academic personnel. A gender problem was proved to be present but on the other hand a lack of sufficient knowledge and awareness was noticed to recognise, realize and deal with gender issues.

Brink & Brouns¹⁵⁷ published their report 'Gender & Excellence, een landelijk onderzoek naar benoemingsprocedures van hoogleraren' that contained analyses on figures, files and interviews. The authors found that significant differences in-between the fields of science exist in the possible evaluation and selection of the scientific personnel. They plead that, in the process of policy development, it is important to keep this diversity in mind. General recommendations related to the importance of good coaching, awareness of stereotyping, the need that commissions are accountable for the quantity and quality of selection processes and the need for commissions to be composed with attention to diversity.

Little research has been published on the position and career management concerning equal opportunities for the ATP. In 2001, the results of the debates¹⁵⁸ within the K.U.Leuven were published, in 2004 the 'Tweede Gelijke Kansenrapport' analysed the horizontal and vertical segregation within the ATP at the K.U.Leuven, in the faculties and the different grades.

The EVA-project¹⁵⁹ developed a tool for gender-neutral job evaluation and job classification. The 'Mobiële Gendercel'¹⁶⁰ project developed checklists on neutral job descriptions, possible gender bias in job descriptions, process and personnel planning, communication policy and the segregation monitor.

Also important in career management is data monitoring. The Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid published its general findings on indicators for equal opportunities in Flanders¹⁶¹. Regarding the academic personnel in Flanders they reported that the inflow of women in

¹⁵⁶ K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid (2000). *Vooronderzoek Gelijke Kansen bij aanstelling, benoeming, bevordering van het ZAP aan de K.U.Leuven*, 64 p.

¹⁵⁷ van den Brink, M. & Brouns, M. (2004). *Gender & Excellence. Een landelijk onderzoek naar benoemingsprocedures van hoogleraren*, 149 p.

¹⁵⁸ K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid (2001). *Debatten Administratief en Technisch personeel. Voor iedereen gelijke kansen aan de K.U.Leuven*, 18 p.

¹⁵⁹ Instituut voor de Gelijkheid van Vrouwen en Mannen (2006). *Het EVA-project. Evaluatie en classificatie van functies. Instrumenten voor gelijk loon (2001-2006)*.

¹⁶⁰ <http://www.genderwerkt.be/>.

¹⁶¹ Steegmans, N.; Van Aerschot, M.; Valgaeren, E. & Mertens, T. (2002). *Gelijke kansenindicatoren in Vlaanderen: statistieken en indicatoren voor een gelijke kansenbeleid voor mannen en vrouwen*. Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid, 315 p.

ZAP is still problematic and that the share of women in ZAP is still inversely proportional to the different grades of personnel.

The VRWB (2001)¹⁶² published ‘Wetenschappelijk onderzoek en de genderproblematiek’ that on the one hand contains data of the universities and on the other hand researches the causes of the under-representation of female academics. The causes were divided into societal and historic-cultural factors and choices women make but also in the specific HR-policy and the organizational culture of the universities. The authors conclude that the under-representation of women in academia is primarily an existential problem of the scientific institutions; it is therefore important that universities are convinced that it is crucial to strive for a bigger participation of women in the academic corps.

Koster, Visser, Willemsen & van Zwol (2006)¹⁶³ developed a monitor on Dutch female professors that entails figures on the participation of women in science and the participation of women in higher scientific positions.

SEIN published some figures on the glass ceiling at universities¹⁶⁴ (see 3.2.2. ‘Promotion opportunities’) and a study on female professors¹⁶⁵ researching why there are more male than female professors and the impact of the selection procedures within the universities.

The Instituut voor de Overheid published a study on the equality of men and women in the federal administration in which a new career structure was screened on gender¹⁶⁶. The recommendations formulated the need for gender expertise, sensitization and training, more participation, a principal agreement on the importance of gender neutrality in the entire job classification process and coordination of the gender actions in a cell or working group.

3. Process report

The goal of the ‘Career management’ module was to develop new tools and/or optimize existing ones concerning equal opportunities in the field of career management, or more

¹⁶² Vlaamse Raad voor Wetenschapsbeleid (2002). *Wetenschappelijk onderzoek en de genderproblematiek*, 88 p.

¹⁶³ Korsten, M.; Visser, A.; Willemsen, T. & van Zwol, W. (2006). *Monitor Vrouwelijke Hoogleraren 2006*, 27 p.

¹⁶⁴ Van Haegendoren, M. & Steegmans, N. (2003). *Het glazen plafond aan de Vlaamse universiteiten*. SEIN en Steunpunt Gelijkekansenbeleid, 14 p.

¹⁶⁵ Van Haegendoren, M.; Valgaeren, E. & Noelanders, S. (2000). *Gezocht: professor (V), een onderzoek naar vrouwen in academia*, 43 p.

¹⁶⁶ Hondeghem, A.; Scheepers, S.; Decat, A. & Facon, P. (2004). *Studie naar de gelijkheid van mannen en vrouwen in het federaal openbaar ambt, rapport D/2004/10107/014*, Studie in opdracht van de Federaal Minister voor Ambtenarenzaken, 195 p.

specifically, promotion opportunities for all university staff. The university itself, in this case the K.U.Leuven, was used as a case study in the development of this module.

Four tools were developed and are reported in 'Instrument and case study'. This part will explain the way the module was developed and will identify success factors and pitfalls. The introduction already clarified that this module consists of different smaller projects, as the module was elaborated in collaboration with different entities within the K.U.Leuven. This Process report will focus on these collaborations and the good practices derived from them, through the application of the following model:

3.1. Instrumental model for introducing gender mainstreaming policy

The 'Manual on Gender Mainstreaming at Universities'¹⁶⁷ provides a general instrument for introducing gender mainstreaming in knowledge-organizations and in this module its Instrumental model was used as a starting point to integrate the gender equality perspective in the career management of the organization.

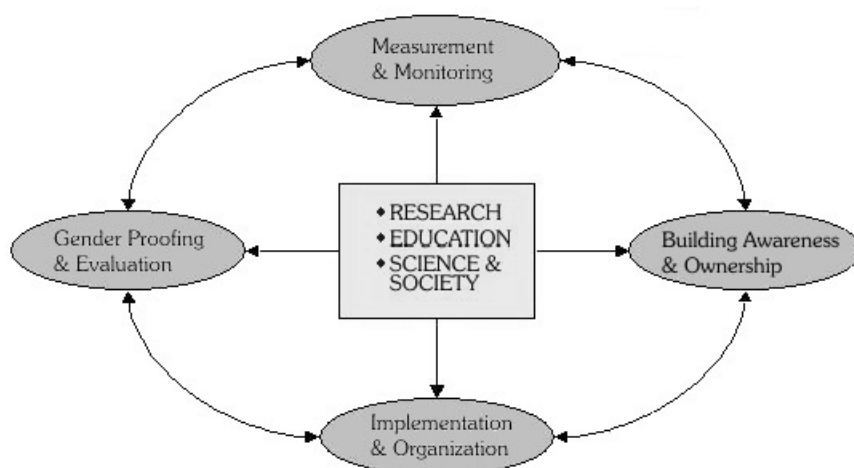


Figure 11: Gender Mainstreaming Process in Universities' Core Activities

The model offers a framework for introducing the gender mainstreaming policy through four toolkits or sets of instruments: (1) Measurement and Monitoring, (2) Implementation and Organization, (3) Building Awareness and Ownership and (4) Gender Proofing and Evaluation. The authors aimed at developing different tool sets that are easy to use by anyone in the organization and to different extents. We refer the interested reader to the Manual itself.

¹⁶⁷ Stevens, I. & Van Lamoën, I. (2001). *Manual on Gender Mainstreaming at Universities*. K.U.Leuven-Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid, Universiteit Maastricht- Centrum voor Gender en Diversiteit, 164 p.

These four parts will discuss the approach and the instruments that were developed. It is important to stress that the different toolkits do not imply any kind of order; they are to be used at random. We chose to start with 'Measurement and monitoring', as at the start of the project the career opportunities of all staff were mapped. Between the other three toolkits a very thin line of overlap exists (as shown by the double arrows in the model), as they all rely on some kind of support basis.

3.2. Measurement and monitoring

“Systematic collection and dissemination of data on the positions of and opportunities for women and men is indispensable to assess which areas most urgently need to be addressed and to check the impact of policies and measures that have been implemented. The long-term effect of gender mainstreaming cannot be measured directly, but gender mainstreaming consists of various, mutually attuned actions in different policy areas, which can and should be measured separately. To prevent discouragement and apathy, even small successes need to be acknowledged by stressing that gender mainstreaming derives its power from an accumulation of small results.”¹⁶⁸

From the gender mainstreaming point-of-view, it was important to undertake actions that would be long-lasting, rather than one single action. In order to create and adapt a policy, the lacunas in a certain topic need to be identified. In this case, the pitfalls in the career management structures and processes concerning equal opportunities needed to be identified to assess problems and provide improvement, when measures were taken. Indicators to evaluate the current policy were important as well.

As the definition of Gender Mainstreaming¹⁶⁹ stresses that “policy processes ... are incorporated ... by the actors normally involved in policy-making” the first step was to contact the department that is responsible for data information. In collaboration with the Office Management Information (HR-department) we determined which data could be provided and which results could be drawn from these existing data. This exercise would also result in some recommendations to improve the data information system. That way, it could be guaranteed that providing gender data in the future would not mean much adaptation of figures and that different faculties, groups or offices needing these kinds of data could have them at short notice.

Before generating and analysing data, it is important to have a clear view on the data that already exist and on the aim of the analysed data, i.e. who is going to use the conclusions based on the organizational structure. For instance, in the case of the K.U.Leuven, the decisions on strategic HR-policy are the responsibility of the Group Management of the three groups. It was thus decided that when possible, separate analyses would be made for the different groups.

¹⁶⁸ Stevens, I. & Van Lamoen, I. (2001), *op. cit.*

¹⁶⁹ Council of Europe (1998). *Gender Mainstreaming. Conceptual Framework, Methodology and Presentation of Good Practices*. Strassbourg: Council of Europe.

The measurement and monitoring of career management policy entailed different aspects and so different analyses were made (see 4.1. Tool: Mapping career and promotion opportunities).

3.2.1. Basic data and analyses

The module started with some basic gender analyses of general data to compare the past and present male-female proportions per statute. These analyses were put into basic scissor diagrams, as shown in the introduction (see figure 6 for the ABAP, figure 7 for the ZAP, figure 8 for ATP). In agreement with the Office Management Information it was decided to simply use the data as published in the official annual reports of the university. Since 1997 these data are published per statute (per grade of ZAP, docs and post-docs of ABAP, per level of ATP), per sex (male-female), per FTE and per terms of employment (fulltime/part-time). Additional data per faculty, statute (FTE ZAP, ABAP, ATP) and sex (male-female) are also published.

Using these data had two advantages: (1) no extra work was created to generate the data and (2) a format could be created to update the data easily every year.

Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: measurement

Three times a year, the Mainstreaming Promoters are invited to a network event to exchange know-how and experience in developing and executing their action plans. More experienced Mainstreaming Promoters can give less experienced colleagues some tips on how to execute a plan while the Diversity Policy Office offers support.

Especially when the faculty or office is not completely convinced of the importance of equal opportunities, data and figures are a necessary tool to prove a gender bias may exist.

The Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering were in a beginning stage of introducing equal opportunities in their faculty. Besides creating a working group as a support basis, they decided to first make a report on the evolution of the male-female proportion within their faculty and to publish it. In doing so, they revealed the gender problem within their faculty and had an input to further elaborate their decentralized action plan (identify the causes of the unequal inflow of students and survey the inequality at the level of post-doctoral researchers).

Even Mainstreaming Promoters with many years of experience in executing a successful action plan need data to monitor the results of their action plans. A constant point of attention in the decentralized action plan of the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Engineering is to yearly update their data on the male-female proportion of the students and staff at the faculty.

3.2.2. Promotion opportunities

When interested in investigating a possible gender bias in career opportunities, the best way to do so is by performing a cohort analysis: one and the same group is followed from the same starting position at a certain point in time till an end position at a later time. That way, it is possible to study progress. Unfortunately, it is a complicated statistical

technique that takes a lot of time. Furthermore, a gender expert is needed to interpret the results. Therefore, cohort analyses are rarely used. For the ABAP, a brief cohort analysis on the career opportunities was published by the VRWB (see 1.1.1. Academic Personnel).

Within the K.U.Leuven, a cohort analysis was already performed in 2003 by the HR-department for the ATP. Unfortunately no difference in sex was made. This project made it possible to repeat this research. As the data were already generated in the past by the HR-department little additional work was created. A dataset of 1,419 co-workers, of which 641 men and 778 women, that were continuously part of the ATP from 1994 till 2003, was analysed. When the chance on promotion for the whole period was calculated (grade in 1994 compared to end grade in 2003) the results showed that everyone did promote at least once. The overall picture showed that the male ATP in that period had a higher chance to promote two or three times.

The same method was used to analyse the career opportunities of the ZAP that were continuously part of the ZAP between 1999 and 2007 (945 ZAP of which 821 men and 124 women). However, a cohort analysis was not possible as some ZAP might have been longer at the university as a former junior researcher or post-doctoral researcher. The cohort analysis would never cover an entire career but only a part of it. A part of the methodology used in cohort analyses could be used to map the career paths of the sample above. A very different pattern was found in the career paths of the male and female ZAP: especially the lower, part-time grades were dominantly female.

Another more accessible way to map the differences in promotion opportunities is to calculate the Glass Ceiling Index (GPI)¹⁷⁰. The GPI is calculated by comparing the proportion of women at a certain job level (x) with the number of women at the job level below (x-1). Dividing (x-1) by (x) gives the GPI-score. A high GPI-score means that generally the promotion of women remains behind the potential that is present in the organization. One should be careful when calculating and interpreting the scores: not all people in a certain statute are interested in promoting to a higher one. For instance, at the university not all post-doctoral researchers are interested in becoming an Assistant Professor. Furthermore, some ZAP view the grade of Professor as an end grade as a Full Professor is expected to take on more managerial tasks. However, when women systematically seem to stay behind, one should investigate the possible causes. As Gender Mainstreaming aims to guarantee more equal opportunities for women but also men, the GPI should be calculated for both, as done in the following example.

Example: GPI for ZAP at the K.U.Leuven

Table 23 shows the Glass Ceiling Index for the year 2006 in comparison to 1997 for the male and female ZAP at the university. Fortunately, it appears that the glass ceiling is diminishing throughout the years, although in comparison with the male ZAP much work remains to be done concerning equal opportunities (in promotion).

¹⁷⁰ Van Haegendoren, M. & Steegmans, N. (2003), *op. cit.*

Table 23: FTE m/f-proportion with glass ceiling index per year

Year		FTE (m)	GPI (m)	FTE (f)	GPI (f)
2006	Full Professor	394.85		29.3	
			0.48		1.27
	Professor	190.4		37.2	
			0.88		1.08
	Associate Professor	168.05		40.2	
			0.39		0.91
	Assistant Professor	65.35		36.7	
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>818.65</i>		<i>143.4</i>	
1997	Full Professor	357.7		8.3	
			0.42		2.58
	Professor	150.1		21.4	
			1.14		0.91
	Associate Professor	171		19.5	
			0.73		1.78
	Assistant Professor	124.3		34.7	
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>803.1</i>		<i>83.9</i>	

3.2.3. Mapping external factors

The analyses as described above thus show that a gender problem exists for all statutes: the male staff at the university is in general to be found in the higher grades than their female counterparts. But why is this? What causes this gap? And what measures could be taken to close it?

As the situation was different for the three target groups, different working plans needed to be developed. For the ABAP for instance, a high drop-out rate was noticed: as an exit survey already existed, access was asked to these data (see 3.3. Proofing and evaluation).

The female ATP seem to promote, but less so than men. As a new job classification system was drawn up at the time of the project, access was asked to perform a gender analysis (see 3.3. Proofing and evaluation).

The female ZAP seemed to hit the glass ceiling, although less hard than in the past. In the search for causes it was planned to perform a discourse analysis of the meetings of the boards (evaluation commissions and University Board) that discuss the applications for promotion and decide who eventually gets promoted. Due to judicial reasons the access

to the reports of the meetings was overruled. In the Netherlands however, a similar research was done¹⁷¹.

In collaboration with the Vice-Chancellor Diversity and the Personnel Director ZAP, it was agreed to perform a quantitative in-depth analysis of the figures of the promotion within the ZAP. Research identified two potential reasons why the female ZAP might promote less in comparison with their male colleagues:

1. **Participation in decision-making organs and evaluation commissions:** a count of the number of male and female members in the decision-making organs at the university teaches us that 78% of the members are male and 22% are female. Only two out of fourteen evaluation commissions had a female member. It remains a question and pitfall why evaluation commissions are not composed with more attention to diversity. It was decided upon, as a monitor, to publish these figures on the website of the Diversity Policy Office¹⁷² and to yearly update them.
2. **Potential candidates versus candidatures:**
 - a. ... *to get appointed in the ZAP:* the project gave the opportunity to update the figures in the 'Vooronderzoek' (2000)¹⁷³ in which not only the male-female proportion of the candidates for promotion, but also the potential candidates were analysed (ie. the number of candidates that, based on a certain statute, could apply for an appointment as an Assistant Professor). The results showed that proportionally women and men have the same chance of getting appointed, but there are less female candidates that actually apply compared to the number that could have applied. This could mean that fewer women within the university are encouraged to apply for an appointment compared to men.
 - b. ... *to get promoted within the ZAP:* similarly, the candidates for promotion within the ZAP were compared to the candidates actually applying for it. Unexpected results were found: it seemed there were less potential than actual male candidates, which was impossible as only members of the ZAP within the university could apply for promotion. The answer was to be found in the procedure: although one can only apply when three years tenure in a grade, some (male) ZAP apply every year to make their candidature already noticeable to the commission. Although those candidatures were inadmissible, the applications could not be filtered out of our data. Because this puts a bias on the figures, no further analyses on these data were made.

3.3. Proofing and evaluation

“The process of gender mainstreaming is not based on empirical data alone. Measurement is very useful to indicate the existence of inequalities between the sexes, such as

¹⁷¹ van den Brink, M. & Brouns, M. (2004), *op. cit.*

¹⁷² http://www.kuleuven.be/diversiteit/rddb_decentraal.htm.

¹⁷³ K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid (2000), *op. cit.*

disparities in access and representation. However, it can not uncover what the causes of these inequalities are. Likewise, monitoring tools are useful to check whether progress has been realized towards gender equality, but they can not sort out whether this progress has been achieved by structural transformations of the mainstream. This is where the process of gender proofing becomes effective. Gender proofing tools are designed to trace the causes of existing gender biases, and provide guidelines for changing structures and procedures aiming at promoting gender diversity.¹⁷⁴

Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: research policy

The Research Coordination Office has a lot of experience in research on doctoral efficiency and evaluation of the doctoral output. The focus on the decentralized action plan of the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Research Coordination Office starts from the goal of their office, namely coordinating research funding. Previous actions related to providing the Mainstreaming Promoters of the faculties with data about the doctoral output of their male and female researchers, formulating propositions and policy recommendations concerning elements of research and diversity and the consultation of the Diversity Policy Office about the gender neutrality of the guideline changes about some type of funding.

3.3.1. ABAP: exit survey

An analysis of the scissor diagram of the ABAP (see figure 6) showed that for the junior personnel approximately 55% is male and 45% is female. This gap widens when looking at the post-doctoral researchers: 2/3 is male, 1/3 is female. This is a logical consequence of the fact that for every woman that obtains her PhD, two men do¹⁷⁵.

The university in general is marked by a high drop-out rate of junior researchers: at the K.U.Leuven approximately 40% of the junior researchers that start, leave the organization within two years. What are their motives? And are these motives different for men and women? In order to gain insight in those motives, the university founded a steering committee to develop an exit survey that was launched in March 2005. In the scope of this project, access to the database was given and the researcher of this module was included in the steering committee. With this access granted, the results were multiple: (1) input for the action plans of the Mainstreaming Promoters, (2) guidelines for developing HR-tools related to career guidance, (3) testing the perception of male and female co-workers leaving against the policy of the university, (4) formulating well-founded suggestions towards equal opportunities and facilitating the implementation of the VLIR-EQUAL Project. It was agreed that the researcher would perform additional analyses on the differences in perception of the male and female researchers related to HR-policy.

The exit survey is based on the 'Policy note on the assignment and tasks of the junior and

¹⁷⁴ Stevens, I. & Van Lamoen, I. (2001), *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁵ Verlinden, A.; Billiet, J.; Pyck, H.; e.a. (2005). *Doctoreren in Vlaanderen (1991-2002), Syntesenota en aanbevelingen*, 63 p.

associate staff¹⁷⁶ that contains among others structural guidelines concerning the assignment and guidance of the ABAP. Two surveys were developed, one for the junior researchers and one for the post-doctoral researchers, though most items overlap.

The results showed that although the respondents were very satisfied about their stay at the university, significantly more male respondents would recommend others to work for the university than their female colleagues. Women had fewer formal interviews (at start mandate, annual performance interview, evaluation meeting) than male respondents and they indicated to benefit less from these interviews, although the differences were not significant. Generally, the respondents were very satisfied with the terms of employment, though three aspects were highly discouraging: the job uncertainty, the lack of mentorship and the lack of career growth potential. Another point of attention was the high dissatisfaction about the work/private life balance with female junior and post-doctoral researchers. Furthermore, 13.4% of the male postdoctoral researchers indicated a high dissatisfaction. This is important as the work-life balance and high work pressure is a bottleneck often quoted in the gender theme which often hypothecates career development at the university.

Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: survey career management

In agreement with their faculty working group on Equal Opportunities and Diversity, the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Theology decided, with the support of the Diversity Policy Office, to organize a survey investigating three bottlenecks in the career management policy: (1) the step from the last Master year to start a doctorate, (2) the doctoral process, (3) the step from a PhD to a scientific career. The working group wrote a concept note and developed a tentative questionnaire as a starting point for a survey. After the authorization of the Faculty Board the survey (see 4.2. Tool: Survey Career Management) was sent out to all respondents that concluded the last Master year since 1998. The survey resulted in some policy recommendations that the Mainstreaming Promoters and the working group will use as an input for the next academic year. The results of the survey were presented and discussed at a meeting of the Faculty Board, a meeting of the ABAP and a meeting of the faculty educational committee.

In collaboration with the Diversity Policy Office, the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Medicine developed a qualitative questionnaire to survey the perceived career perspectives of assistants in university hospitals. The results and recommendations were presented to the faculty and medical board which resulted in a change of a full 80% statute in the hospitals and a meeting for better financing. The questionnaire and the results can be downloaded from the website of the Diversity Policy Office¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷⁶ http://www.kuleuven.be/personeel/VolledigeBeleidsnotaAAP_BAP.htm.

¹⁷⁷ http://www.kuleuven.be/diversiteit/rddb_gender.htm.

Good Practice: competence profile ABAP

In 2006 the ABAP-representatives worked in collaboration with the HR-department and Research Coordination Office on the development of a competence profile for doctoral students. This profile should draw attention to more non-academic skills such as management and communication during the course of the doctoral research, as a thorough command of these skills can facilitate the transition to the job market¹⁷⁸. Several criteria were selected in a brainstorm session with members of the ABAP and the Boards of the three Groups made a selection from the list of criteria. The competences were clustered into five groups and a group of HR-professionals from the labour market were asked to indicate to what extent doctoral students would have to have the competence to be able to compete with a candidate without a doctorate but with four years experience. That way, bottlenecks could be identified.

Before clustering the competences, the Diversity Policy Office invited the ABAP-representatives to see if the gender expertise of the office could contribute to the project. This resulted in some remarks and points of attention about the procedures and criteria:

- To what extent were the brainstorm meetings and the boards of the group composed with attention to diversity?
- Were the criteria defined in a clear and sex-neutral way?
- Is there a sort of hierarchy of competences (is one more important than the other)?

The meeting resulted in the fact that members of the lobbying group 'Women and University'¹⁷⁹ of the K.U.Leuven were asked to mark the most important competences and make suggestions for competences that might be missing. Although the ABAP-representatives had a broad input from their members and the boards, they wanted to rule out a gender bias because these organs were mainly male. A good practice in Gender Mainstreaming.

3.3.2. ATP: job classification project

An analysis of the scissor diagram of the ATP (see figure 8) shows that more female ATP seem to work in the lower grades, more male ATP in the higher grades. The results of the cohort analysis on the promotion opportunities of the ATP showed that male ATP had a higher chance of being promoted two or three times as opposed to their female colleagues who, in most cases, were promoted only once (see 3.2. Measurement and monitoring).

As described in the Problem definition, the ATP is divided into 4 levels (A, B, C, D). Within each level there are different grades with different wage scales. Two kinds of promotions are possible: the promotion to a higher wage scale within a grade (if a grade contains several wage scales) or promotion to a higher grade. Each kind of promotion has its own procedures and conditions:

- In order to get a promotion to a higher wage scale, one has to have six years of grade seniority and a positive performance evaluation.
- In order to get a promotion to a higher grade, the employee and superior are asked

¹⁷⁸ https://www.kuleuven.be/personeel/competentieprofiel/index_eng.htm.

¹⁷⁹ <http://vap1.kuleuven.be/V&U/>.

tot put together an updated job description. A performance evaluation is also required. Based on the job description and its rating, using the job classification system, the legitimacy of the promotion to a higher grade needs to be proven.

Procedures for promotion to or within level A are done via the HAY-method of job classification, which has been established since 2001 and is still in development.

Because the job classification project was still in a pilot phase at the time of the VLIR-EQUAL Project, it was interesting to take part in the project.

3.3.2.1. Job classification: definition

3.3.2.1.1. Definition

The goal of job classification is to enable the mutual comparison and hierarchical order of jobs in an objective and neutral way. Based on this order, every rating for the job can be determined per group of 'equal' jobs. Job rating and job classification are mainly used for determining wage scales but can also be used for other HR-applications, e.g. organizational development, staff planning, training needs, selection, career guidance, etc. Because job rating has so many possible applications in the field of HRM, it is important to set up the job classification in such a way that equal opportunities for men and women can be guaranteed.

Job rating and job classification can be defined in several ways and know some overlapping. The broad definition of job rating and job classification is more or less the same, i.e. the whole process of job description, job analysis and job rating. In the most narrow way, job rating means defining the relative 'weight' of a job, using grading tables and job classification means to divide jobs into classes of 'equal' jobs.

As the terms of job rating and job classification are used in different ways, and other complicated further jargon is used to explain the procedure, the terms should be interpreted as follows, for reasons of simplicity:

- **Job rating:** the whole procedure of job description, job analysis and job rating,
- **Job classification:** the end result of the job rating procedure.

At all times, the danger of job rating discrimination¹⁸⁰ must be avoided. In practice, it appears that jobs traditionally performed by women are generally described as less exact and differentiated than jobs traditionally done by men and are often presented as less demanding than they are in reality. In general, 'male' jobs also are usually described in more technical and organizational terms than these 'female' jobs and most of the systems grant a higher appreciation to such skills. The difficulty is to discover the hidden mechanisms of (indirect) job rating discrimination.

¹⁸⁰ Two types of job rating discrimination: (1) direct job rating discrimination is valuing jobs practised mainly by women lower than jobs practised mainly by men, either placing women in a lower wage scale than their male colleagues, (2) indirect job rating discrimination means not valuing (or lower scoring of) skills like for instance empathy, handiness, preciseness etc for jobs that women mainly practise and to regard these skills as self-evident qualities that are perceived as inherent in femininity.

The systems of job rating are often criticized because they are a reflection of the social value judgements at work and as long as the work done by women is considered less valuable, it will have repercussions on the rating of jobs. When opting for a certain job rating system it is important to pay attention to gender biases: in the system, in the process, or within the procedures/phases of the system itself. By being aware of possible gender biases, a gender-neutral classification can be developed.

3.3.2.1.2. Legal framework

Equal pay for equal work is a value protected by international and national law since half a century. Important international law concerning equal pay for equal work was included in the Convention no 100 by the International Labour Organization (1951), the Treaty of Rome by the European Community (1957) and Directive no 75/117 by the European Community (1975). Three years later, Belgium adopted the EG-directives in the Principle of Equal Treatment (4/4/1978), in which Title V discusses the “Equal treatment of men and women regarding conditions of employment, access to employment, professional training and career opportunities and the access to independent professions”. Article 13 handles the regulations and practices concerning wages, the protection of them and the employment classification (includes the job rating and the resulting job classification). In the collective agreement on terms of employment no 25 (generally binding by national legislation- 9/12/1975) the social partners included the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. Article 3 states that “the equal remuneration of male and female employers must be ensured for all elements and conditions of the wage, including the system of job rating when being used.” Equal pay for work of equal value means that a woman who practises a job that is equal to that of a man has a right to the same wage and same benefits, even if it concerns another kind of work; unless the difference in payment is explainable by non-discriminatory reasons. That ‘value’ is determined by the systems of job rating. Article 3 states that “under no circumstances the systems of job rating may lead to discrimination, nor by the choice of criteria, nor by the assessment of those criteria or the systems of transferring job points to wage points”¹⁸¹.

3.3.2.2. *Project within the K.U.Leuven: approach and tool*

The HAY-project started in 2001 after years of preparation by the working group ‘FUWA’ (short for job rating in Dutch). In March 2003, the whole procedure and its results for level A were presented to the University Board. The Board decided to first further refine and test the systematic developed through pilots. It was decided to start a pilot project in the University Administration and Central Offices and the University Library. Level B, C and D were also included.

As the K.U.Leuven initiated at this time the pilot in the University Administration and Central Offices and the University Library, a perfect opportunity was given to analyse the approach of the K.U.Leuven to develop its own job classification in what should be a sex-

¹⁸¹ Instituut voor de Gelijkheid van Vrouwen en Mannen (2006), *op. cit.*

neutral way, to make suggestions and to create therefore a basis in all policy phases and in the whole organization.

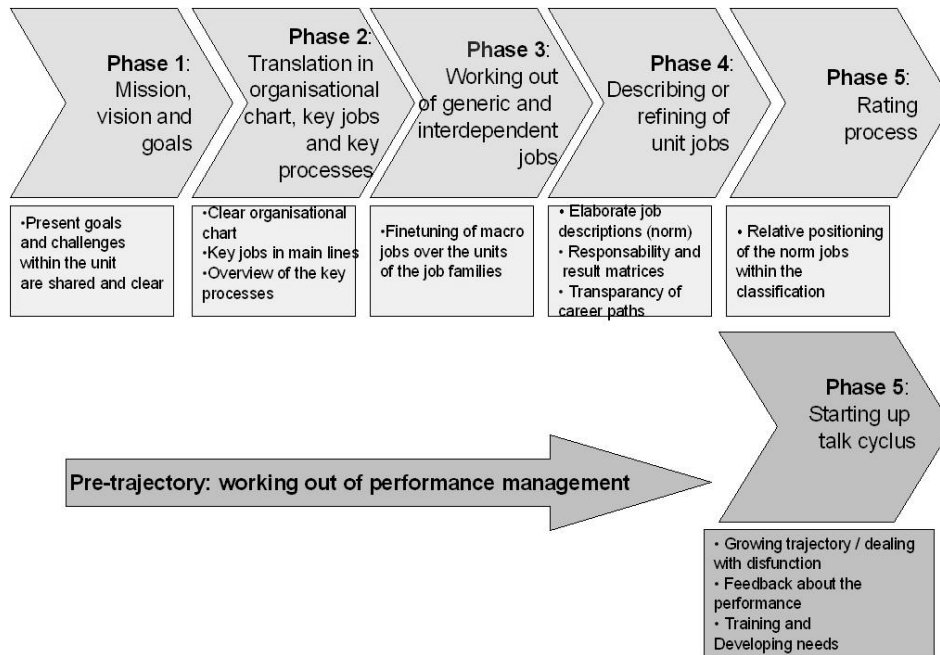


Figure 12: Phases of the pilot project (approach)¹⁸²

To obtain information and data, several meetings with the responsible at the HR-department took place. After mapping the HAY-procedure it was decided to start with testing the gender neutrality of the procedure by filling out the checklist of the EVA-project¹⁸³. The EVA-project has developed ‘signposts’ for equal opportunities. These signposts are a tool to guarantee the neutrality of the job classification process.

Based on a literature study, the results of the checklist and meetings with the HR-department, a tool to guarantee equal opportunities in job descriptions was developed within the project (see 4.3. Tool: gender-aware job descriptions). Analysing and rating a job stands or falls, as it happens, with a job description as complete as possible: what is not described, cannot be appreciated.

We chose to develop a scheme entailing a step-by-step plan. This step-by-step plan focuses on the process approach that is important to successfully implement the job classification procedure. Recommendations are made to avoid stereotyping within the language used. As the aim was to develop a handy and practical tool, some exercises and useful tips are included in the scheme.

¹⁸² K.U.Leuven – Personeelsdienst (April 2005), PowerPoint-presentation ‘Project view job rating’.

¹⁸³ Instituut voor de Gelijkheid van Vrouwen en Mannen (2006), *op. cit.*

3.4. Implementation and organization

“At all levels of the organization, people have to be assigned who are officially responsible and accountable for gender mainstreaming: people who initiate, implement, and co-ordinate the process. Preferably, these are academic leaders and managers, who are in a position to influence policy practices and decisions. Gender mainstreaming strategies will not be effective as long as they are simply ‘added’ to the portfolio of individual managers and policy makers. Specific training and sufficient financial means are required.”¹⁸⁴

Implementing Gender Mainstreaming thus entails the process of providing a structural and cultural basis for equal opportunities in the university¹⁸⁵. Within the project a solid basis for equal opportunities in the K.U.Leuven already existed:

- The Diversity Policy Office was founded in 1999 as the Centre for Equal Opportunities within the Rectorial offices. By refusing to place the Centre under a faculty or HR department it was prevented that the policy would pertain exclusively to that faculty or to the HR department. A Rectorial Advisor for Equal Opportunities was appointed with a certain budget and staff. A network of Mainstreaming Promoters was founded and the University Board spent half a day on a gender training.
- A new university management was installed in 2004 and one of the Vice-Chancellors got the portfolio of diversity. Furthermore, the task of the Rectorial Advisor was broadened to equal opportunities and diversity. In order to further organize the equal opportunities and diversity policy and implement it in the organization, a Steering Committee Diversity was installed: the Rectorial Advisor for Equal Opportunities and Diversity was made chairperson, members are the Vice-Chancellor Diversity, the HR-director, the coordinator of Students Affairs, the contacts for the different subjects within diversity and representatives of the Group Boards.
- An Advisory Committee on Gender was installed that can test the gender policy on its effectiveness and propose and formulate recommendations to the Steering Committee Diversity. Members are the Rectorial Advisor, the Staff member Equal Opportunities and Diversity of the Diversity Policy Office, two chairpersons of the lobbying group ‘Women and University’, 6 rotating Mainstreaming Promoters, two representatives of the ABAP, two student representatives, two researchers in gender matters and the person in charge of the ‘Gender studies’ student course. They meet approximately three times a year.
- The network of Mainstreaming Promoters was elaborated.

At the start of the VLIR-EQUAL Project, the ‘Career Management’ module was put on the agenda of the Steering Committee Diversity and it was decided to implement the results in the action plan of 2007-2008, when the project would be finished.

The module was elaborated in close collaboration with the HR-department and Research Coordination Office. The Vice-Chancellor and HR-department got periodic updates on the progress of the module. By communicating about the project and including the mod-

¹⁸⁴ Stevens, I. & Van Lamoen, I. (2001), *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁵ Stevens, I. & Van Lamoen, I. (2001), *op. cit.*

ule in the diversity structures, the sustainability of the actions and measures taken would be guaranteed.

**Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters:
putting Equal Opportunities on the agenda**

New in their function, the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Rectorial Offices teamed up with the Mainstreaming Promoters of Student Affairs to organize a lunch meeting to which all employees of the respective offices were invited. First, the Staff member Equal Opportunities and Diversity was invited as a guest speaker to explain the diversity policy of the university. Then, the Promoters gave a presentation to introduce themselves and to illustrate their decentralized action plan. A call for suggestions was made. The meeting was closed with an informal network lunch. By organizing the meeting, all employees of the Rectorial Offices got an introduction about the equal opportunities and diversity policy and were given the contact details of the Mainstreaming Promoters. Afterwards, all participants received a report of the meeting.

The Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculties of Engineering, Bioscience Engineering and Science (together the Group Science, Engineering and Technology) also organized a network lunch: all male and female post-doctoral researchers and assistant professors from the faculties were invited. The Emancipation Officer of the Flemish government was invited as a guest speaker. By organizing the network lunch, the academic staff of those faculties got to know each other and the Mainstreaming Promoters in an informal way and their attention was drawn towards the importance of equal opportunities and diversity. The Group Management SET showed their commitment by providing food and drinks.

Within their decentralized action plan, the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Arts first intended to found a women's club from the idea that women invest less in a social network due to a high workload at the faculty and at home. By attending a seminar about diversity, the Mainstreaming Promoters however learned about the benefits of mentoring trajectories. Every new or permanent female member of staff could be matched to a mentor (volunteer from the faculty) that functions as a contact for the member to speak in confidence about career planning, work-life balance, etc. The UHasselt developed such a tool on one-on-one mentorship in the scope of the VLIR-EQUAL Project (see chapter 5).

The decentralized action plan of the Mainstreaming Promoters within the Office Communication entails the constant attention for diversity through communication. They designed a diversity logo and a special feature on the topic of equal opportunities and diversity was included in the monthly university newspaper.

3.5. Building awareness and ownership

“Gender mainstreaming implies a paradigm shift in thinking of all actors involved in policy making, especially of academic leaders and managers who are officially assigned to initiate and coordinate the process. This requires training to reach a certain degree of gender awareness and gender expertise. Training thus enables relevant policy makers to dismantle seemingly gender-neutral practices and transform them, meeting the demands of a broad range of people, women as well as men. Apart from a certain degree of expertise, it

*is necessary that gender mainstreaming is taken on board as an administrative and management responsibility in its own right.*¹⁸⁶

Building awareness and ownership thus entails that a certain level of understanding and expertise on the subject of gender is provided and a certain level of responsibility is taken to change existing gender relations.

As described above, the K.U.Leuven already has an elaborate structure for generating and executing an equal opportunities and diversity policy. The Mainstreaming Promoters play a very important role in that structure, driving the integration of diversity in the organizational structure and decision-making processes. The Mainstreaming Promoters are no specialists in Gender Mainstreaming but male and female academics and administrators at different stages of their careers. The dean or head is asked to voluntarily appoint a male and female member of personnel as Mainstreaming Promoter (see 4.4. Toolkit: Mainstreaming Promoters). In other words, the Mainstreaming Promoters are brought together from all grades and statutes, though the Faculty of Law and the HR-department stressed their commitment by appointing the dean of the faculty himself and the Personnel Director of ZAP as Mainstreaming Promoters.

As many new Mainstreaming Promoters were welcomed during the project, a training course on equal opportunities and diversity (see 4.4. Toolkit: Mainstreaming Promoters) was organized instead of a network meeting. The more experienced Mainstreaming Promoters were invited to the training to exchange know-how.

Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: creating a support basis

As a starting point the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering followed the example of the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculties of Theology, Engineering and Social Sciences and made an appeal within the faculty to create a working group for equal opportunities and diversity which they gave an attractive name.

Some working groups are put together with attention for representation (members from all statutes within the faculty), some working groups meet monthly and are open to anyone who is interested.

All working groups can be found on the faculty websites.

Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: mapping situation

One of the ways to build awareness within the organization is to collect and disseminate figures about the faculty or office. The Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences for instance monitor the representation of female academics in the faculty's decision-making organs. In general they want to tackle the loss of talent by the under-representation of women in the academic career and the administrative policy.

¹⁸⁶ Stevens, I. & Van Lamoen, I. (2001), *op. cit.*

Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: participation

In the ‘Tweede Gelijke Kansenrapport’¹⁸⁷ scissor diagrams were generated for all faculties. For the Faculty of Science the scissor diagram showed that the largest drop-out of female academics was to be found in the promotion from post-doctoral researcher to Assistant Professor. More detailed information was asked by the Mainstreaming Promoters from the Diversity Policy Office. Analyses of the appointment figures showed that there was a lack of female candidates. The Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Science decided to make it a point of action for the next academic year to create some portraits of female scientists on their website as role-models for their female post-doctoral researchers.

4. Instrument and case study

The ‘Career management’ module of the K.U.Leuven aimed at developing new tools and/or optimize existing tools concerning equal opportunities and career management. As described in the Process report, the K.U.Leuven was used as a case study to develop and optimize such tools.

This part will describe the tools and the correct way of using them.

4.1. Tool: mapping career and promotion opportunities

For this tool: see Tool Annex.

In the Process report we started out from the Instrumental model to integrate the Gender Mainstreaming concept in career management. A new simple model was drawn up (see tool: Mapping career and promotion opportunities) to show how the module was developed along the way and what methods can be used to map the career opportunities of the personnel.

4.1.1. Identify possible gender issues

First, we needed to show if a gender problem existed for the different statutes (ZAP, ABAP, ATP): quantitative analyses were performed on the data of the official annual reports of the university. Scissor diagrams clearly showed whether or not there was a gender problem. If not, no further research would be needed.

¹⁸⁷ K.U.Leuven, Centrum voor Gelijke Kansenbeleid (2004), *op. cit.*

4.1.2. Analysis of promotion opportunities

In a second step, the promotion opportunities for all statutes were analysed. Different techniques could be used. One can simply calculate the male-female proportions within the statutes, as done in the following illustration:

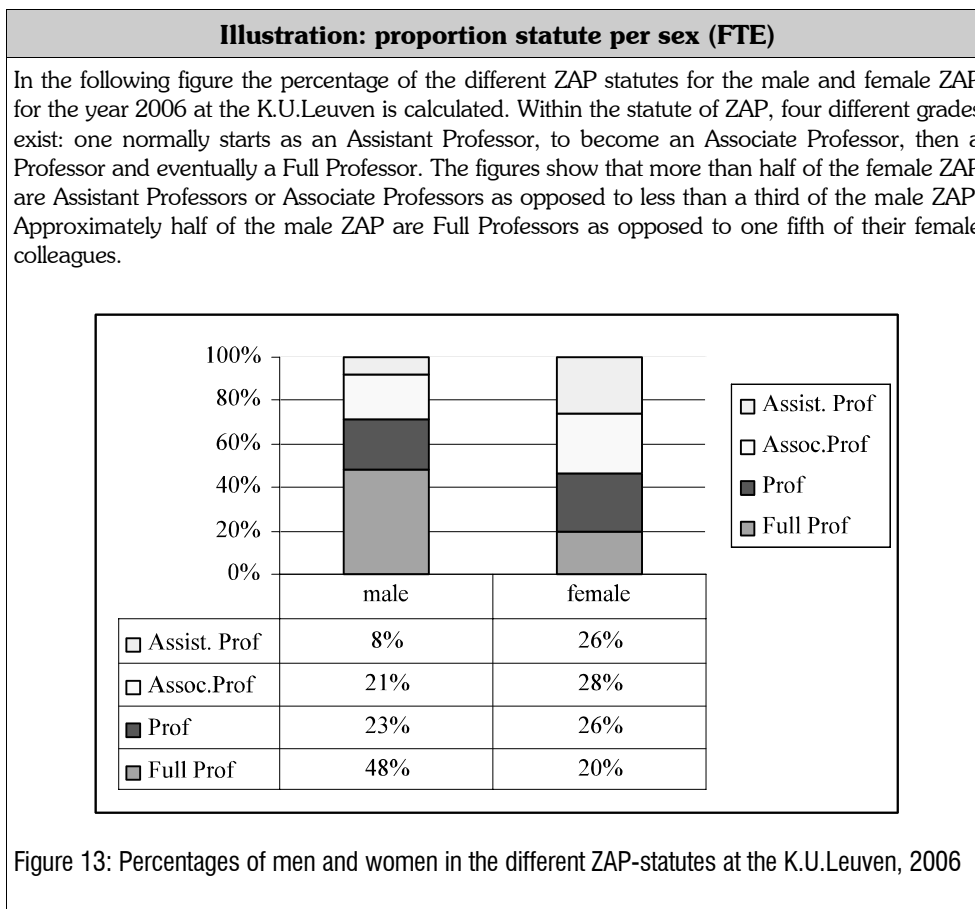


Figure 13: Percentages of men and women in the different ZAP-statutes at the K.U.Leuven, 2006

Another way to map the vertical segregation is by calculating the Glass Ceiling Index (GPI; see 3.2. Measurement and monitoring).

A more thorough statistical analysis is the cohort analysis. It follows one and the same group from a certain point in time till a later moment. Within the K.U.Leuven a cohort analysis was performed for the ATP and the same methods were used for the ZAP. As the VRWB already performed a recent cohort analysis for the ABAP, no sufficient added value could be generated by doing the same for the K.U.Leuven.

4.1.3. Research causes

The analysis on the promotion opportunities for the different statutes showed that a gender gap in the promotion opportunities between the male and female staff exists. This urged the researchers to find the possible causes of that gap.

Two different sources are distinguished. One can research the policy (structures, procedures, documents) of the organization regarding career management. Another possible source is the personnel itself: which lacunas are there between policy and practice? How do the employees perceive promotion opportunities within the organization? And is there a difference in perception between male and female personnel members?

4.1.3.1. Personnel

When surveying your employees, you need to bear in mind three aspects: ‘what’ is asked ‘from whom’ in ‘what way’?

‘What’ is the research question, drawn from the problem definition, i.e. the items you will question.

‘In what way’ is the method that will be used. Herzog¹⁸⁸ makes a distinction in the classification in the way items are administered or by their physical format (see figure 14).

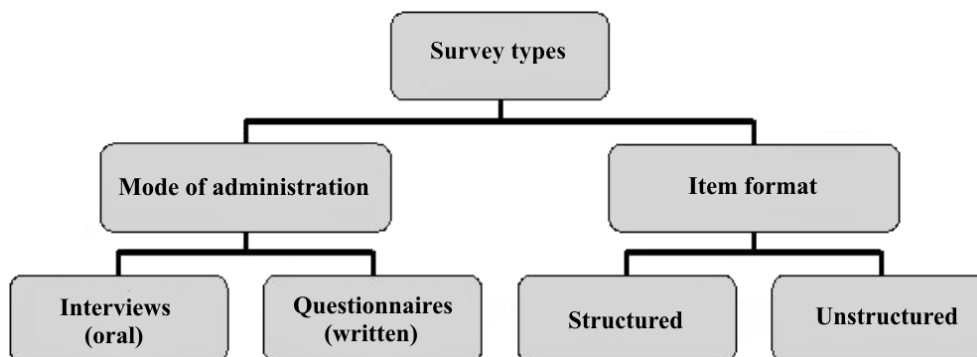


Figure 14: Types of surveys classified according to Herzog

“Structured responses, commonly known as closed or multiple-choice responses, are those in which the respondent must choose among alternatives supplied by the researcher. Unstructured responses, commonly known as open or free responses, are those in which the respondent may say or write anything. Structure is desirable when consistency across situations is important. An unstructured approach is desirable when explora-

¹⁸⁸ Herzog, T. R. (1996). *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. HarperCollins College Publishers, 378 p.

tion is the major goal, when one does not know what responses are likely and wishes to form impressions that may be tested more thoroughly in later research."¹⁸⁹

In our case, if you want to test the policy against practice, a quantitative questionnaire needs to be developed. Certain items (questions) are asked and the employee can choose from several answers. A preliminary explorative research (or a thorough literature study) is needed to make sure that the list of answers is exhaustive (=no other possibilities exist).

'From who' is the population that you will study. This can be the entire staff or just some statutes. One can analyse the personnel members who are present or the ones that are leaving the organization. This last sample is a great source of information: apart from investigating why a person leaves the organization, one can also check potential differences in perception.

Within this module, access was granted to the central exit survey for researchers. Furthermore, a questionnaire was developed to study the career opportunities of the academic personnel at the Faculty of Theology. Both will be discussed in part 4.2. Tool: Survey Career Management.

4.1.3.2. Policy

From a process view one needs to test the policy on gender neutrality. This entails different aspects, e.g. can all information be gathered by the researcher or employees (transparency), how was/is the policy developed (gender neutrality, objectivity) and what results can be drawn from the policy executed (effectiveness)? This means all procedures and structures regarding career management need to be scrutinized.

Within this module this was the case for the ZAP and ATP. The ABAP does not know a real promotional structure as their employment depends on funding. For the ATP, a transparent career plan exists. We chose to gain access to the job classification project, as this is the main HR-tool for this statute. A sex-neutral job classification system was developed (see 4.3. Tool: Gender-aware job descriptions). For the ZAP the promotional procedures were checked within the module and communicated to the HR-department with suggestions for improvement. This means that for the appointment and promotion-structure the procedure was mapped and evaluated on transparency, objectivity and effectiveness. The main obstacles remain the lack of clarity in promotion/appointment criteria and an imbalance in the composition of the decision-making units.

The procedure and outcomes of the five-yearly evaluation of the ZAP were analysed. It is determined by decree¹⁹⁰ since 1999 that the job performance of academic staff members needs to be evaluated at least once in every five years. The following example illustrates how this check was realized:

¹⁸⁹ Herzog, T.R. (1996), op. cit.

¹⁹⁰ Decreet betreffende het onderwijs X(I), 18 mei 1999.

Illustration: check on the evaluation of the ZAP

What?

It is determined by decree since 1999 that the job performance of academic staff members needs to be evaluated at least once in every five years. An evaluation has to take place three years after the first appointment or after every designation or promotion.

Procedure?

The University Board lays down the rules for evaluating job performance and the way in which members of the Academic personnel work. The evaluation procedure is regulated by the Academic Council. The University Board laid down a certain procedure: a faculty evaluative commission per faculty and a general evaluative commission per group was founded. The evaluation is made on motivated decisions by the authorized general evaluative commission, based on the non-binding, motivated propositions of the authorized faculty evaluative commission.

The members of the senior academic staff (ZAP) are evaluated based on the way they fulfil their assignment, educational tasks, research tasks and any tasks of service. The Human Resources Department is responsible for the preparation of the file in collaboration with the Research Coordination Office. The member itself is not involved nor asked for input in this preliminary stage of the procedure due to administrative simplification. The staff member in question is informed of the end result by letter. The possibility for further feedback is given, which is done orally by the chairperson of the evaluative commission or by personnel director ZAP of the HR-department. This feedback is actually asked for.

The percentage of negative evaluations is on the average approximately 0.015%.

Evaluation?

Transparency:

Most of the information above could be found on the website of the HR-department.

For more detailed information, the cooperation of the personnel director ZAP was asked, who kindly invited us for a personal interview.

The members of the senior academic staff also have access to the evaluation procedure on the website. However, the member is not asked for input nor involved in the procedure itself. It is also not clear which criteria are most important and how the evaluation as *such* is done.

Often, more information is only given during feedback and if asked for.

Objectivity:

The file distinguishes three main criteria, though not every criterion is as important as the other ones. The two most important criteria are the research output and the education evaluation. As neither training nor instructions are given to the members of the different commissions, it is hard to guarantee the objectivity. Each commission can have a different idea on what is a good or bad performance of a member, between the commissions of each faculty and between the consecutive commissions. Uniformity should be seen as crucial and is essential to guarantee equal opportunities for all staff.

Effectiveness:

As the evaluation is still in an early stage of execution, it is hard to evaluate the effectiveness at this stage.

At this moment, the university tries to meet the rules, as determined by decree. In the long term, the HR-department will use the evaluation as an instrument for further career guidance and performance interviews.

4.1.4. Support basis

In the part 'Implementation and organization' (see 3.4.) the importance of a clear structure and thorough support basis was already stressed. Interaction with top level management is necessary to gain access to the data needed but also to make sure that the learning effects and results will be incorporated in the policy. Sustainability is needed to gender mainstream the structures and procedures. In this module periodic updates about the project were communicated to the top and entities involved. By using Mainstreaming Promoters (see 4.4. Toolkit: Mainstreaming Promoters) as intermediary actors the target audience, the staff of the K.U.Leuven, was reached.

4.2. Tool: survey career management

4.2.1. Exit survey K.U.Leuven

Within the project, access to the data of the central exit survey of the K.U.Leuven was granted. In order to get insight in the motives of the researchers leaving the university, two surveys were developed by a steering committee, in which the researcher of this module was included (see '3.3. Proofing and evaluation' for the results of the surveys). The results were discussed with the HR-manager and will be used in future presentations. Two presentations about the survey were also given during the transnational meetings within the VLIR-EQUAL Project to exchange know-how on the subject.

The university considers the departure of the co-worker as a very important moment in the collaboration, it is a moment of looking back and possible exchange of feedback on the collaboration, on what has been learned and achieved. Within this view, exit interviews and surveys are an expression of respect towards the co-worker and a unique learning moment for the university as an organization¹⁹¹. Feedback about the results of the survey are given to the different groups, faculties and units of the faculties.

Since March 2005 every ABAP leaving the university receives an e-mail request to fill in the exit survey. Based on their statute, junior researchers and post-doctoral researchers are guided to a different survey. As the exit survey is an HR-tool developed by the K.U.Leuven, the survey itself cannot be published in this guide. Based on valuable discussions within the transnational co-operation and a blueprint of the surveys, some points can be given that should be part of the content of a survey:

- motives to start a career at the university;
- satisfaction (job content, guidance);
- perception on job content, working environment, competences, guidance;
- motives to leave university;
- new job.

¹⁹¹ <https://www.kuleuven.be/personeel/exitbevraging/index.htm>.

4.2.2. Career Management Survey

For this tool: see Tool Annex.

A questionnaire was developed in collaboration with the Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculty of Theology (see Good Practice Mainstreaming Promoters: survey career management). The initial questionnaire was based on the concept note of the Mainstreaming Promoters and the working group on equal opportunities and diversity of the Faculty of Theology. Some items (8-12, 18, 20-23, 25, 28, 29, 32, 34) were (partially) taken over from the questionnaires of the study ‘Doctoreren in Vlaanderen’¹⁹². After feedback of the Mainstreaming Promoters, the working group and a staff member of the Research Coordination Office and after the authorization of the Faculty Board, the survey was ready to be sent out.

The survey is a quantitative questionnaire with 35 items. Two types of questions can be distinguished: a first one inquires about a certain situation or experience (the respondent ticks the right box), a second one probes the opinion of the respondent (the respondent marks his/her opinion on a scale from 1 to 6).

The questionnaire consists of seven major parts and was sent to 117 respondents who have attended the last Master year at the faculty since 1998. The seven parts entail:

1. *personal data* (year of birth, sex, year of graduation, family situation, number of children);
2. *information about the last Master year*: grade obtained, course chosen, satisfaction, actions about funding to start doctoral research, motives to enrol in Master year, information about different sources of funding, starting the doctoral research, motives to not start a doctoral research;
3. *information about the doctoral research*: sex promoter, motives to start doctoral research, choice of subject, opinion about some statements (regarding the faculty, the doctoral research, the promoter), formal interviews (performance interview, evaluation interview, effectiveness of those interviews), obtaining the PhD, interest in scientific career;
4. *information about quitting the doctoral research*: the phase of the doctoral research, satisfaction with terms of employment, motives to quit doctoral research;
5. *information about the scientific career*: job after PhD, added value of a PhD-degree, expectation to remain scientifically active;
6. *information about ending the appointment at the university*: way to end career at university, motives to leave university;
7. *information about the current job (career)*: decisive elements in choice of profession, satisfaction with terms of employment in current job, current job, level of current job.

In the questionnaire reference functions were used. This means that depending on a certain answer one is directed to a next one. This is because not all parts are relevant to everyone. Of all respondents that graduated as a student, some started a doctoral research and others did not for certain reasons. Some obtained their PhD, some did not.

¹⁹² Verlinden, A.; Billiet, J.; Pyck, H.; e.a. (2005), *op. cit.*

Some got appointed as a post-doctoral researcher, some did not get appointed because they were not interested in a scientific career or for other reasons.

The following figure shows the career trajectory within the faculty:

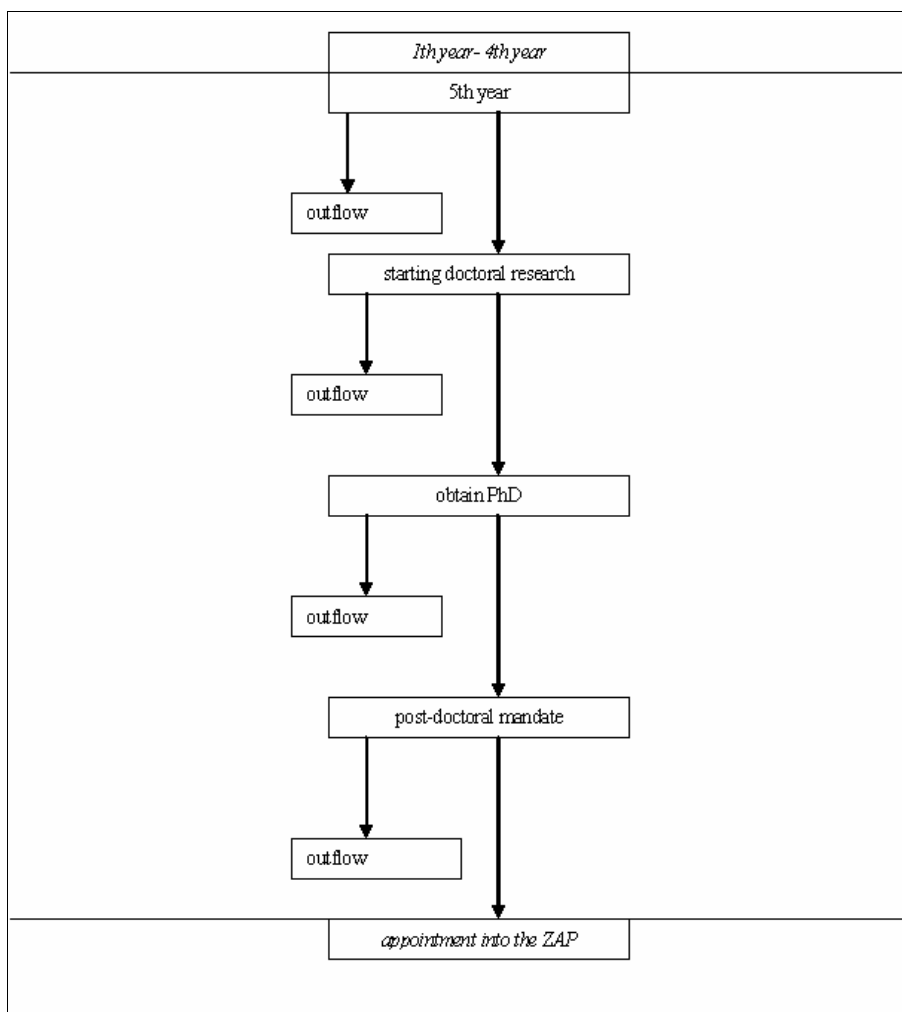


Figure 15: Career trajectory from graduation till appointment in the ZAP

The survey was sent three times: a first time, a second time one week later and a third and last time three weeks later. The envelope contained the survey and an extra sealed envelope with the address of the faculty secretariat on it. If a respondent already sent the envelope back, he or she got a thank you-note the next time. The envelopes were numbered on the outside to know who already answered. A guiding letter explained that that number was only meant for administrative purposes and was unrelated to the analyses of

the data. The guiding letter also explained why the research was conducted and stressed the importance of the survey to gain input for an action plan for the faculty on equal opportunities and diversity. For questions about the content of the survey the respondents could contact the researcher of the Diversity Policy Office (see guiding letter and survey in Tool Annex).

Sending out the survey three times contributed to a high response rate of 53.70%. The data were put in a file by a student, paid by the Faculty Board that showed its commitment in this way. All analyses were made with the statistical program SPSS¹⁹³. The first type of questions (experience/situation) was tested on significant differences by means of the χ -test. The second type (opinion on a scale from 1 to 6) was tested by means of *t*-tests: the difference in averages were tested on significance. In the statistics a result is called significant when the difference in results is not caused by coincidence, but by something else.

No conclusions could be drawn about quitting ‘the doctoral research’ (part 4) and ‘the scientific career’ (part 5) of the respondents, as not enough respondents filled in this part. In general, the respondents were highly satisfied about the Master year. Fewer female respondents had the intention to start a doctorate; more male respondents wrote a research proposition. Scientific ambition and external stimuli were the main reasons to start a doctoral research. A quarter of the women indicated having started doctoral research as a preparation to a career outside the university. The guidance of the promoter and the faculty in general scored very highly. An important conclusion however was that female respondents seemed to have fewer formal interviews (performance interview, evaluation interview). The female and male respondents all considered a good work/life balance to be important: sufficient room for other engagements was deemed necessary. Those still working at the faculty were highly satisfied with the terms of employment except for the level of ‘support/mentorship’ and ‘the workload’. Of the respondents that left the faculty, the majority of women indicated working in an educational institution while the majority of men indicated performing scientific research.

Provisional results were first discussed at a meeting of the working group on equal opportunities and diversity of the faculty. The feedback of the members of the working group was included in a final report that was presented to different organs of the faculty. The Faculty Board was positive about the final report and about the idea of mentoring trajectories put forward in the policy recommendations to guarantee sustainable coaching.

¹⁹³ SPSS 12.0 for Windows 12.0. Copywrite ©SPSS Inc., 1998-2003.

4.3. Tool: gender-aware job descriptions

For this tool: see Tool Annex.

As described in 'Proofing and evaluation' (see 3.3.), a tool to guarantee equal opportunities in job descriptions was developed. The aim was to develop a practical and handy instrument that can easily be used. The K.U.Leuven, which at that time initiated a pilot job classification project in the University Administration and Central Offices and University Library, was once again used as a case study.

4.3.1. Approach

This tool was developed on the basis of a literature study, an existing training package and meetings with the university's HR-department.

The EVA-project¹⁹⁴ developed a training package for gender-neutral job evaluation and job classification. This training package is a very valuable tool though it can be difficult to keep an overview. Therefore the present study aims at developing a tool that can be used as an overview with the most important reflections, based on the information in the package.

Plichart and Van Den Bulck¹⁹⁵ discuss the gender aspect of a text in 'Vooronderzoek naar de genderdimensie in Klare Taal'. The gender aspect of a text entails what the language use and the text implicitly state about the place of men and women in society, about their mutual relations on how to act as 'female' women and 'male' men in each other's eyes, and about the differences in appreciation. Language and expressions evoke certain culturally determined ideas and expectation patterns linked to 'femininity' and 'masculinity' as well as the societal appreciation and interpretation related to these terms. Some gender specialists opt for a gender-neutral language; a writing language that does not reveal gender information, but it is not easy to foresee a gender-neutral alternative for each word. For this reason some plead to use gender-aware or gender-balanced language. The developed tool provides guidelines to describe jobs using gender-aware or gender-balanced language.

4.3.2. Step-by-step plan of gender-aware job descriptions

We have opted to develop a scheme that entails a step-by-step plan (see Tool Annex), which focuses on the process approach that is important to successfully implement the job classification procedure. The plan consists of five steps. Recommendations are included

¹⁹⁴ Instituut voor de Gelijkheid van Vrouwen en Mannen (2006), *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁵ Plichart, I. & Van Den Bulck, H. (2006). *Vooronderzoek naar de genderdimensie in Klare Taal*. Centrum voor Vrouwenstudies, Universiteit Antwerpen.

to avoid gender colouring in language in general and more specifically in the job descriptions. Some exercises and useful tips are also included in the scheme.

4.3.2.1. Step 1: gender awareness

Looking at language through a gender perspective is trying to recognise gender-coloured values, standards and behaviour of human relations at all levels. Gender awareness is the first step to make a change. The best approach is to sensitize all parties involved and to make recommendations concerning sex neutrality in job rating.

In a first step, two exercises are given to raise gender awareness. The first exercise asks to list up possible tasks for a co-worker of the HR-department and to do the same for an HR-assistant. The job titles 'co-worker of the HR department' and 'HR-assistant' appear to have a different connotation. Sometimes male job titles sound like they entail more responsibility than female job titles. In this case also, a job title can mean more or can be seen as inferior.

A second exercise reveals how easily prejudices and stereotypes influence one's perspective. The exercise lists a number of functions and asks respondents to indicate immediately whether they think the function is performed by a man or a woman.

Finally, a useful tip is given to create an information brochure containing general information about the job classification project but also draws attention to gender-neutral job descriptions. Job holders (i.e. the person who performs the job) are frequently involved in collecting information for describing jobs. By making them aware of this issue, they can take it into account.

4.3.2.2. Step 2: job holder and standard form

In the job rating process, the nature of the job serves as a criterion for ranking jobs, irrespective of the characteristics of the person who does the job. The job itself is evaluated, not the achievements of the job holder. One should evaluate as it were the chair and not the person who sits on it. It is important that the job description reflects the job requirements. A job description is recognizable if job holders can recognize themselves in the description. The job holder is a privileged source of information, so make sure that both sexes are represented.

It is important that jobs are described in a uniform manner and conformal to the demands of the job rating system chosen. For this reason the use of a standard form is recommended. That way, job descriptions can easily be read and compared. Moreover, a standard form guarantees that male and female jobs are established in the same way. By using a fixed classification, one can take into account all characteristics. Furthermore, the examples of tasks and activities that are sometimes given to fill in the form must be described in a gender-neutral way.

4.3.2.3. Step 3: job titles

The past decades the diversity in the social roles between men and women has considerably changed: it is not certain anymore that a director is a man. These current changes make awareness in language necessary: for twenty years there was no female alternative for a fireman.

Language not only reflects changes in society, it can also 'brick' those changes in the collective unconscious. The well-considered use of gender-aware terms creates a permanent change of the collective unconscious and as a consequence also a change of the social reality.

Avoid sex-identification through the job holder or by the job title, the forms of address or personal pronouns. Many associations and governments publish handbooks of job titles featuring official recommendations for gender-neutral language: an overview¹⁹⁶:

- Use an equivalent sex-neutral or general term for replacing a male job description when possible. Some examples:
 - * 'fire-fighter' instead of 'fireman';
 - * 'mail carrier', 'letter carrier' or 'post worker' rather than 'mailman';
 - * 'flight attendant' instead of 'steward' or 'stewardess';
 - * 'bartender' instead of 'barman' or 'barmaid';
 - * 'chairperson' instead of 'chairman'.
- Adding a suffix to make the word feminine should be avoided as well, even if some of these are also entirely obsolete now, such as 'sculptress', 'poetess', and 'aviatrix'. Some examples:
 - * 'usher' not 'usherette';
 - * 'comedian', not 'comedienne'¹⁹⁷.
- When speaking in general categories or neutral terms, examine if you really address both sexes. For example:
 - * 'General practitioners are frequently assisted by their **partners** in their practice' instead of 'General practitioners are frequently assisted by their **wives** in their practice'.
- If you choose an initially neutral term, afterwards avoid that the term is referred to using he/him/his. Try to avoid duplicate forms as he/she and his/her. The plural form sometimes offers a solution:
 - * 'Scientists are responsible for **their** own studies' instead of 'Each scientist is responsible for **his** own study'.
- Use a member word instead of a possessive pronoun:
 - * 'Can manage **the** files well' instead of 'Can manage **his/her** files well'.
- If there is no sex-neutral description available, use the plural form.
 - The inclusive 'we' and the direct 'you' are frequently opted for as alternatives:
 - * 'We look for construction employees. **They** support ...' instead of 'We look for

¹⁹⁶ The Flemish government developed directives for gender-neutral job titles. Checklist voor trainers. <http://www.emancipatiezaken.be/page.asp?page=69>.

¹⁹⁷ Source: Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender-specific_job_title; consultation 10th June 2007.

a construction employee. **He** supports ...’.

Note that these guidelines are by no means a complete standard, as there is still much disagreement on proper usage.

4.3.2.4. *Step 4: job characteristics*

The job characteristics or criteria are the central elements of job rating systems, to which the ‘weight’ of the job is measured. The job classification system must analyse and appreciate jobs on all aspects that are important in the execution of the job.

There are a number of characteristics which are typically attributed to jobs, usually performed by women. Those characteristics are seen as inherent to women and thus inherent to the job. But, characteristics that are not described can also not be appreciated. In order to obtain a more balanced inventory of job characteristics for all jobs, relevant job characteristics of jobs dominated by women must be added to the system.

Typical characteristics that are generally associated with traditional ‘female’ jobs are for instance social skills, physical and emotional care, concentration, handiness, preciseness, cleanliness, repetitive and short cyclic work, domesticity, patience, etc. Typical characteristics that are associated with traditional ‘male’ jobs and that are generally overvalued are for instance leadership, organizational capacities, technical insight and activities, commercial, financial and material responsibilities, heavy physical work, policy development, policy advice, etc.

‘Male’ and ‘female’ characteristics must be integrated proportionally in the system. In general, job descriptions are rated based on the same criteria. Be alert for those basic criteria. Remember that what is not incorporated in the description cannot be appreciated either. The tool makes a suggestion to be attentive for this issue by providing an exercise on listing all relevant characteristics and describing them in an unambiguous and clear way. All characteristics or criteria must therefore be defined in such a way that they are applicable to both ‘male’ and ‘female’ jobs. Independence, responsibility, creativity, complexity, knowledge, are for example characteristics that can be typical for ‘female’ and ‘male’ jobs but are sometimes defined in a way that is more characteristic of ‘male’ jobs.

4.3.2.5. *Step 5: verbs*

In job descriptions most aspects of the job are accentuated by the use of verbs. In traditional ‘male’ professions the emphasis is more on technical and physical aspects and the responsibilities of the profession are being stressed by using the following verbs: to monitor quality, to identify needs, to detect compatibility, to secure continuity, to check, to implement etc.

In job descriptions of traditional ‘female’ professions however, the human-specific, nurturing aspects are emphasised and the profession is implicitly presented as a hierarchical subordinate position. The following verbs contribute to this subordinate position: to play a

role, to support, to accompany, to contribute, to look after and to help. In this way these undesirable gender aspects confirm traditional role patterns for men and women.

Furthermore, the work that women execute is often described in such a way that the importance is not stressed, compared to male colleagues performing the same job, for example:

- 'he gives/controls' versus 'she accompanies';
- 'he co-ordinates versus 'she remains in contact'.

4.3.3. Application

This step-by-step plan for gender-aware job descriptions is an instrument for equal opportunities. It is a handy and easy to use tool that requires little knowledge about the job rating system. An easy form with some suggestions, recommendations and exercises will lead respondents through the five steps to set up gender-aware job descriptions. The tool can be used as a monitoring and evaluation tool. These tools are useful to check whether progress has been made towards gender equality.

This tool can thus be useful to help set up job descriptions and to indicate the presence of inequalities in gender. The tool is still being tested within the K.U.Leuven. In a first phase, it was tested on the documents the HR-department generated in the scope of the HAY-project.

Results of the application of the tool on the document 'manual for job descriptions', that was generated by the HR-department for the job holders within the HAY-project:

- Examples of job titles containing the female form of the Dutch word for 'department secretary'. This is a job title often used at the K.U.Leuven but it is not a sex-neutral term. In this case, the K.U.Leuven sets a bad example, giving the impression that the gender problem is not important instead of encouraging job holders to use gender-neutral terms. This could lead to job holders, who provide the information for the job description, not being aware of the problem. Our suggestion: set an example by using gender-neutral job titles and adding some information about sex-neutral job titles. An exercise may make things clear.
- Furthermore, within the given examples of activities and responsibility, no gender-neutral language was used. For example, the job title of 'team leader' with the responsibility of 'organizing, coordinating, and following the activities of the co-workers of his team etc.' One needs to pay attention to avoiding the use of reference words and writing in a gender-neutral way. Therefore the tool pays special attention to the subject of gender awareness and gender-aware language. This tool can help job holders to write and give information in the right way.
- The manual pays attention to quality control in general and in the use of clear language, but not to gender-aware language. We would like to suggest adding the steps of the tool to the 'quality control' section as the tool can also be used as an evaluation instrument.

In a second phase, the profiles used in the job classification system will be evaluated using the tool. An agreement with the HR-department is already established, but due to a delay in the project the check could not yet be completed. This check will involve selecting pairs of jobs traditionally performed by men and jobs traditionally performed by women and analysing the descriptions of these jobs with regard to potential inconsistencies. This is done by listing up all job titles and job characteristics and by looking at the language use through a gender perspective (verbs, possessive pronouns, refer words ...). Differences and/or similarities should be noted and suggestions will be made that pay more attention to gender-aware job descriptions.

4.4. Toolkit: mainstreaming promoters

For these tools: see Tool Annex.

Throughout the different parts of this module, the good practices of the Mainstreaming Promoters were already described and by this, the value of such a network was proven. The 'Building Awareness and Ownership' section (see 3.5.) already stressed the important role of Mainstreaming Promoters in the elaborate university structure for executing a thorough equal opportunities and diversity policy.

A toolkit for Mainstreaming Promoters was developed within this module and contains three tools: (1) a profile of the role of Mainstreaming Promoters (tool: profile Mainstreaming Promoter), (2) a blueprint of the training the Mainstreaming Promoters received (tool: Equal opportunities and diversity training) and (3) a form to evaluate such a training course (see Tool: evaluation form Mainstreaming Promoters in Tool Annex). These three tools will be described in this part.

A profile of the role of Mainstreaming Promoters was already developed in 2001, when the Diversity Policy Office founded the networks. As the equal opportunities and diversity structure has evolved since 2001 and more experience was gained in directing such a network of Mainstreaming Promoters, the VLIR-EQUAL Project was the perfect opportunity to update that existing profile.

Any organization interested in founding such a network, can use the profile to recruit the Mainstreaming Promoters. Within the K.U.Leuven, the profile is sent to the dean or head who is requested by the Rectorial Advisor for Equal Opportunities and Diversity to appoint new Mainstreaming Promoters within the faculty or office.

Within the updated profile (see Tool: profile Mainstreaming Promoter in Tool Annex) one can find the role the Mainstreaming Promoters will play within their own department and towards the equal opportunities and diversity officer (in the case of the K.U.Leuven this is the Rectorial Advisor). One can also find some competences the potential Mainstreaming Promoters should have or should be willing to acquire. This profile is by no means a profile of the 'ideal' Mainstreaming Promoter. Beginning Mainstreaming Promoters have to grow in their role. Furthermore, the approach of developing a decentralized action plan

will depend on their department and the support of the head.

It is of great importance that the Mainstreaming Promoters can operate in a clear structure and under the support of a central equal opportunities and diversity office. The organization must be willing to invest time and money into diversity; otherwise the Mainstreaming Promoters will be doomed to fail. This central equal opportunities and diversity office is responsible for organizing a number of network meetings where the Mainstreaming Promoters can meet and share experiences. Within the K.U.Leuven at least three network meetings are organized each year:

- a first one in the beginning of the academic year (around October) to discuss the approach each faculty or office will use to develop and execute its action plans;
- a second one in the middle of the year (around February) to follow-up on those plans and
- a third one at the end of the academic year (around June) to evaluate the action plan executed, to share learning effects and pitfalls and to propose actions for the following year.

Each year, the Diversity Policy Office bundles the different action plans in a report, publishes it on its website and sends it to all Mainstreaming Promoters and their deans or superiors. By publishing it on its website, the university shows it is working on diversity in a professional way.

As the network of Mainstreaming Promoters of the Offices was elaborated and also new Mainstreaming Promoters of the Faculties were welcomed, a training course on equal opportunities and diversity was organized at the start of the academic year 2006-2007. Two afternoon sessions were scheduled (see Tool: Equal opportunities and diversity training in Tool Annex). The Mainstreaming Promoters were first consulted to know if they would be interested in attending such a training course and what items should certainly be addressed. The Mainstreaming Promoters were always invited to have lunch together before the afternoon session started, to get to know each other on a more informal basis. Sandwiches and drinks were supplied.

The first afternoon session started with a course of Professor Maddy Janssens on what diversity is and how it can be applied in organizations. Professor Maddy Janssens is a professor at the K.U.Leuven with experience in the field of diversity in organizations. The Rectorial Advisor on Equal Opportunities and Diversity then introduced her Master plan on equal opportunities and diversity at the university.

In a workshop, guided by the Staff member for Equal Opportunities and Diversity, small groups applied the theory given by Professor Maddy Janssens to the situation in their faculty or group based on two questions: (1) how does the policy of the K.U.Leuven compare to the theory, (2) what themes are important to the faculty or office? For each question a target was formulated and the findings were reported on a flipchart. A list of important topics was clustered in themes on the flipcharts and the Mainstreaming Promoters got the assignment to identify three action points for the next academic year as a preparation for the second afternoon session. That second afternoon session was scheduled one month later to give the Mainstreaming Promoters enough time to meet with their dean or

superior, if necessary. During that month they received a report of the first afternoon session and an overview of all the action points as discussed in their small groups.

The second afternoon session started with a training course by the Staff member for Equal Opportunities and Diversity on how to develop a decentralized action plan. Some tools were provided. After a short coffee break, the participants were divided into three groups according to the three themes in which their action points were clustered: (1) promotion, (2) inflow, (3) communication/supporting basis. Three topics were discussed in these small groups: (1) identifying the suitable approach and tools to meet the goals set, (2) ensuring the engagement and supporting basis within the faculty/office, (3) formulating measures according to time and budget. For each question a target was formulated and the way to report it to the whole group was determined. In the classroom there were flip charts. At the end of the training session the Mainstreaming Promoters got the assignment to formalize their action plans for the next year by a follow-up meeting two months later.

Afterwards the training sessions were evaluated by means of a form (see Tool: evaluation form Mainstreaming Promoters in Tool Annex). Learning points were that the subject of diversity is sometimes too abstract and that more concrete examples from within the university or other organizations were needed. Positive remarks were the fact that the group could learn from each other and motivate each other, the interesting inventory, the input of Professor Janssens and the thorough preparation. In the light of Gender Mainstreaming, the HR-department engaged itself to formally include the training in their central training programme.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

This module investigated the promotion opportunities and the policy on career management at the K.U.Leuven. The career opportunities of all staff members were mapped and analysed and in collaboration with different entities within the universities, four tools were developed.

5.1. Transferability to other organizations and settings

The first tool showed how the promotion and career opportunities of the staff at the K.U.Leuven were mapped and gave an overview of the entire project that was developed over two years' time. The way to analyse the career opportunities of the academic personnel should be transferable to other universities, colleges or scientific institutions.

Within the module, several smaller projects were elaborated in collaboration with the HR-

department, the Research Coordination Office, the ABAP-representatives and the Mainstreaming Promoters. Three tools and some good practices resulted from this collaboration.

A second tool is the career management survey. A quantitative questionnaire was developed that studies the motives to start a doctoral research and continue a scientific career as well as the perceptions of the respondent towards the career management policy within a faculty. This tool primarily applies to other faculties within universities and can be used provided that some items are adapted to the specific career trajectories (some modifications will be needed for the second part on the last Master year and item 33 that informs about the current job).

A third tool is a step-by-step plan to create gender-aware job descriptions. This tool can be used as a proofing and evaluation instrument. It can add value to the process of job classification as it is a practical hands-on tool that gives an opportunity to learn about and raise gender awareness. This tool can easily be used in other settings than university environments, such as medium-sized and large organizations in the private as well as the public sector.

A fourth tool contains an updated profile of the role of the Mainstreaming Promoters, a blueprint of what an equal opportunities and diversity training for these Mainstreaming Promoters should contain and a form to evaluate this training course. Any organization interested in founding a network of Mainstreaming Promoters will benefit from this toolkit. The added value of such a network was proven via the multiple reported good practices.

5.2. Evaluation of the module

As a final conclusion, this module is evaluated by applying the definition of Gender Mainstreaming:

- *“(Re)Organization, improvement, development and evaluation ...”*: the policy on career management was tested with respect to transparency, objectivity and effectiveness. The way to perform this test on equal opportunities was mapped in a tool.
- *“... of policy processes ...”*: all topics concerning career and promotion opportunities were researched on whether they would guarantee equal opportunities. If not, opportunities were created to develop additional tools on equal opportunities.
- *“... so that a gender equality perspective ...”*: these tools on equal opportunities were tested within the organization.
- *“... is incorporated in all policies and at all stages ...”*: within the ‘Process report’, the need for a structural embedding was stressed. An absolute premise is to obtain the engagement of the top level management to elaborate the research, though it is not always easy to get this support. Within this project, agreements were made with the Steering Committee on Diversity in the beginning of the project to implement the learning results of the VLIR-EQUAL Project in the action plan of 2007-2008, when the project would be finished, in order to guarantee the sustainability of the actions

and measures taken.

- “... *by the actors normally involved in policy-making*.”: decision-makers were convinced by the importance of an equal opportunities and diversity policy by involving them in the project and by developing the tools in collaboration with them. By asking the Mainstreaming Promoters to develop an action plan within the scope of the project, we were able to reach personnel members as well. That way, there was a maximum transfer of know-how about the project and the importance of equal opportunities.

Chapter 4

Scientific communication

Ann Van der Auweraert (UA)

1. Introduction

“Communication skills are as important as science” Dr. Sean McCarthy¹⁹⁸.

During more than one and a half year, female academics of the University of Antwerp and of other universities in Flanders, have developed, spread and exchanged knowledge concerning gender and (scientific) communication. The result is an instrument that can be useful for universities and organizations to set up a training course: ‘Communicate your way to the top’. The ultimate goal is to supply women with a personal tool they can use as a guiding principle for their career development.

The focus will not be on scientific communication between researchers and their peers, but on the other overall communication in this environment. During the career of a researcher, there are indeed a lot of other moments where communication plays an important role. Good communication skills are pre-eminent to conquer a place in formal and informal networks, to sensitize others for a project, to write clear project proposals, to put boundaries to tasks and responsibilities, to be heard during meetings, to function on external platforms, to give interviews, to give presentations for non-professionals, to debate and to argue, to communicate with executives, students and staff, ...

In this project, two aspects are important: on the one hand, becoming aware of the gender problem at universities so that changes may become possible, and on the other hand, the development of a communication instrument that meets the needs of female academics. The intention of this project is to provide the modern and successful female academic with new tools in order to enable her to be more decisive in the future.

The entire report is written in line with the steps that were taken to develop a scientific communication training for female researchers. With this process approach, the author hopes to acquire a maximum exchange of learning effects and experiences. The way this instrument was developed can be found in part 3 ‘Process report’. The contents of the training and the evaluation of the project are described in part 4 ‘Instrument and case study’. As a starting point, the problems in the field of communication, which women experience, are briefly described.

¹⁹⁸ *‘How to Present your Project to Academia and Business’, “Tools for Successful Research Careers”, Stockholm, Sweden, 3-4 December 2001.*

1.1. Problem definition

*“You must seize the chances you get and create sometimes those chances yourself. Women have the tendency to stay where they are. They are too loyal, too expectant and too satisfied. The glass ceiling is not situated at the top, but on the floor, to which everyone remains stuck.”*¹⁹⁹

Female researchers insufficiently reach the university top. The problem is that the qualities for being a good researcher are not necessarily the same as the qualities that are needed to build a career.

There are all kinds of theories concerning the glass ceiling, old boys’ networks, and the career barriers for women. This module however will study the issues women can work on, if they want to get to the top and the focus is on the role of communication skills.

What can we learn from women who have reached the top? How did they succeed? Which competencies do they have? What did they have to learn?

1.2. Context UA

The University of Antwerp chose the topic of gender and communication and the organization of communication trainings for female researchers. This choice was based on the fact they already had many years of experience in training academics in communication skills in the context of the WeCom-project²⁰⁰. In the spring of 2000, the WeCom-project initiated trainings for scientists in communication with non-professionals and the general public. More and more scientists need to communicate with non-professionals such as potential sponsors, governments, partners, journalists, young people or the general public. The WeCom-courses are practice-oriented and interactive. Together with other scientists, they improved their communication skills. Five modules were developed: two basic modules ‘Clear and persuasive writing for the general public’ and ‘Clear and persuasive speaking for the general public, before camera and microphone’,

¹⁹⁹ Proposition of Ilja van Haaren (business woman of the year 2002 in the Netherlands) on the Internet forum <http://www.empowervrouwen.nl/manvrouw/index.php?id=28,135,0,0,1,0>.

²⁰⁰ www.wecomproject.com.

WeCom also offers the workshop ‘Communication management for scientific communicators of scientific research institutions’ and published a series of books on scientific communication:

- ‘Wetenschap en communicatie, hoezo?’ by Ann Van der Auweraert, project leader of ‘Wetenschap en Samenleving in Interactie’.
- ‘Spoken voor een volle zaal’ by Bob De Groof. Bob De Groof teaches communication techniques at different training institutes.
- ‘Een doeltreffend radio- of televisie-interview’ by Bob De Groof.
- ‘Wetenschap communiceren met medialand’ by Jos Huypens. He teaches Communication Sciences, is a WeCom-teacher and runs an office for communication advice.
- ‘Populair-wetenschappelijk schrijven’ by Ann De Ron, biologist, freelance journalist and teacher WeCom.

and three additional specific modules ‘Radio and television training by experienced science journalists’, ‘On-line communication, tips for a user-friendly website’ and ‘Writing reports, basic elements of a clear and readable report’.

The many years of experience of WeCom with communication training for researchers ensured a good basis and the necessary expertise to develop communication training for female researchers.

2. Literature study

2.1. Work actively on visibility

“Look at a man as someone with a quiver full of arrows. Seeing an aim, he shoots all his arrows. Most of the arrows will miss their aim, but there is a big chance that one arrow strikes home. And that is the one people will remember ...and which they applaud. A woman on the other hand takes slow steps, carefully considering each one of them. Only when she is almost certain that she will touch her aim, she will shoot. And it will strike home. Amazing! But ... it is a pity, because the man has already run away with the prize.”²⁰¹

In the book by Marike Van Zanten *“Mevrouw, mijn heren ...”* twenty-five top women talk about their success stories. They reveal how they have succeeded in life. In general, they all proclaim it is crucial to control your own career in an active way. This, according to the top women, requires networking and lobbying, e.g. to gain more endorsement for your position²⁰², or to get the support of influential people when important promotion opportunities present themselves or when your contract should be extended²⁰³. Furthermore, it is also crucial to maintain your networks during your whole career²⁰⁴. As an Executive Board member says *“a top position is always a combination of quality and opportunism: being at the right moment at the right place. That requires visibility and networking.”* To conclude: *“influence continues to work via relations and contacts”²⁰⁵.*

Visibility can also be achieved by making your ambitions and your competencies more recognizable, because others cannot guess what you would like to achieve. For this

²⁰¹ Dowd, M. (2006). *Zijn mannen nodig*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.

²⁰² Van zanten, M. (2005). *Mevrouw, mijne heren ... 25 vrouwen over de weg naar de top*. Amsterdam-Antwerpen: Archipel, p. 237.

²⁰³ Van zanten, M, (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 232.

²⁰⁴ Van zanten, M, (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 281.

²⁰⁵ Tannen, D. (1994). *Woorden aan het werk. Hoe vrouwen en mannen op het werk met elkaar praten*. Amsterdam: Prometheus; *op. cit.*, p. 121.

reason, many women must change their mentality. Women seldom define themselves as ‘ambitious’, but always as ‘enthusiastic’²⁰⁶. They must also convert their ambitions into actions. The first female General of the Netherlands suggests women stand up for themselves for a nice job, and do not wait until someone else sees their potential²⁰⁷.

Of course, you need to sell yourself with style. The recommendation of one of the top women is: *“Do what you like, do it well, and sell yourself”*²⁰⁸. For this reason, this top woman chose to train herself in communication skills during her whole career. She attended training courses in sales techniques, presentation skills, media training, etc. Also according to professor Doorne-Huiskens, women can boost their career by presenting ideas, by learning to take risks and by fighting. *“You do not get your career on a plate.”*²⁰⁹ A nice tip of one of the top women is to offer champagne when you have secured a new project²¹⁰. Women who are not putting themselves forward and thus remain invisible or those who do not use the right style, have less chances of getting to the top.

Finally, it is important to search for allies amongst colleagues and contacts outside work. It is also necessary to discover who your adversaries are.

“The tips seem simple, but the practice is rock-hard”, says Nuyens, the author of the book *“Waarom vrouwen geen baas worden”*²¹¹. Besides, most women do not like having to spend time to be visible because they consider it a waste of valuable time. The next quote of a top woman who recently had to give notice because of disagreements with other board members of her organization, formulates this clearly: *“If I can only make a career by going to drinks, then I would rather have no career at all”*²¹². Furthermore, these receptions and dinners are often at a time when most women would be rather at home with their children.

Networking and lobbying are therefore not as popular with many women and this is the largest obstacle on their way to the top, according to Hedwige Nuyens. Women are often not aware that *“there is a large difference between what apparently is considered as a criterion to be successful (knowledge and skills on the one hand and commitment to the work on the other hand) and what really counts in building a successful career (visibility and informal networks)”*²¹³. Nuyens compares many women in work situations with table lamps. They work hard, slave away on their projects and if they are in a leadership position, their focus is on their team. They know what they are worth, and

²⁰⁶ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 272.

²⁰⁷ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 53.

²⁰⁸ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 228.

²⁰⁹ <http://www.empowervrouwen.nl/manvrouw/index.php?id=28,143,0,0,1,0>.

²¹⁰ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 269.

²¹¹ Nuyens, H. (2005). *Waarom vrouwen geen baas worden*. Leuven: Ten Have en Davidsfond/Leuven.

²¹² Van zanten, M., (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 116.

²¹³ Nuyens, H. (2005), *op. cit.*, p.123.

‘hope that they will be asked to appear on the stage’, instead of self-confidently entering the scene on their own initiative²¹⁴. And table lamps seldom reach the top. Most of the top positions are taken by chandeliers. They look around and up the whole time. They put themselves continuously in the spotlight and develop close relationships with their bosses. They grow much faster than table lamps. They are noticed more quickly; the bosses identify themselves with them and consider them the most suitable candidates when a position must be filled in.

So women are too invisible. According to Nuyens, one may work very hard and be prepared to invest a lot in his/her work, if he/she does not know or apply the rule of visibility, he/she is not going far (or only by a happy coincidence). Therefore, someone who wants to make a career must figure out who makes the decisions that are important for him/her. Moreover, one should put him/herself in the spotlight with these decision makers and develop and maintain a good relationship with them. This goes not only for people at the university but also in other environments. Also in the media for example, comments are given mainly by male scientists.

However, according to Tannen, problems can arise when women try to be visible. Many women with whom she spoke simply do not like being in the spotlights. They feel threatened by the possible grudge of direct superiors or colleagues. There is an unspoken rule amongst women to be modest. Within a group, others will punish a girl who is conspicuous or draws attention to herself²¹⁵. Therefore, women are stuck: everything they do to increase their visibility undermines their femininity in the eyes of others. Because of this, most women underestimate themselves, sell themselves short and are afraid to express their ambitions.

The conclusion is that in general women blow their own trumpet much less than men. As a result, they receive less appreciation for what they are doing. If a male boss is not aware of this or the organization does not consider this, the chances of having an equal number of men and women at the top are small, says Hedwige Nuyens.

2.2. Be aware of differences in communication style

*“What we pay for is a mutual difference in styles.”*²¹⁶

Research of Deborah Tannen, the world-famous sociolinguist and linguistics professor at Georgetown University, shows that the different ways of communicating at work can be disadvantageous for the woman. The way women talk is frequently considered as ‘a sign of indecision, of incapacity to radiate authority, of incompetence’²¹⁷ and often does

²¹⁴ Ehrhardt, U. (2000). *Vrouwen zijn gewoon beter*. Rijswijk: Uitgeverij Elmar B.V., p. 82.

²¹⁵ Tannen, D. (1994), *op. cit.*, p. 133.

²¹⁶ Tannen, D. (1994), *op. cit.*, p. 67.

²¹⁷ Tannen, D. (1994), *op. cit.*, p. 121.

not correspond to what we expect from a person in authority.

This does not come as a surprise if we compare the language that is associated with femininity and masculinity. The table in the Appendices (table 4.1) shows that what is considered as feminine language is quickly felt as inferior. Or in other words: “*use of masculine language can give more power to what you say*”²¹⁸. Therefore, the problem is not the difference between women and men but the unequal value that is allotted to femininity and masculinity.

Women speak more often in terms of ‘we’ instead of ‘I’, concealing their own successes and performances. Furthermore, women tend to want to keep harmony in a conversation and to take into account the impact of one’s own words on the other person. As a result, many women in a leadership position rather conceal than emphasize the power of their position.

Men and women think they speak the same language but frequently the meaning they give to the same words is totally different. Men use communication to transmit content and information. For women, communication serves other aims too: it is a means to solve problems, to reduce stress, to create emotional links, to stimulate creativity and develop new ideas²¹⁹. Men communicate in a result-oriented way in which efficiency and competence have the highest priority. Being open and showing (negative) feelings is experienced as being weak, incompetent and unprofessional. For women, emotions are meaningful and are expressed in order to understand themselves better. Once negative feelings are heard, they quickly disappear²²⁰.

This very short explanation shows that misunderstandings are inevitable. In addition, because there are mainly men at the top at universities, it is not always obvious for women to find appreciation for their communication style.

Moreover, many studies have shown that men speak longer; more often interrupt and more often take the floor than women do²²¹. “*These things also happen during conversations with people of equal rank and equal qualifications, even when women are in the majority.*”²²² At meetings, for example, men frequently use subtle strategies to shorten the speaking time of women, so they can speak longer themselves or a man repeats in the middle of a heated discussion what was previously introduced by a woman. What the other participants of the conversation first ignored then suddenly gets the full attention of the group²²³. It is therefore difficult for women to get support for their ideas. Tannen says that this does not mean that women cannot be heard, but

²¹⁸ <http://www.iiav.nl/epublications/2002/genderboekje.pdf>, op. cit., p. 10.

²¹⁹ Van der Auweraert, A. (2004). *Wetenschappers moeten leren communiceren in mensentaal*. <http://taalschrift.org/discussie/000512.html>, 23/04/04.

²²⁰ Gray, J. (2002). *Mars en Venus op het werk*. Utrecht/Antwerpen: Het Spectrum, 295 blz.

²²¹ Tannen, D., (1994), op. cit., p. 257.

²²² Ehrhardt, U. (2000), op. cit., p. 75.

²²³ <http://www.iiav.nl/epublications/2002/genderboekje.pdf>.

they are at a disadvantage.

Women can train themselves, for example in speaking louder and longer and in resisting the inclination to speak on a higher tone at the end of a sentence. However, for Tannen, the best solution is to see the differences and to understand what happens when people talk to each other. Tannen does not advise women to adapt their communication style to the men in the group, although she notes that a lot of girls and women do this to get a better result²²⁴. Likewise, Van Zanten says that for pioneering women, copying the masculine style was often the only possibility to make a career²²⁵. Moreover, these women keep rather silent about their being a woman and a mother. They do not say for example that they have to pick up their children, but they rather say that they have another meeting. They use a style that does not make men feel uncomfortable. This means e.g. never to show emotions, to radiate self-confidence and to react light-heartedly²²⁶.

However, Tannen observes that a woman, who tries to behave like a man, can bring about a completely different impact than she had hoped. Many of these women are labelled 'bitchy' and 'dominant'²²⁷. The male style seems to work for men, but not for women. For this reason, Tannen advocates more tolerance for different conversation styles in organizations. Then, 'on that beautiful day, the glass ceiling becomes a mirror through which a large number of Alices can find a passage way'²²⁸.

2.3. Enjoy the political game

*"Women are clearly less interested in power than men. This means that a woman finds it more attractive that a task is interesting, rather than that it represents the next step on the hierarchical ladder. Because of that, she invests more energy in her work than in all kinds of power fights ..."*²²⁹

Top women indicate that this is a political game and if you cannot handle that, you must not aspire to a top function. That goes for men and women, but it seems that women do not want to master or accept the rules of the game²³⁰. Women have a 'natural' aversion to the power fight that is necessary to become a social climber, according

²²⁴ Tannen, D. (1994), *op. cit.*

²²⁵ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 160.

²²⁶ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 171.

²²⁷ Tannen, D. (1994), *op. cit.*, p. 134.

²²⁸ Tannen, D. (1994), *op. cit.*, p. 144.

²²⁹ Ehrhardt, U. (2000), *op. cit.*, p. 83.

²³⁰ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 110.

to 76% of the female managers who participated in a research of VNO-NCW²³¹. Many women look for cooperation and intimacy in their job, whereas for many men it is all about winning. Sometimes women are not even aware that their organization is a political arena, in which the unwritten rules of the game determine who wins. Alternatively, they find the political game reprehensible and ignore it only to find out after a couple of years they have been sabotaging their own career²³². The advice of an experienced business woman is: *“Look at it as a game, never take it too seriously, because otherwise it can destroy you. Never show your emotions and be a good loser if you have lost a battle”*²³³.

‘FEM business’²³⁴ gives a list of tips to make a career:

Know the rules of the game

Decisions are not taken during a meeting but in the days before that, in the lobby or after work in the pub. It is precisely in those informal networks that women are not often present.

Dare to ask

Many women are ambitious. They want to be promoted, to have a better salary and to conduct more interesting projects. Only, they never ask for it. If a man has higher aspirations, he simply says so. Take your destiny in your own hands and dare to ask.

Profile yourself

Throw that false modesty overboard and create a distinct profile for yourself. Women complain that they are not appreciated, that their boss does not realize what they are capable of and what they accomplish. However, they seldom are part of the problem. *“Women do not even come close to the glass ceiling. They permanently stick to the floors, because they do not stand up for themselves.”* ING- chairperson Ewald Kist in the monthly magazine ‘Opzij’.

Change your self-image

Women systematically underestimate their own qualities. Dare to bluff, do not be such a perfectionist ... Men are not like that either. Kees Vriesman, director of Staatsbosbeheer: *“I would like to have more women in higher positions in my company but time and time again, I am confronted with their lack of self-confidence”*.

Network with the top

Women are very much into networking. They are more often members of networks than men are (82 versus 76 percent). However, they mainly network with other women. That is not upward networking. That is why few women reach the top. Go to the pub with men, go to receptions or travel to the Côte d’Azur. If necessary, invite a key character for a dinner but look for the right people and clearly state what you want.

²³¹ Vrouwen en de top, Forum/VNO-NCW, 28 juni 2001.

²³² Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 118.

²³³ Van zanten, M. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 231.

²³⁴ <http://www.empowervrouwen.nl/manvrouw/index.php?id=25,131,0,0,1,0>.

3. Process report

There were two large parts in the project:

- I. In a first part the issues that female scientists consider important were mapped: what they are doing, where they have already experienced thresholds and where their needs lie, both in the field of the gender problems at the university and in the field of communication. This was necessary to have an idea of the extent to which the subject matter is actually alive and to serve as a basis for developing the contents of a training course. As a starting point, a work schedule was established and the most efficient and appropriate methodology was searched to obtain the answers needed. The researchers participating in this first part were selected and met each other five times in total. Finally, a training course was developed based on the results obtained. This training course is based on the practice and the needs of the female researchers.
- II. In the second part of the project, a training of five half days was initially offered to the scientific researchers who also took part in the first part of this research. This test training was evaluated afterwards and the contents were adapted if necessary. At a later stage, the training was offered to participants of all Flemish universities. Finally, the experience gained during this second series was used to update the training course once again.

The entire course took up 20 months and can be divided in five phases:

1. In a first phase (start July 2005), the project was prepared, and the project manager was selected and appointed. In addition, the methodology to be used to develop the instrument was completed.
2. The second phase started in October 2005. This phase can be defined as ‘the exploring phase’. During this phase 1) the needs and thresholds of female scientists concerning gender, communication and scientific communication were explored, 2) the subjects that needed attention in a communication training to promote the career possibilities of women in an academic environment were selected, and 3) the information needs were identified. Then it was decided which guest speakers would best meet these needs.
3. In March 2006, the third phase of the project began. In this period, the communication training was organized and female researchers were trained.
4. At a fourth stage, in the autumn of 2006, the training was evaluated and adapted, followed by a next test training for participants of the other Flemish universities.
5. Finally, the fifth phase was completed during the spring of 2007: the results and the training diagram were written down in a guide.

In what follows, the first four phases of the project will be described: the choice of the methodology, the selection of the participants, the exploring phase, the training, and the evaluation.

3.1. Qualitative and participative research methodology

The purpose was to work as much as possible with the knowledge, experiences and expertise of the female researchers themselves. For this reason, a qualitative research method was preferred. Moreover, the researchers aimed for a mixture and diversity of opinions, attitudes, values, experiences, etc by opting for a participative research method. This is a useful method because it creates the possibility to give access to everyone who wants to make a (relevant) contribution in providing solutions and plans for the future, to take along as many values and opinions, and to have a broad group reflect on the problems. Moreover, controversial points of view and several opinions are brought together. Finally, participative research increases the knowledge and awareness of the participants, creates a network of relevant persons and more support for the programmes and initiatives that come from the project. The method is also appropriate with respect to mutual learning²³⁵.

In participative research, participants are actively involved in the research during all phases: project set-up, method development, collection, interpretation and evaluation of data and formulation of recommendations.

Conditions to succeed in participative research²³⁶:

- make clear in the beginning what the aim/role/function of the session(s) is for all participants;
- consider participation as an instrument;
- make clear where the participants can contribute, which role they play in the research;
- support aims you would like to achieve, always give feedback on the different phases to avoid frustration and set-up a framework;
- for each session, explain its aim and its place in the entire training;
- respectfully ask dominant people to link their contribution to the aim of the session (e.g.: "how can this help us?");
- encourage the more silent people to participate actively;
- general remark about participation: good research and results do not always constitute a good idea or plan; always review them with scientific theories.

Focus group sessions

There are several methods for conducting participative research. This module used the familiar form of focus groups²³⁷: a small group (maximum 12 people) discusses under the supervision of a moderator. The method can be considered as a crossover between an interview and a discussion and is used when there is a need to explore the concept and to generate creative ideas. It is a very suitable method for collecting opinions and

²³⁵ Slocum, N. (2003). *Participatory Methods Toolkit*. Brussel: ViWta, Koning Boudewijn Stichting.

²³⁶ Conversation on the 22th of November 2005, with one of the participants, Nadia Molenaers, who has experience with the method of participatory research.

²³⁷ Slocum N. (2003), *op.cit.*, p. 97-105.

getting participants to develop their ideas and opinions by comparing them to the ideas and opinions of others. This method has the advantage of being relatively cheap and flexible. That same flexibility can however be a disadvantage as well, because the process is more difficult to control when it depends on the input of the participants.

The aim was to meet several times with the same group of women, as working with different groups of people requires more time and because the gender topic is still a complex one. By working with only one group, there was enough time to sort this out.

There were five three-hour meetings with a group of female researchers of the University of Antwerp: once a month on a preset date and each time on a different campus.

3.2. Selection of the participants

First, it was necessary to select the participants for the explorative phase. For this, information events were organized, and the selection was based on a motivation sent in by potential candidates and some postulated criteria.

3.2.1. Information meetings on the different campuses

At a preliminary meeting, the promoter and the project researcher decided to select participants from the group of female researchers of the University of Antwerp and to invite them to a first information meeting concerning the project. To avoid potential barriers, several information events were organized, at varying times and on different campuses.

The database of the University of Antwerp made it possible to select potential candidates on the basis of gender, so that only female researchers were invited by mail. They all received an invitation for the information event, containing the project set-up, the provisional programme, an overview of what the participants could expect and what was expected of them (see Tool Annex).

During the information events, the promoter explained the content of the VLIR-EQUAL project. Then the project researcher 1) introduced the module on scientific communication, 2) showed the necessity of the project by giving some figures concerning the participation of women at the top of universities, 3) gave arguments to emphasize the importance of communication, and finally 4) glanced through the provisional programme.

During these information events, the benefits for participants were emphasized again: free communication training by experienced professors, active participation in the research, participation in the eventual policy proposals, insights and awareness in the gender theme, getting to know other female researchers from different disciplines, and captivating lunch moments. The expectations with regard to the participants were

listed: the need to attend all of the ten lunches, the willingness to help the researcher with the data collection by means of inquiries and interviews, and to give support whenever necessary for the research. Women interested in participating could also express their expectations concerning the place, the day and the hour of the meetings. A list was passed round where the interested persons could fill in their name, discipline and e-mail address. The information moments were concluded with a question time. Everyone was asked to indicate on the participants list if they wanted to take part in the project (see Tool Annex). There was also a possibility to respond afterwards by e-mail.

3.2.2. A selection based on motivation and criteria

The number of people interested exceeded all expectations. At the first information event, there were 25 people, at the second information event approximately 20 and we received some e-mail responses as well. This added up to about fifty people. That is why we asked each of those fifty women to motivate their application (see Tool Annex).

In total, 30 motivations were put in an Excel document. In order to collect as much expertise and as many experiences as possible, a heterogeneous group was composed. The following criteria were postulated:

- all faculties had to be present;
- both junior (starting) and senior (with experience) academicians;
- women with and without children;
- knowledge concerning methodology: theoretical or practical;
- knowledge concerning communication: professional communication knowledge, experience expert;
- science communication: experience, practice, training;
- gender aspects in own research;
- personal experience with gender problems;
- member of governing bodies, work groups, being the only woman at meetings;
- critical view on gender problems, or never experienced any gender problem.

Given the motivations of the people interested and the criteria, 12 participants were selected eventually. The people who had not been selected, were informed by e-mail. They were also told that they would receive further information. These were labelled 'passive participants'.

3.2.3. Blackboard communication

To guarantee an efficient communication process, a blackboard environment was created (see Tool Annex). This created the possibility to have a discussion forum, an information platform, documents and interesting links and the production of several mail groups such as active and passive participants.

3.3. Focus group sessions

The 12 female researchers of the University of Antwerp mapped the information and training needs that they had experienced in the fields of gender and communication. Based on that, they elaborated the training content.

This phase consisted of five meetings of three hours each. The meetings were held during lunch on request of the participants so that the researchers did not lose any working time. The moderator (the project researcher) presided the meeting while an assistant gave support.

Each meeting was preceded by a preparation to elaborate a scenario (see Tool Annex) in which the following topics were taken into consideration:

1. the aim of the meeting;
2. the programme of the meeting with time indications;
3. a text to introduce the topic and the meeting;
4. the necessary materials such as copies, post-its, scrap paper, etc.;
5. the appointments with guest speakers.

Each time, an invitation was sent to the participants with the programme, the date, the room and the hour of the meeting. An assistant took care of taking notes, ordering sandwiches and coffee, writing and sending the report, and ensuring the audiovisual materials. The participants filled in an evaluation form at the end of each meeting (see Tool Annex). Afterwards there was a discussion between moderator and assistant, and a follow-up of tasks by e-mail. The report of each meeting was put on blackboard.

3.3.1. Meeting 1: Brainstorming about gender and communication

The aim of this first meeting was to list all opinions, attitudes, experiences, expertise, expectations and ideas with respect to gender problems at the university and in the field of communication to create a tool for career advancement (see Tool Annex).

Before exploring the gender and communication topics, some time was spent on getting to know each other. Everyone filled in a personal information and criteria questionnaire (see Tool Annex). Afterwards, they briefly discussed this information with their neighbour, and then this neighbour told the whole group what she learnt about the person sitting next to her (maximum 2 minutes per person) so everyone knew who the other people in the group were. The project researcher who presided the meeting and the assistant also participated in this round.

Then the participants had to answer the following questions:

1. Concerning gender: what are the gender problems female academics face according to you? How do you experience these problems? Do you have suggestions for a guest speaker?
2. Concerning communication: can communication be a tool for the successful advancement of female academics? Which aspects are therefore important and need

to be improved? Do you have a suggestion for a guest speaker?

For this task, the participants were subdivided in small groups of four people. The groups were already more or less homogeneously composed before starting, so that potential common items could be tracked. By working with three different subgroups each on a different topic, a lot of information can be obtained in a short time.

For the topic gender, three homogeneous subgroups were composed: 1) those with a critical point of view with respect to the gender problems or those who have never experienced problems, 2) those with practical experience in the gender problems and 3) those who consider the gender topic in their research.

For the communication topic, the following three groups were composed: 1) those with theoretical knowledge of communication, 2) those who are strongly communicative and 3) those who communicate 'awkwardly'.

The answers had to be listed and classified according to their importance. After 20 minutes, other groups were formed for a following topic. In each group, a reporter was appointed who afterwards gave a brief summary for the other groups. The assistant noted everything down on the flip-over. The different post-its and notes on the flip-over were analysed by the project researcher (using the computer programme Atlas-ti) and were grouped in a list.

The female participants ended this first meeting with a Q&A session. Most questions handled about the qualitative research method, because most participants were not familiar with this method. Therefore, in the next meeting, the difference between quantitative and qualitative research would be explained.

3.3.2. Meeting 2: The gender topic

The second meeting provided the results of the brainstorming about the gender topic. The several thresholds and difficulties experienced were split up into 12 categories.

1. Category: typical of the discipline/research group

The participants had different conceptions depending on their discipline, research group or faculty. In this way, the big differences between the exact and the human sciences became notable. The participants from the exact sciences experienced more gender-related problems than for example those from the faculty of social sciences and the faculty of law. The explanation given by one of the participants was that *"Within the exact sciences one works traditionally and strongly hierarchically. There are many male colleagues who do not take responsibility for their family and are still of the old school."*

In addition, the attitude of the department head also has an influence. One of the participants told the group that the head of her department apparently thinks that *"you can put your children in your suitcase to go abroad"*.

2. Category: generation problem

According to the participants, age has an influence as well. Those who mainly work in groups with young researchers experience gender as less problematic. Many young men in groups of Senior Academic Staff “*admire women, experience gender as less problematic*” (faculty of communication sciences) “*and have no problem with part-time work*”. However, in other faculties and research groups there really is a generation problem, because “*there are still too many old crocodiles*”.

3. Category: pregnancy and CV

Thresholds that apply specifically to women are of course getting children and this “*right on moments when career opportunities are appearing*”. One of the researchers said the following: “*My CV would have looked very different if I did not have children (pregnancy of 9 months, and 6 months after birth being not productive at the same level).*” It is “*the number of publications which counts*” and the experience which you acquire abroad. On this issue as well, there are notable differences between disciplines. The pressure to publish internationally is bigger for exact scientists than for human scientists, although this is changing as well. According to one of the researchers, “*it would be stupid to become pregnant if you aspire to a mandate function*”.

4. Category: job characteristics

Another barrier that women experience and which is not considered a gender problem, is the fact that an academic job demands much effort of a person.

5. Category: female researcher’s characteristics

Women have management skills. They distinguish themselves by their communicative qualities and their broad interests. However, these ‘female’ characteristics are often less appreciated. “*Women are more often teachers, are good at reporting exactly, and they do well in education, but these qualities are underestimated.*”

6. Category: social representation

There is also something wrong with society’s conception of the way a woman should behave. “*If a child is ill, the mother is supposed to stay at home*”, or “*the traditional family role is emphasized too much*” and “*if they call from school, it is always to the mother*”. On the work floor, the woman is looked upon as “*sweet and helpful, rather than an expert*”. This stereotypical representation is also present in the minds of students: “*young female professors are considered as assistants*”.

7. Category: looking at things through the male perspective/standards

Most commissions have male scientists to evaluate proposals, also for projects and statutes. “*These commissions, such as the CAP-Commission, look at things from a male perspective*” and “*the statutes are evaluated by a group of traditional men*”.

8. Category: private life – work

For many women it remains a problem to combine family and work. Sometimes, a

woman has to choose between a career and children. Although there is formal pregnancy leave, female researchers are expected to continue reading and following up on their mails, to keep on teaching, etc. For young women who do not know how to manage the combination of private life and career, this can sometimes be an insuperable problem. Moreover, the problem with part-time work is that there are less promotion opportunities and fewer possibilities for commitment.

Moreover, meetings often take place at difficult moments for researchers who have children and especially for women. However, as more and more men want to be at home for their children, young male researchers are increasingly confronted with the problem of combining private life and work as well.

9. Category: role models

In some faculties, there are already many female researchers like for example in the faculty of social sciences. However, at management level, men are still predominant, meaning there are few real role models showing women how to succeed. Furthermore, women who do get to the top are often so strong that these examples can discourage others: *"I am not like that, I cannot do this"*.

10. Category: selection criteria

The selection criteria are not always transparent and female qualities are often underestimated. In general, women's CVs are taken less seriously. A female researcher summarized it as follows: *"the objective rules of the game are not aimed at women"*. Women are more often in a teaching position and are very good at education and reporting, but these capacities hardly enrich their CVs.

11. Category: men do not know how to react

Some participants experience that men do not listen to women, in meetings for example. When a man repeats a proposal, given by a woman, it is heard. One of the participants also experienced that a campus with a traditional catholic culture has more problems with the ambitious young female researchers. Someone else experienced that the dean did not know how to respond to young ambitious women.

12. Category: typically female characteristics having a negative impact

The participants also noted problems that are typical of women. Someone said that women possibly have difficulties to create a distinct profile for themselves. The emotional link with work that women often experience is often a disadvantage. Moreover, the self-reflection of women concerning their 'womanhood' has a detrimental influence on the long term. So they become very vulnerable.

Not all of above topics are problematic and need to be explored. For this reason, during the second meeting the participants were asked to split up the gender topics in three groups: 1) which topics are important for me? 2) which topics need more exploration? and 3) which topics have to be taken into consideration in a training course? This information was collected plenary; the next table gives an overview.

Table 24: The different gender topics which are seen as important, which ask for more exploration and which must be incorporated in training.

Which topic is important for the participant personally?	On which topic do participants wish further information?	Which topic do participants want to see incorporated in a training course?
<p>Selection criteria: On what topics are researchers evaluated: number of publications, and what else? In reality? What do young researchers have to take into account if they want to plan their career as well as possible?</p> <p>Assessment private life-work: How do you combine family and work?</p> <p>Job characteristics that go beyond gender: What is related to gender, and what is not? What can be done and what cannot? What is normal and what is discrimination? How can you see the difference? Looking at things through the perspective of gender? Generation problem vs. gender problem?</p>	<p>Best practice: What do other universities for example in foreign countries do? Sharing experiences.</p> <p>Evolution in the gender problems: Is there a progression? In other words, is there something we can do about the gender problems?</p> <p>Stressing the distinctive features as a woman: How do we appear as women to men? How do we have to make ourselves known in the best way to maximize our chances of having a successful career? Which influence does the social image of working women and educated women have? Which role can female researchers adopt without losing their individual character as a woman?</p> <p>Selection criteria: What is exactly going on now? How can female researchers obtain that education (a field they excel in and find important) is no longer a disadvantage for their careers? How to stimulate innovation at the university? What can be measured, and what cannot? How to fill in the social role without being disadvantaged in career opportunities?</p> <p>Gender awareness: What does looking at things through a gender perspective mean? How can we discover where gender has an influence? What does a male perspective look like and what about the female perspective? Which components does it consist of? How can we raise the awareness of the people around us? How can we make female researchers aware before they are promoted?</p> <p>Delegating: How does that work, how do female top managers do it? How do they plan their work and family?</p> <p>University information: What is the equal opportunity policy at the university? Which measures are taken? And how are they doing in comparison with other universities?</p>	<p>Learn to look at things through a gender perspective: How do men and women look at things through a gender perspective? And when?</p> <p>Influence the representation positively: How can you, as a female researcher, communicate in a way that is positive for your career, that makes you feel good and that allows you to grow in an academic environment? When do you do things as an individual and when do you do them collectively?</p> <p>Female characteristics: Which female characteristics often have a negative/positive influence? And how can you use your female qualities in a positive way? How can you have a positive impact as a woman?</p> <p>Make a gender-neutral examination: Do we as women look differently to male students than to female students, are we aware of that?</p> <p>Selection criteria: Can we influence these criteria, and how? What can we do in practice?</p>

The plan was to arrange the subjects in order of priority during the meeting, but there was not enough time. That is why the participants received the topics by e-mail so that they could classify them in order of importance. The scores were counted and a list was set up. The topics with the lowest scores presented the highest priority (see Appendix 4.2).

The three most important topics were: 1) being gender-aware/looking at things through a gender perspective 2) stressing the distinctive features of women in a predominantly male culture and 3) knowing the selection criteria.

During the discussions, a number of questions arose: how can we give a modern interpretation at our university that answers the need of society for more service and a more balanced partitioning of women and men at the top? What does the term 'career' mean and is it the same for everyone? Does this also influence the approach of gender problems? Do we all understand and strive for the same thing? Does our vision on the world also have an influence on this? How do men and women look at career development? Do women want two careers (one at home and one at work) and is that possible? Is this becoming a problem for young men as well? What is crucial in order to obtain a top position in the organization? Which components are changeable and which are essential? The performance society is under pressure, how do we handle that as an individual, can we change that as an individual? Both men and women would like to. What can we do about the international pressure to publish?

3.3.3. Meeting 3: The communication topic

In the first part of the meeting, an expert gave a presentation proving the horizontal and vertical segregation at Flemish and European universities with figures. The people who were not selected for the project also received an invitation for this informative session.

A short summary of the expert presentation

Most women understood the proposition that the glass ceiling is not immediately apparent for many women. Some female researchers even wondered if there even is a gender problem. On the other hand, the expert showed some figures: only 15.5 percent of female senior academics, and this mainly in the lower degrees, an increase of only 0.5% over the last years (2002: 15%, in 2004: 15.5%) and in the higher functions only 7.5% women. Something is not right ... Possible causes are: 1) a company culture that is very male-oriented (male properties are much more appreciated in academic environments), and 2) the (unjustified) modesty of women (men are more visible in the competition). Women who have made it, say it is due especially to their domestic situation, particularly the support given by partner and parents, and to luck.

The discussion about gender problems gradually changes. The discussion about the equality of men and women changes into a discussion about the use of the best com-

petencies in an organization and the manner to exploit the female potential. Women are good at teamwork and organization, have better communication skills, strive more for win-win situations, etc. And those female skills can help an organization. The question then is why organizations not easily commit to using that knowledge.

In the second part of this meeting, the most important communication topics of the first day were selected. This worked in the same way as for the gender topic (see Appendix 4.2). The following topics were brought to the attention in the brainstorming session during the first meeting:

1. Category: importance of communication for the career

The participants were aware of the importance of good communication skills. Women who have made it are often very communicative and the participants wondered if there is a link. The more communicative participants believed that this had helped them in their way to the top. Communication is an instrument for personal PR and visibility. Someone also believed that *“after having published 15 or 20 texts, it is no longer important to raise that figure. What is important however, is good communication at all levels”*. To get to the top, it is also crucial to be able to communicate diplomatically. Finally, a lecturer mentioned that the advantages of having good communication skills already manifested themselves during the study: *“You tend to give higher scores to someone who talks smoothly”*.

For the participants, the importance of communication for a career was however not gender-related. *“Communication skills are important for everyone in a career, both for men and women.”* The participants found it important however to pay attention to the communication topic *“to make women stronger, rather than having them adapt to male standards to make promotion”*.

2. Category: the term communication

The participants defined ‘communication’ as all types of external and internal communication with others to raise their visibility. The participants also mentioned it would be useful to increase resistance and to tackle specific, personal tips.

3. Category: how to communicate?

The question ‘how best to stress the distinctive features of women?’ was taken into account. Different opinions and ideas came up. Firstly, it is important to communicate with heart and soul in order to enthuse the public. Non-verbal behaviour is of course crucial at this point. Secondly, one needs to adapt to the target audience and act from a contextual or relational point of view. Thirdly, pay attention to the way you bring the message: be enthusiastic, use a little humour if you can, but make sure it does not look faked!

The elements discussed above apply to men and women who want to increase their visibility. For women in particular, the participants said *“communicating about feelings is taboo for men and women, but certainly for men”*.

4. Category: communication differences between men and women

Apparently, men and women display many differences in the field of communication. Men are said to be better in recognizing the unwritten rules about university careers.

Men communicate more in an informal way. Women recognize they do this too little. Men are for example more into networking during receptions, in the lobby etc while women often do not realize it is a useful way of becoming known and of putting themselves in the spotlights.

At meetings, men are more direct and reward arrogance. It is a form of intimidation and a tool to acquire a certain status. Moreover, emotion-driven communication is taboo and that is difficult for many women as for them rational and emotional aspects are stronger intertwined.

Men are more communicative in meetings than women are but they often 'talk nonsense', a difference described by one participant as "*the unpretentiousness of women versus the self-confidence of men*".

Women consider their dynamic communication abilities and their attention for non-verbal elements as strong points. They can read between the lines, show consideration for everyone and are more balanced. They also better than men understand the art of being a chameleon. In general, they have better communication skills, a potential they should be able to maximize.

5. Category: faculty, culture and time characteristics

The female researchers noted the differences between faculties. Written skills in particular are very important in exact sciences because there is a strong emphasis on publications, but the importance of oral skills is increasing as well. In the old days, a university was an ivory tower, now it is a component of society and that has its consequences on communication.

6. Category: social perception

Society still thinks differently about the characteristics of men and women. One of the participants mentioned having two children with the same school grades. "*But while the boy is often said to be highly intelligent, the girl is referred to as 'hard-working' (although this is not the case).*" Another example is that arrogance in women is less tolerated than in men and that self-confident women are often called 'bitches'. Female professors are more often addressed by their first name while male professors are addressed as 'Sir'.

7. Category: male standards

Professionalism standards are traditionally male-oriented. Governing boards often mainly consist of men and it would be desirable to have more women in them. However, this demands a lot of time from a small number of women at the top who, as exceptions in this male-dominated world, are asked for everything. At conferences as well, the majority of the speakers are men. Even female listeners often think they are better than the female speakers, but this is probably due to the fact

that they are used to listening to male speakers.

8. Category: women's self-image

The female researchers do not think it is necessary to imitate men. They do however believe it would be useful to copy the good things without giving up the unique characteristics of women. Women need to take more pride in their female skills because their self-image is often low. Women are too friendly and insecure in their communication. Women easily seem to think 'I do not deserve this' and tend to question themselves more. Women are more perfectionist, wanting to be 100% certain before applying for a position, publishing research or presenting a project. They sometimes need an extra push to overcome that internal threshold. Women could help each other on this.

While discussing the different topics, several questions and objections arose:

- How can people use communication to advance their careers? To what extent can communication be used as an instrument?
- Are there any differences in skills between men and women, and if so, what are those differences? Is it possible to distinguish between different communication styles? Which part does non-verbal communication have in this and how important is it? Rather than looking at the differences between men and women in depth, the female researchers were eager to learn how to communicate more clearly and efficiently for the benefit of their careers. They did not want to ignore the differences, but emphasizing them will not help either.
- According to one of the female researchers, communication should be linked to a fundamental debate concerning appreciation and career criteria at universities. *"Who is satisfied as a table lamp and does this excellently, is just as valuable and deserves also the necessary merits as a chandelier. Why give a negative connotation to table lamps and give a positive connotation to chandeliers?"*
- Many researchers were interested in the topic of networking.
- Context-based communication was considered as a training priority. The focus is on adapting communication to the situation. There is for instance a considerable difference between internal and external communication. In meetings for example, people do not communicate in the same way as in public presentations.
- Finally, stressing the distinctive features of women and working on their self-image were also considered to be priorities and have been taken into account in the gender component. Do women need to adapt to the male standards or act as women to balance the standard?

Then in the same way as for the gender topic, the following questions were discussed:

1. Which topic is important for me?
2. About which topic do I want further information?
3. Which topic has to be incorporated in a practical training?

The eventual result was summarized in the next table:

Table 25: The different communication topics which are experienced as important, which need more exploration, and which must be incorporated in a training

Which topic is important for the participant personally?	On which topic do participants wish further information?	Which topic do participants want to see incorporated in a training course?
Self-image of women	How to communicate? On meetings, presentations, radio/TV	Networking
Context-based communication	How to take the context into account?	Communication by media
How to use communication as a career instrument?	Forms of communication: strategic, informative, diplomatic ...	How to communicate?
Role models	The different ways of communicating	How to fit in in a group?
Types of communication: scientific communication and others	Communication differences between men and women	Several communication situations
Networking, social talk	Networks	Science communication
	Role models and mentoring (women and men)	Context-based communication (e.g. at meetings, several target groups, with other aims)
		Social talks
		Profiling as a woman

Like for the gender topic, the participants gave priorities to the different aspects (see Appendix 4.3). Eventually the following four communication topics got the highest score to be taken into consideration in a training:

1. stressing the distinctive features of women/working on self-image;
2. communication differences/styles/skills;
3. context-based communication;
4. communication as an instrument.

3.3.4. Meeting 4: Career and communication

The aim of this meeting was to let some experts speak about career and communication. Hedwige Nuyens, author of the book *“Waarom vrouwen geen baas worden ...”* and formally financial vice-president of the K.U.Leuven, acted as a guest speaker²³⁸. In her presentation, she specifically emphasized visibility as being crucial to increase one’s promotion chances. Moreover, she paid much attention to the metaphor of chandeliers and table lamps.

According to Nuyens, women insufficiently master the rules of lobbying and networking and do not pay enough attention to these activities. *“Women work well, stick to deadlines and deliver quality but they forget that networking is also part of the job”*, Nuyens

²³⁸ Before that, she was was Director of Credits Belgium, ABN Amro Bank. She was elected in 2001 as Female Manager of the year.

argues. *“Instead of going to a reception, women will finish their reports or go home, forgetting that at these receptions important contacts are made and maintained.”*

To create career opportunities, visibility can make the difference. Nuyens outlined the picture of two persons A and B: both are intelligent, have the right diploma and are prepared to invest the necessary time. These factors are absolute required for a top career. Between person A and B there is however a notable difference in visibility. Person B spends more hours to be visible in the organization than person A. Even if B is less intelligent and invests less time in his or her own work, this person will have nevertheless more chances to obtain a promotion.

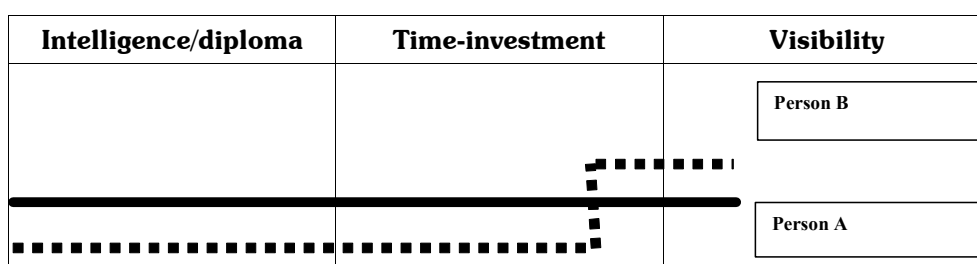


Figure 16: The importance of visibility

A second important point of interest that Nuyens explained during the presentation was the metaphor of the table lamps and the chandeliers. From her book: *“In every organization there are table lamps and chandeliers. The table lamps work fast, heave on their files, and if they have an executive task, they are mainly concerned with the team. The chandeliers on the other hand look around and up the whole time. They continuously try to get attention and always focus on their bosses. (...) In many organizations, the top-level bosses are chandeliers. (...) Chandeliers climb the ladder a lot faster than table lamps. Their hanging culture means they are noticed quicker. The bosses recognize themselves in them (as they are chandeliers as well) and therefore consider other chandeliers as suitable candidates. The table lamps do not realize what is going on but when it comes to promotion, they are skipped time and time again. (...) Most women, clever and competent as they may be, opt for the table lamp model. Do they have to panic immediately? No, you can live with it (...). Forcing yourself to be something you are not (a chandelier), will make you unhappy. (...) However, it would make a difference if women realized they have to help their boss to make sure he/she gets to know their qualities. (...) In other words, don’t just talk about your team and your employees. Talk about your own merits as well.”*²³⁹

The second guest speaker of this meeting, Brigitte Hertz, neatly took up where the previous speaker had left off. In fact, she also worked with the group on the topic of visibility, be it from a very practical angle. She is the author of the book *“Presenting research”* and she emphasized the importance of presenting ourselves to the people

²³⁹ Nuyens, H. (2005), *op. cit.*, p. 113.

around us. She let the group feel how important communication is by giving exercises and tips about body language.

During the meeting, there was no time left for feedback on the guest speakers. That is why the participants were asked to send in their feedback by e-mail. They also got the opportunity to discuss the topics treated in the meetings on the Blackboard forum. The feedback showed that it is important for a training course to have strong individuals with practical coaching experience, who can act as role models. Moreover, the use of metaphors and tips makes it easier for people to grasp the contents. Finally, the participants became more aware of the need to improve their visibility and the possibilities of a communication skills training.

3.3.5. Meeting 5: Set-up of the training contents

In preparation for this session, an interim report of the previous meetings was written and was sent to the participants with the request to read it by the next meeting. The fifth session started with a discussion of all the participants' feedback on the interim report. It became clear that the session of Hedwige Nuyens had been particularly appreciated because this guest speaker talked from her own experiences and participants appreciated the non-academic input.

In the second part of this session, a guest speaker was invited who presented a gender training proposal while another guest speaker presented a proposal for a meeting skills training. The discussion with the participants provided the following interesting subjects for training:

1. introduction in gender aspects and selection criteria at universities;
2. external communication (e.g. presenting research to journalists, the broad public, or at project applications);
3. internal communication (e.g. meetings);
4. the use of communication as an instrument for advancing one's career (e.g. social talk at conferences and receptions).

4. Instrument and case study

In the exploration phase described above, a training programme was developed with twelve female researchers. The training was offered to the same group of women and was afterwards evaluated once more. The following is a report of the contents and a description of the course of this test training. Finally, the evaluation of the trainings will be discussed and some tips for organizing the training will be presented to the reader.

4.1. Contents and course of the test training²⁴⁰

4.1.1. The gender topic

This topic is discussed from several angles. During the first training session, the emphasis was exclusively on gender and gender awareness. After the evaluation, some more topics were added such as representation at universities, gender & communication and academic careers for women. The training programme not only paid attention to the theory about gender and gender awareness but also gave people a chance to talk about their own experiences. That way, the following points of interest were identified.

4.1.1.1. Gender awareness

Gender is all about standards and values, which are attributed to both sexes and which influence three levels: 1) identity or self-image, 2) normalizing functions (what is male and what is female) and power proportions, and 3) representation.

There are many stereotypes with respect to men/women, which help us to select, process and pass on information quicker. However, these stereotypes can easily be shattered, with counterexamples for instance (e.g. a caring man). These ‘exceptions’ confirm the existence of stereotypes.

4.1.1.2. Representation in society

There are many examples to illustrate that men and women are often pictured in a different way. In television interviews for example, women are more often portrayed

²⁴⁰ Participants: researchers of the University of Antwerp.

The seven faculties of the University of Antwerp were represented: Sciences, Medicine, Pharmacy, Biomedical sciences and veterinary medicine, Arts and philosophy, Law, Political and social science and Applied economics. Almost all statutes were represented as well: 1 assistant, 2 doctoral students, 2 post-docs, 3 lecturers, 3 main lecturers and 1 professor (no full professor). In terms of age, the group was sufficiently diversified (2 < 30, 5 < 40, 4 < 50, 1 < 60). In total, there were four women without children, 1 with 1 child, 2 with 2 children, 2 with 3 children and 1 with four children. When it comes to methodological know-how, the group contained three experts: one methodologist with experience in qualitative research, one with grounded theory experience and one user of the ‘focus group’ toolkit developed at the faculty of medicine. There were female researchers with and without experience in gender problems and people with a very critical attitude towards the gender issue. Four women mentioned being particularly gender-oriented in their own research. A number of participants were experts in the field of corporate communication and arts. Only one of the women had already participated in a scientific communication training but the other four women explicitly mentioned spending a lot of time on it. Three participants were very communicative and attribute their career success to those verbal skills. Other people told us communication is not always what they hope it would be. The views on careers and ambitions were very different. One of the participants was a widow, who deliberately chose to work part-time, one person said to have a very ‘male’ career course, one is a single mother having difficulties with the combination of work and family, there is one young woman with a ‘great guy’ who strongly supports her, one young woman spends a lot of time abroad and has to postpone her desire to have children and one researcher who says to have evolved spontaneously into the traditional role pattern.

from a bird perspective or sitting down while men are shown from a frog perspective and when in action. There are more women in publicity and more men in the media. Research shows only 32% of the people on television are women. The older women get, the less you see them on television. When looking at children's programmes, the number of men and women on screen is the same. As for Flemish newsreaders, only one in five is a woman, while the European average is 1 in 3.

4.1.1.3. Representation at universities

It is important to create a positive image of the research profession and especially of female researchers. However, that often goes wrong. If women are put in the picture, it is generally because of being a woman and not because of their scientific merits. University brochures to recruit students for example, contain more women but when talking about professors, they generally show a man. This results in an incorrect image of reality and hinders the recruitment of good female candidates for a scientific career.

4.1.1.4. Male/female proportions at universities

Compared to other company sectors, universities are far behind when it comes to the proportion of women in management. The number of women in the higher positions stagnates whereas the number of men increases. A report of Nico Steegmans²⁴¹ shows that women represent only 15% of the senior academic staff (ZAP) at Flemish universities. That is a very small percentage, especially when one realizes that the majority of students are women.

4.1.1.5. Obstacles women face on their way to the top

According to the participants of the session these are:

- the combination of private life and work;
- the higher you climb the ladder, the more you need to adapt to the dominating male standards;
- a strongly male-oriented working culture;
- evaluation commissions consist almost exclusively of men;
- expectation patterns with respect to women (e.g. 'women are less ambitious');
- women spend more time on other tasks (e.g. education);
- women are less visible;
- women underestimate their qualities; they have lower self-image than their male colleagues do.

²⁴¹ Steegmans, N. (2004). 'Vrouwen in het hoger onderwijs: feiten en percepties'. In: Spee, S., & eds., *Wachten op gelijke kansen*. Antwerpen: Garant, p. 183-200.

4.1.1.6. *The glass ceiling at the university*

See general introduction for more information about the glass ceiling at universities.

4.1.1.7. *Differences between women and men*

Another question is whether men are different. A recent research by a female journalist who infiltrated as a man in men's clubs, shows the following differences: among men exists a kind of 'brotherhood' and contacts between men seem to be easier than between men and women. This is largely due to sex differences, to the different worlds. Men have more authority and self-confidence and pay more attention to their careers on the long term.

4.1.1.8. *Gender and communication?*

The combination of gender and communication is not an obvious one. The participants in the test training were asked what they think about it.

According to the participants, we need to distinguish two levels of communication: 1) career communication and 2) social talk. The questions they asked themselves were when to use which words? What to say in which situation? What is the correct strategy? Can you talk about your family? How to communicate in a concise and efficient way? Are there any rules with respect to communication? What does a targeted communication imply and how do you use communication in a strategic way? What do you say to whom? How can you make sure people (e.g. your promoter) listen to you? Perhaps, too much communication is not the way to go either? In short, the participants hoped to discover the do's and don'ts of communication strategies in the training.

A second subject handles about the aim of networking and how to network as strategically as possible? How can you use communication to increase your visibility and to create more chances? How can you find good and reliable mentors/counsellors?

The third point they discussed was the relationship with male superiors. Male professors, who are higher in rank, can use their power. How do you handle delicate situations? How do you avoid trouble while saying what you have to say? How can you use arguments that do not fit their framework? How can you refuse tasks and assignments (e.g. education tasks, caring tasks) in a tolerable way? How can your communication style help you to avoid people taking advantage of you?

Daring to talk about your career without seeming too ambitious and without influencing the process is a fourth point of interest. The participants wanted to get tips about how to express their expectations. How can you communicate about your ambitions without being seen as a 'bee queen' (or becoming one)?

How do you communicate (emotions) to the people who stipulate your career? What has to be emphasized on your CV, which details do you need to include (or not)? In

short: how do I write a good CV? How do you plan your career and how do you realize it by means of clear communication (informing people about your career perspectives, etc). How to have an effective job interview? Are there any alternatives you can talk about? The participants wanted to acquire certain insights and knowledge that would help them decide how they want their career to evolve and how they can be more efficient in reaching certain objectives.

The fifth type of questions handled about the differences in communication between men and women. Do women and men communicate in different ways? What are those differences and which are the differences you need to take into account as a woman?

The final question was how to make university communication more woman-friendly. This for example means having people who take care of those who have missed a promotion or who did not get a project. Today, universities do not pay enough attention to this matter.

4.1.2. The career topic

Like for the gender topic, theoretical insights were shared with the participants but the participants also got a chance to talk about their own experiences and objections concerning this topic.

4.1.2.1. Session 1

4.1.2.1.1. How do you work your way to the top?

People grow up with the idea that knowledge, intelligence and hard work are enough to succeed. This message especially appeals to girls. However, is this approach enough to work your way to the top?

The experience of Hedwige Nuyens teaches us that one must work on 'three cubes' to succeed. Apart from the cube of 'knowledge, diploma, skills, professional experiences' there is the cube of 'time investment' and the cube of 'visibility, PR, networks'. All three of them are crucial. These three cubes work as communicating vessels. Women more often tend to neglect the 'visibility, PR and networks' cube. In other words, they should take the time to work on visibility and look for a recipe that fits them. Try for example to do one PR-activity a month.

As a lecturer, you have to be good at teaching and working in an educational responsible fashion, but you also need to work on visibility. In order to grow, you have to make sure the right people know what you are capable of. Always use your time well.

Tip

Most meetings are useful; others are informal and informative but do require your presence. Do not waste your time: do something else or meditate. Learn to read fast.

4.1.2.1.2. How are people appointed?

You become an assistant because of your results and because you are noticed by one of the professors. You become a lecturer by applying. When a position becomes available, it is published, both nationally and internationally, in order to attract the best candidates. However, during this procedure, many other things may happen ...

At the university, people are appointed by a selection commission, which works formally as well as informally. The formal part consists of a jury, a test procedure, etc. It all seems transparent and objective but this is just the visible tip of the iceberg. What happens behind the scenes is even more important. How did the profile come about? Who positioned himself/herself and how? Who is part of the commission and who is not?

A second selection process is far less transparent but at least as important for selecting the candidate. If the members of the jury know the applicant and have a positive image of that person, it raises his or her chances of getting the position. The decision is then often justified by adapting it to the criteria.

It is therefore important not to spend all your time on the preparation of your application. Go out, do some research, try to find out in advance how the commission is composed, how the members of the jury will proceed, how you perceive the jury, etc. Their perception can be coloured by the quality of your work, your character, your reputation and your motivation.

Tip

If eventually you are not selected, try to find out why. If you have this information, you can use it for the future. However, retrieving this information should be done in a positive manner. Example: 'I am not after your personal opinion but can you tell me something about the tenor of the evaluation? What can I learn from this application round? Can you give me any tips?'

Do not ask these questions if you are still emotional or angry. If you cannot find the reasons, try involving someone who can figure it out for you.

4.1.2.1.3. How to work pro-actively?

Women often think they will climb the ladder on the basis of their merits. To achieve something however, you need to have the support of others as a lever. For this reason, you have to persuade the commission members of your value for a group. Being selected is often a matter of how well a person 'fits' in the group. Can he/she function in the whole group and what is his/her added value?

Women frequently think they give clear hints to their superiors but you cannot be clear enough about your career. Your interest for your work and your profession has to be dominant. Determine your added value. You can list the steps that you can take in your career plan. You have to know what the different scenarios are. As a negotiator, you are strong if you are not in a dependent position. If you can draw several scenarios, you must dare to convert them to practice as well.

Women are often table lamps. They occupy themselves with the work that comes from their computer and lies on their desk. If you want to succeed, you must be a chandelier. You have to focus on what happens, left and right.

Tip

Compare your work to your family. Within a family, relationships are very important. Women tend to think that the relationships at work must be purely business. Your relationship with your boss is very important, however. Departures or dismissals often have to do with a relation that is in a rut. No-one can build a good relationship with your boss for you. That is your own responsibility.

Nobody has ever said that succeeding is easy. You have to look at it as a game. You need to have an eye for relations and to work proactively. You decide whether you wish to take part in this game but always remember that your choice is also a statement. If you want to work for a university, you also have to capitalize on your titles. On the web, there are few updated and translated CVs of women.

Women attach a lot of importance to other role models. Do not hesitate: have a chat with these role models, but never do it at an emotional moment.

4.1.2.1.4. What are your core competencies?

A university is a pyramidal, competitive system in which each person has a number of core qualities. He/she stands for something. Each positive quality can be explained in a negative way and the other way around. When working under stress, one can devalue his/her core quality: an enterprising person for example becomes a pusher. Someone who is assertive can become aggressive, etc. The most fruitful relations are those between persons with different core qualities. In general, opposites attract. An enterprising person for example can cooperate well with a cautious one. However, the latter can become very passive at stress moments. Then the pusher and the passive person are like a red rag to each other. In general, conflicts arise because both persons exaggerate in a conflict situation. They become 'allergic' to each other. However, it is important to know you can learn a lot from your opposites.

4.1.2.1.5. How to grow in a job?

Everyone grows in his/her job. In the beginning, you have a lot to learn until, later on, you know your way around and you have everything under control. At that point, you are not learning anymore and your job becomes routine. You grow out of it. Then it is time to grow further. This is the normal grow path of any position.

Then we bump into the career gap. Women think they have to grow systematically. They start slowly and build their way up. They are stimulated by small steps, small jumps. When applying for a position, they wonder if they are suitable for the job. Can they aim for a job for which they are not yet suitable? They are afraid to fail. Men start much faster and are stimulated by the gap between where they are now and where

they want to be (the top). They skip a number of steps and go on to take an important position. If you want to progress, you need to aim higher. Take the picture of a spider web. You can follow each strand, but you can also jump from one angle of the spider web to the other. Seek a mentor who can help you in your grow path.

4.1.2.1.6. What is important to you in your job?

Indicate what you think is important in a job. Is it the colleagues, the wages, the contents of the job, the opportunity to use your qualities, the career opportunities, the work-life balance, the appreciation? For many women, wages are less important: research has shown a wage gap between men and women. However, wages are a kind of appreciation; they show how important you are for the company. You have to find out what the right wages are for the type of job you are doing.

4.1.2.1.7. Which elements can advance your career?

Some possible answers:

- openness of the management, getting career opportunities, being encouraged;
- support of your family;
- network development, having a mentor;
- lifetime learning;
- open communication about your own ambitions;
- creating visibility;
- getting the chance to remain yourself.

4.1.2.1.8. Which elements can slow down your career?

Some possible answers:

- uncertainty about your own competencies;
- macho environment or culture;
- overprotection of women;
- poor work-life balance;
- lack of coaching and encouragement;
- insufficient visibility;
- not daring to take difficult/unpopular decisions.

4.1.2.1.9. What do you want to obtain?

Some possible answers:

- permanent position at the university in my research area;
- combining research and education, practice and society;
- getting appreciation of society and colleagues;
- creating a balance between work and private life;
- being a good promoter for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers;
- developing a research group and attracting good researchers;
- becoming a doctoral assistant;
- becoming a professor and/or department chairperson.

For women it is sometimes difficult to pinpoint what they want to become/where they want to go.

Tip

Making a time line can help, from the past to your current situation and the future. Insert steps and stipulate what you have to do to reach them. What do you want to achieve with whom? What is your target and who can act as a lever to achieve it?

4.1.2.1.10. Who has a major impact on your career?

The balance between work and private life also determines your chances of career success. It is important to keep your partner motivated. Try to find out what is important for him/her. Keep your partner and children happy. Keep yourself in good shape. Spend your time well and delegate tasks you do not like. Do the things that you like most. Make it your motto: 'I only do the things I like and I try to like the things I do'.

Apart from your partner and family, who can be important?

- headmaster, dean, director of research institutes, managers;
- the members of the research group;
- your promoter and mentor;
- other universities;
- governments and financiers;
- research councils;
- doctoral students;
- colleagues in your department or faculty.

Exercise

a) What is your next career step and b) Which people can help you in reaching your goals? Do you know those people? Do they support you? If you do not know them, who does? Summarize this in a bullet diagram. And finally, draw a time line for yourself.

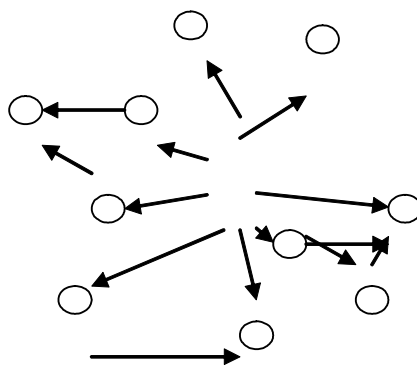


Figure 17: Bullet diagram

The exercise with the bullet diagram puts forward the people who can have an impact on your career and the way you can reach them. Try to reach the most important people with one or two steps. Examine whether you have positive or negative relationships with those people and make a state of affairs.

You do not build networks from your office. As you grow older, it gets easier to make contacts. Develop networks yourself, for example within the current group of trainees.

4.1.2.1.11. Is there life outside the university?

Even if you wish to stay at the university, you will have more chances of realizing that ambition by being open to other scenarios: by holding on to a dependent position you seem very vulnerable.

It is a good idea to keep applying for jobs from time to time, even if it is just for fun. That way, you get a free check-up of your CV, telling you what is missing and what you have to work on. Applying for another job is like a barometer for your career planning. When you get an offer, think twice before accepting or declining it. Be selective in what you do and do not accept.

4.1.2.1.12. How to increase your visibility?

- Dare to ask advice, make a call. What do you say or do not say? How do you ask for trust? Formulate your intentions in a clear way, because on the telephone there isn't any non-verbal contact. If you ask someone for advice, be sure to thank that person or to give feedback about how things went afterwards. It is a game of 'give and take'.
- Make a personal website. A department chairperson sometimes censors the list of publications. Give a complete list of all the publications on your own website and add those articles as PDF files. Articles that are available online are more often cited.
- Give education outside the department, cooperate to information days, science parties, etc but keep your focus. Always keep in mind what you want to achieve by doing so. You can be helpful and work hard, but is it good for your PR? There is a risk they will ask you for everything. Be sure to get the necessary return.
- Talk with others outside the university. Increase your visibility at other universities. If you do not know how to get in or reach the people you want to reach, you can always go to a reading of a professor you want to speak with for example. Address him/her after the reading, ask some more information and then tell him/her about your own research.
- Proceed slowly. First make sure they know your name and face. Try to characterize yourself in two or three sentences. What makes you interesting? Ask the other person about his/her interests and take up on them. Be original, funny and humorous.
- Check the data and verify whether your name is mentioned. If you cooperate to something, do you get a PR return? In the beginning of your career in particular, you are prone to accept all kinds of tasks that are not really to the point.
- Keep a personal directory. Send Christmas wishes, remember anniversaries and

congratulate people on their promotions. You can increase your own visibility by giving attention to others.

- Devote proper attention to your e-mail. Send for example an unpretentious mail while impudently joining a PDF document of your article.
- Let your ambitions circulate internally. People cannot read each other's minds so you need to communicate your ambitions in a clear manner.
- Introduce your research to a broader audience and do not be afraid of using the media to do so. Participate to congresses and publish specialist literature in Dutch as well. Invite more people to your presentations.
- Regularly go on a study trip, even if you do not see the use of it yet. Taking a distance from work refreshes the mind. Try to retain three useful things from each study trip and note them down during your flight home. For example, a title of a book, an interesting contact, an idea ...
- How do you behave at a reception and how do you avoid becoming a wallflower? Walk through the room, try to meet the organizer, practise recognizing faces, find out who is who by means of the list of participants or the personal labels. Find something useful to do.

The important rule about visibility is know yourself, know the people around you and respect yourself.

4.1.2.1.13. Did you remember anything in particular from this session?

After the session, ask your participants what they will remember in particular. During the test training at the UA this was 'the diagram with the little bullets'. Some people realized there were more people who can help them than they initially thought. Others were impressed by the different ways of making contacts interesting, the ways of making one's entrance and increasing one's visibility in a positive way and the ways of dealing with receptions in a more conscious way. To conclude, a good tip seems to be: *"Take the bull by the horns and make a time line which tells you where you want to be next year and which names you can associate to that"*.

4.1.2.2. Session 2

At the beginning of the second training day about career and gender, the participants were asked to talk about what they had undertaken to increase their visibility after the previous session.

The previous session made the participants in the test training aware of a number of things such as: 1) the fact that nobody knew them, 2) the fact that they belonged to a small department and that they had to position themselves stronger (but how?), 3) the fact that the area had to be explored in terms of who does what, 4) the fact that they had to make contacts (e.g. appointment with the dean to present themselves as they enter the faculty), 5) the fact that they had to maintain international networks and contacts by sending New Years wishes for example, or by asking people to contact them, 6) the fact that it was important to ask experts for recommendations, opinions

and feedback and 7) the fact that they had to address a member of the application commission.

The participants had already worked on their visibility 1) by letting people know what they were doing and what they wanted to achieve, 2) by making their ambitions known by applying internally and 3) by being present on preparatory board meetings of assistants. Other participants had accepted a task or commitment such as writing the report and taking initiatives in meetings. As a result, they had less difficulty in making contact and they became more visible for the group. Someone else committed herself to a working group. Finally, receptions had been used more consciously.

In general, there had been more communication by the female participants: *“Participating more actively during meetings”, “Addressing others”, “Linking website to e-mail”, “Discussing CV with others”, “Sitting next to someone in a meeting and presenting oneself”* and *“asking feedback about what can be improved in the future”*.

During the discussion, the lecturer gives additional tips:

- basis = informal contacts;
- being constructive and stressing distinctive features;
- communication training to increase awareness;
- giving compliments, congratulating people, even when they are superiors;
- carefully considering where you want to sit in meetings;
- ‘accidental’ encounters;
- practising outside work, e.g. with friends or partner.

In case of conflicts, remember the following:

- reflect about what the other person wants to hear and what he/she gains by it;
- introduce solutions for the faculty to the dean and explain why you think they are important for the faculty and which contribution you can make;
- do not blame yourself or someone else when there is a problem, always consider them as common problems and look for alternatives;
- allow yourself to cool down before initiating a conversation, always think about what you want to achieve before you start a conversation;
- ask advice when you are uncertain and always keep in mind the interests of the entire university environment;
- if you are turned down, do not exaggerate with apologies.

During applications, you can do the following:

- talk about your ambitions in a very early stage of the application process in order to get information you would not get otherwise;
- do not hesitate to apply, even if you know there is a better candidate, something can always come up;
- never say that your CV is not good;
- remember that of the ten initiatives you undertake, two will fail for sure. If not, you are not going beyond your comfort zone;
- don’t hesitate to apply for a job;
- when applying, you get feedback which will help you to assess your market value.

Need support?

- find out who is supporting you or who could be and remember that not everyone can be your friend;
- think about who can profit from the fact that you remain at the university;
- support is often a matter of building contacts year after year, of giving and taking, of allies;
- there is a difference between being known and being supported;
- address people and ask them to support you, try to get people to support your project, always from the larger base;
- prepare your interview;
- mind the other person's body language;
- ask open questions and be silent while the other person answers;
- try to find out what the other person's weak spot is.

Practical exercise

A role-play with the following task: a conversation with someone who is important to your career.

Conversation 1: a conversation at a reception: search for something that is pleasant to talk about for the other person (I have recently read an article of you, what a coincidence that I meet you here, I've heard a lot about you, etc). Think about what you want to say, always make sure you can go home with something like an appointment, be sure the person in question is listening, keep a couple of scenarios in your head ...

Conversation 2: ask support for your application or project: 1) always begin with neutral things (I've been working here for so long, or I am working on ..., etc) and 2) say what you want to say (I would like to know ..., I already got a lot of opportunities and now I would like to go a step further ...) and 3) involve the other one (I know that you are working on ...), find a common interest and examine to what extent your projects can be handled within the framework of the organization.

Conversation 3: project application: present your project in advance and examine whether your file is complete and if there are any elements that need adapting.

After the session, ask your participants again what they will remember from it.

4.1.3. The presentation topic

Practical exercise

The participants interview each other about their passions (3 minutes). Then the interviewer prepares a two-minute presentation, which is then filmed. During the training session, the contents and form of these presentations are discussed.

4.1.3.1. *The contents and structure of a presentation*

Your presentation is as good as your preparation. Study your presentation so that you know the contents by heart. The difference between a text and a speech is the speaker. For this reason, you can add personal information to your story. Give the impression that you like giving presentations. Avoid negative things because your speaking time is very limited. Be yourself but know that you perform. ‘You are not an actor but a performer’.

The beginning and end of a statement are crucial. During the introduction, which can take 15% of the allotted time, you tell everyone what you are going to talk about and you repeat that. You formulate your core ideas and explain the structure. You make contact, create expectations and ensure a reward (e.g. at the end of the presentation, you will know who ...). In general, listeners remember about 85% of your introduction.

Conclude your presentation, summarize and repeat your core idea. In general, people remember about 75% of the conclusion.

Build your story around a core idea. Work with this core idea by using pictures, metaphors and examples. Do not try to tell too much. The more specific you are, the better. True anecdotes make a story and gradually open the listeners’ eyes. Sow images to harvest imagination.

Try to make a point by telling one story after the other. Then try some storytelling to convey the meanings and facts. Some listeners remember logical, rational facts while others need emotions, associations, intuition, etc. For a female audience, the latter will probably work better. The way you bring the story determines whether the message gets across.

Pay attention to your language. People who speak well have less difficulty in holding the attention of the listeners. Standard Dutch has to belong to the register of the scientist. Dialects can undermine your authority and status. A captivating speaker, who has the gift of the gab, is nice to listen to. However, be careful it does not turn against you.

Do not be afraid of silences. They help people to comprehend what you are saying. In one minute’s time, you pronounce an average of 125 words, but listeners experience this as 800 words. Give them a break from time to time and respect their thinking space. Allow them to think with you: involve them by asking rhetorical questions on a regular basis.

Presentations by research scientists mainly consist of informative sentences. They hardly use any structure or comment sentences. Go for an ‘enlarged conversation’: avoid being pedantic and keep your presentation fresh and colourful. Before starting your presentation, try to answer the following questions: what does my audience know already? What does it want to know? What does it have to know? How do I communicate it?

Stopgaps can be useful in a presentation, but stay away from the meaningless ‘euhm’. If you use stopgaps, only use meaningful ones, such as reflecting, not finishing an as-

sumption, etc. If you have a blackout, there is no shame in admitting it. Someone from the audience will remind you where you left off.

There is nothing wrong with using notes. Write down some keywords, which you can read in a glimpse. It is perfectly acceptable to glance at your notes every 10 seconds. However, do this as inconspicuously as possible.

L'esprit des escaliers: the spirit of the stairway. After a presentation, people often realize they have forgotten to mention something.

4.1.3.2. *Attitude and form*

Abdominal respiration affects your voice. Try to keep a natural voice. Before a presentation, only drink water and avoid coffee and sweets. Continue to breathe evenly.

You must position yourself as a speaker: stand up straight, do not cross your legs. If you move, take small steps. Try to make eye contact, without staring at people. Everyone in the audience is just as important so avoid limiting yourself to the people who nod. Do not look at the same person for more than two seconds. As a speaker, you must observe your audience in order to be able to react.

What can you do with your hands? Let them hang beside your body, indicate rhythm, act and portray, represent abstract ideas, etc. Charismatic speakers are often speakers who also use their hands. Men usually turn their hands to the outside; women to the inside and the outside. You can support your story with mimicry, but do not exaggerate.

4.1.3.3. *Appliances*

Music is good for the atmosphere in a workshop. You can use music when preparing an exercise, at the reception, etc.

4.1.4. The meeting topic

The aim of this session is to help the researcher as a participant and as a chairperson to raise the impact and the efficiency of a meeting. The more you know about the different roles in a meeting, the more impact you can have on it.

4.1.4.1. *Self-test concerning meetings + discussion*

The test training at the UA among other things produced the following questions and nuisances: 'how to work towards a target?', 'I get irritated in chaotic meetings', 'how to interrupt superiors?', 'what are the different roles in a meeting?', 'I often get the feeling that everything has already been told in the lobby', 'I am afraid to intervene, I fear the

impact’, ‘I have problems with my voice, I get nervous’, ‘what if the chairperson is not recognized?’, ‘the type of meeting should always be announced in the agenda’.

4.1.4.2. Meeting culture

Each culture has its own meeting habits. In America and the Netherlands for example, you cannot speak about the meeting during the break. In Belgium, there is no such rule. You have to pay attention to new alliances, which can be set up during the break. There is also a difference between men and women. Women do not tend to discuss the meeting during the break. They rather talk about private matters.

In Europe, it is not unusual for people to interrupt others in a conversation. It is even accepted. In Asia or America for example, that is not the case. Another example: women sometimes come up with emotional arguments. A good chairperson has to be able to objectify these judgements. Likewise, he or she must not hesitate to ask men, who in general have a more objective approach, how they feel about certain things.

4.1.4.3. Voice

A high voice during a meeting reveals agitation and dissatisfaction. Your voice is the echo of your heart. If you feel agitated or if you want to persuade people, talk slowly and quietly.

4.1.4.4. Meeting roles

A meeting is a democratic event: everyone has an equal part in it. The chairperson, however, is and remains the chairperson. He/she must have attention for the process, for the set-up and the aim of the meeting. Always respect the chairperson in his or her role. In case of negative behaviour or extreme disinterest, the chairperson can exclude you from the meeting. As a chairperson, you can also expect the participants to be prepared. To stimulate this, you can for example ask someone to summarize a note at the beginning of a meeting.

Exercise

The group is split up in small groups with one chairperson in each group. Each participant gets a card with a description of a certain ‘meeting role’. The participants have a meeting and are told to solve the problem or to counteract the process. Some typical roles are:

- the apathetic: just wants to have a rest, meetings are a waste of time to him/her;
- the joker: wants to make everyone laugh;
- the chatterbox: talks the whole time;
- the dominant: never stops peddling his/her opinions and points of view, problematic if the chairperson is like this;
- the uncertain: wants to cooperate, but is afraid for responses. With a little push, you can involve someone like this in a positive way in the meeting.

And then there are the bulldozer, the weak, the rebel, the echoer, the negativist, the strapper ...

In terms of group dynamics, twelve people in a meeting is an ideal number. The mix of several types of people guarantees the correct chemistry. Everyone must be able to contribute to the meeting and the roles of the participants have to be clear.

4.1.4.5. *Types of meetings*

In problem-solving meetings, the chairperson acts as a moderator. To solve a problem, you have to go through four phases: 1) defining the problem, 2) determining the cause of the problem, 3) giving solutions and 4) taking decisions. Some of the pitfalls of problem-solving meetings are that no decisions are taken, that old wounds are opened etc and that you always have to start all over again.

Each meeting is limited in time. After an hour and a half, you need to take a fifteen-minute break.

Exercise with the envelopes and the hexagon

The group is divided into two small groups. Each participant gets an envelope with bits of a hexagon. Everyone has to be silent, there can be some cooperation but within certain limits. Each group can ask for help up to three times. The coaches observe and take over when necessary.

This exercise lets all participants feel how they function in a problem-solving meeting, which chances they miss and which they take. It is striking to see that in the beginning all participants concentrate on their own problems. Afterwards everyone takes another role. After a little while, people start to request help and team up to find a solution.

4.1.4.6. *Some tips*

The success of the meeting depends on the preparation and the agenda

- send the agenda and timing to the participants;
- people have to feel welcome (drinks, files ...);
- people need comfort and do not want to sit too close to each other;
- the bistro setting and V setting are best. It is preferable that men sit beside each other rather than opposite each other;
- before starting the meeting, agree on meeting rules and the writing of the report. Preferably, the minutes secretary only takes notes of the decisions and actions.

4.1.4.7. *What have you remembered from this meeting?*

After the test training at the UA, the answers were: insight in the different roles, how to bring points to the attention in a diplomatic way, a relief that you can learn how to act in meetings, tools to lead meetings, the exercises raise the awareness about how meetings go, the differences between leading a meeting in a task- and a process-oriented way.

4.2. Evaluation of the training

After the exploration phase, in which a training programme was developed with twelve female researchers, this training was given to the same group of women, (see invitation in Tool Annex) and afterwards evaluated. Based on these results, the training programme was updated, and for a second time given to female researchers of the other Flemish universities (U Hasselt, UGent, VUB, K.U.Leuven), again followed by an evaluation and update. The evaluation described below is based on both trainings.

4.2.1. Focus: strategic communication with the preservation of the unique female character

The original focus was gender and scientific communication, particularly the communication of scientists with society. Very soon, however, it became clear that the female researchers interpreted the term ‘scientific communication’ as all communication activities of researchers about their study in order to keep on growing to the top. That is why the project was extended to include strategic communication and gender.

Moreover, the training course had to offer an instrument teaching female researchers how to communicate in a more flexible, tactful and strategic way without losing the unique character of female scientists. By unique character, we mean the narrow link with family life, personal aspirations, enthusiasm about one’s own research, solidarity with the job etc.

Moreover, the training had to be very practical, by using exercises, filming the presentations, etc. However, there could also be topics, stories to which the participants simply had to listen. Furthermore, the training had to be supportive, contribute to the career, be change-oriented, show results, ...

4.2.2. Composition of the group

In the first group of female participants, there were female researchers from several statutes and from the different faculties and disciplines of the University of Antwerp. The group contained 3 PhD students, 1 PhD assistant, 1 post-PhD, 4 lecturers, 2 main lecturers and 1 professor. Some participants had experience with the gender topic thanks to their research context.

The second group contained participants from several Flemish universities, who were selected by the project assistants of the VLIR-EQUAL-project. To this group belonged: 1 doctoral student, 1 scientific employee, 4 doctor-assistants, 5 post-docs, 3 lecturers and 1 main lecturer. It was striking that many of those participants had experience with the gender theme, through membership of a work group or a centre for women’s studies.

Both groups were very enthusiastic, though there were some differences. The first group contributed more to the content and was more actively involved in the discussions whereas the second group was somewhat passive. This is probably in part due to the more heterogeneous composition of the first group, which consisted of female researchers of all hierarchical levels. The lecturer can bring extra dynamics in the group.

4.2.3. The gender session

In the first training session, the gender topic was approached from a theoretical angle by the lecturer, which did not really 'connect' with the environment of the target group. One of the participants said the session had made her a bit more gender-aware but "*remained at a more theoretical-informative level than I had expected*". Someone else said "*the contents were less applicable, many theories and anecdotes and not enough practical exercises*". A third person formulated it as follows: "*Insight in gender is widened but for me, this is not directly applicable, not very concrete*". This session had therefore little added value.

The lecturers had to be more in touch with the environment of the participants. That is why, for the second training session, we invited two lecturers to talk about their experiences and their gender research. This went down very well because among other things "*there were several speakers, with several angles*" and "*the explanation about the obstacles and the university as an organization was very interesting*". The exchange of experiences was important: "*I got a thorough analysis of the specific problems which you can experience as a woman and I learned about experiences of other women in this area*". Moreover, this approach was "*a kind of interuniversity networking*". The interactive approach of the lecturers and the professional method were appreciated. The participants got "*a better and clearer representation of gender-related obstacles*". The theoretical explanation about the differences was "*very useful and confronting*" and the "*link between communication and career*" was considered very interesting, though we should have paid "*more attention to useful strategies*". Because of the different contexts of the participants when it comes to knowledge about gender issues, some people would have liked to go faster while for others, the pace was just right: "*I learned a lot: I started from scratch*". One person thought the session was too general and not gender-specific enough while someone else described it as "*the correct balance, not too gender-specific*". Possibly, the participant's level of knowledge influences the expectations and the extent to which the lecturer can pay attention to specific gender differences. In general, it seems that too much emphasis on the gender differences is not appreciated. As mentioned before, participants particularly look for tools that can help them in their careers.

The session was given by women and the participants were all women. "*These women-only sessions allowed people to adjust and exchange interesting information.*" Some people however suggested organizing this session for men as well, because "*they need to be made aware of these issues even more than women do*".

4.2.4. The career session

In general, the participants were pleasantly surprised: *“More interesting than I thought it would be”* and *“I got more than I had expected. I expected it to be a theoretical discussion but it was very practical”*.

It is obvious this session was particularly appreciated because it was very specific and practical. *“All typical pitfalls were indicated, based on personal experience rather than on theory.”* Participants formulated it as follows: *“Offers practical solutions”*, *“The exercises were based on real situations”*, *“Useful tips for every-day practice”*, *“Practical tips”* and *“Useful steppingstones”*.

The typical pitfalls and problems women can encounter were drawn from *“recognizable situations and experiences”*, and *“the typical obstacles for women are indicated and were very recognizable”*. The session was considered gender-specific enough, because *“as there were only women, things were already gender-specific”*. The topic was in fact not really meant to be gender-specific, but *“this was not necessary”* because *“in fact it is not about differences between men and women, it is useful for both sexes”*. The *“pitfalls women are more susceptible to”* were taken into consideration, *“the examples were gender-specific”* and *“more is not necessary”*.

The career topic went down very well with the participants. It was considered very important and the participants would have liked to spend more time on this topic. There was suggested to introduce an additional session, which would allow for exercises about futuring, time management, role-plays, etc. Therefore, the second training series spent two days on the topic of career and communication.

This session was very interactive and contained many exercises, especially on the second day. There was *“a good mix of input from the participants and the coach”*. *“The participants could learn a lot from each other.”* One participant admitted she had learned many new things *“which have opened my eyes”*. Another participant mentions, *“it was useful to reflect on it”*.

One of the participants suggested *“using/resolving some case studies”*. Another participant would have loved *“to have more room for discussion/interaction”*. Finally, a quote of one of the participants: *“I think that you have succeeded in opening the eyes of a number of younger participants. Let us hope it will lead to some action (and promotion)”*.

4.2.5. The presentation session

“I have learned an awful lot and I got many useful tips from the coach and the other people in the training course. The interaction was particularly enriching.” This quote characterized the feedback of all participants. Another participant formulated it as follows: *“It was rather confronting to see myself on the screen, but it is instructive. Very good teacher as a matter of fact”*.

The approach is appreciated because of *“its excellent balance between information transfer, exercises and feedback”*. The participants have learned a lot *“by giving feedback and learning from their own errors, the individual feedback and personal recommendations, the active participation of all participants, the many useful tips and the discussion of practical questions”*.

The gender-specific issues were taken into account when necessary, but *“there are not many differences between men and women when it comes to presentation styles. This session is a must for both sexes”*.

4.2.6. The meeting session

The session definitely fulfilled the expectations of the participants. *“It was more interesting than I had expected. Very useful.”* As one participant said, *“a real eye-opener about what you need for effective meetings”*. It gives you *“a good idea of the characteristics of good meetings, a nice, technical frame of reference and a neutral basis”*.

About the attention given to the role of the chairperson at a meeting, one participant says, *“my expectations were met. I needed to know more about the role of the chairperson”*. Another participant, however, stated, *“the part about the role of the chairperson could have been shorter”*. Again, this is probably due to the differences in hierarchical levels between the participants. Someone who is at the beginning of his/her career does not have the same needs as someone at the top.

The gender-specific theme was not the core issue but *“was, however, mentioned in all stages for which it mattered”*. The different gender aspects were partially discussed, but one person deploras, *“there was no practical information on how to change a predominantly male meeting culture though there was some information on how to behave within the current culture”*. The lack of a real focus on gender and differences between men and women was not considered a negative thing. *“I do not really think it is necessary so I did not miss it.”* *“I did not have the impression that the underlying rules of a meeting are different depending on the composition of the group.”* *“You should not focus too much on gender but it is important to make people aware of the issues.”*

4.2.7. The lecturers

The guest speakers and coaches all had a lot of experience, both theoretical and practical. It is very important to select strong individuals with a lot of experience. The gender of the coach does not matter, but any links with the academic context are much appreciated.

4.2.8. The time aspect

It was not always easy to respect the allotted time. Very often, certain subjects had to be postponed to the next meeting. This was probably due to the interactive approach of the meetings. It is difficult to know in advance which topics will appeal to the participants and how much time people will want to spend on them.

Apart from the timing problem, the training went very well and there were no real setbacks. The participants were very enthusiastic women who really went for it. If it were up to them, they would all be at the top within a few years. As a matter of fact, three participants were promoted to Assistant Professor, one to fulltime Assistant Professor, one to post-doc and one to BOF-ZAP²⁴² shortly after they followed the scientific communication training.

4.3. Tips for organizing the training

The test trainings produced insights into several organizational aspects of the training such as the desired topics, the form or way in which the training should be given, the ideal group of participants, the requirements for lecturers, the duration of the training and each session, the best location and the most efficient set-up of the room, how the evaluation should be performed and what the syllabus should look like. They also generated a number of session-specific tips.

4.3.1. The desired topics

In order to begin the training in an efficient way, it is a good idea to provide participants with information in advance. It is also advisable to introduce the participants to the lecturers and their potential offerings, so they can select the topics themselves. That way, the offerings of the lecturers are geared to the needs of the participants.

4.3.2. The form

The training should be practical and interactive, with many exercises and exchange of experiences and tips. It should also be change-oriented and supportive.

During the test trainings, the use of a learning environment such as Blackboard was perceived as very useful. Blackboard offers a forum in which participants can exchange their opinions and give feedback after the training. Furthermore, all information and

²⁴² BOF = Bijzonder Onderzoeksfonds. Flemish Government fund with financial resources for fundamental research. ZAP = Senior Academic Personnel.

documents can be put on Blackboard to make them available for everyone, which is useful for those who have not been able to attend a particular session. On top of that, the system provides an easy way to send mails to the entire group or to subgroups. Because of the many advantages Blackboard has to offer, it is important that participants are encouraged to use it.

4.3.3. The participants

Select a group as heterogeneous as possible. This will stimulate the input of experiences and the exchange of tips and recommendations. Heterogeneity is necessary on different levels, such as discipline and/or faculty, rank or status, people with or without theoretical and/or practical experience in gender issues. By selecting participants from different universities, interuniversity networks are created instantly.

As far as the selection procedure goes, it is best to organize an information event in which the training is explained and in which participants are offered the opportunity to ask questions. This will allow winning over people who initially were reluctant to participate. If there are too many applications, ask the candidates for their motivations.

4.3.4. The lecturers

As far as lecturers are concerned, preference is given to coaches with a strong personality, hands-on experience in communication and knowledge of the academic context. Lecturers who have reached the top themselves and/or who have succeeded in balancing their career with their family lives are highly appreciated, as they will be able to act as a role model for female researchers.

4.3.5. Duration and location

The training is split into five sessions of a full day each. To make sure everyone is able to fit the training into his or her schedules, the sessions are organized every other week. In addition, one full day is preferred over two half days.

The sessions are organized on different campuses and at different universities, in order to keep the transportation costs more or less on an equal level for all participants. It is recommended to choose a room with a U-shaped table configuration and with enough room to work in small groups. Tables and chairs that are easy to move are also a plus.

4.3.6. The evaluation

- Take some time for a Q&A session at the end of each training day in order to give

- everyone the opportunity to provide feedback about it.
- Provide the participants with an evaluation form and give them time to fill it out. Do this for each session and have them return the forms immediately to make sure you get them all back.
- Ask the participants for their opinion on very good or very bad scores on the evaluation form.
- Process the evaluation as soon as possible and send it to all participants and lecturers.
- Write a report on each session.

4.3.7. The syllabus

- Ask for the PowerPoint presentation of the lecturer in advance and hand over a copy to all participants.
- Provide a recommended reading list that can be interesting as a supplement for the class of the lecturer.

4.3.8. Organizational tips

- Those who were interested in the project but were not selected as participants, were kept up to date with all necessary information via e-mail. This was done upon their explicit request.

Tips for day 1

- Provide enough time to get acquainted with one another; ask participants to share with the group why they are interested in the topic.
- At the beginning of the session, ask participants whether they have experienced gender-related obstacles themselves.
- Give participants time to digest what was told by the guest speakers. This gives them the opportunity to share their own experiences.
- Make sure you give all participants the opportunity to express their views, even those who are reluctant to “take the floor” spontaneously.
- Ask participants about their expectations of a training course about gender and communication.

Tips for day 2 and 3

- Have participants reflect upon their own career path.
- Put theory into practice with exercises.
- Have participants talk about the future they envision for themselves.
- Observe conversation exercises; these are clarifying and inspiring.
- While discussing the observations, the lecturer can give tips drawn from his or her own expertise; these are very enriching.

Tips for day 4

- Have a number of people (half of the participants) do the presentation without giving them specific instructions beforehand.
- Look at each of the presentations and provide specific feedback for each participant. Ask the group to give feedback as well.
- Afterwards, have the second half of the group do their presentations.
- Obviously, the advantage of splitting up the participants into two groups is that the second group will no longer make beginners' mistakes, as they will adapt their presentations to the tips given by the lecturer. Everyone will notice the improvement.
- Do not discuss the theory on a point-by-point basis, but in function of what comes up during the presentations. Afterwards, you can have a look at the theory to conclude the day.

Tips for day 5

- Teach participants about meeting techniques through role-playing.
- Assign a - randomly selected - role to each participant.
- Always discuss the theory based upon what came up during the role-plays.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

In the introduction of this module, the following three questions were asked: what can communication do for the academic career of female researchers, which aspects are important and which needs do female academics have with respect to communication training? In what follows we have tried to formulate answers from the results of this study, viewed from three angles: 1) a literature study, 2) focus group sessions with a group of twelve female academics of the University of Antwerp and 3) two communication trainings at Flemish universities as a pilot and test phase.

What follows is a summary of what women want to achieve in their careers, which gender and communication aspects can slow them down, what can help a career and what does this mean for communication trainings? As a decisive factor, some tips and recommendations are given, for female researchers on the one hand and the university on the other.

5.1. What do women want to achieve in their career?

What female researchers want to achieve in their career, depends of course on their personal motives and ambitions, but the list below shows the ambitions of the women

who took part in this pilot project:

- permanent position at the university;
- permanent position at the university in my research area;
- linking research and education, practice and society;
- getting appreciation of society and colleagues;
- balancing work and private life;
- being a good promoter for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers;
- developing a research group and attracting good researchers;
- becoming a doctoral assistant;
- becoming a professor and/or a department chairperson.

5.2. What slows down a career?

In the different phases of the project, several obstacles and difficulties in the field of gender and communication surfaced, which can explain why women are slowed down in their way to the top.

From literature

A literature study showed there are several communication aspects that can cause difficulties in the way to the top. Networking and lobbying for example can be obstacles. As it happens, these activities are not very popular with women. Contrary to men, women often believe that to have success, it is enough to be good at what you do.

Another barrier on the way to the top we encountered in literature was the perception of the female communication style. A high-pitched voice, making long sentences, adopting a supporting, endorsing, integrating, thorough, inquiring or confirming attitude, formulating things from one's own perception, etc are frequently considered as a lack of authority or as inferior. Women also tend to speak in terms of 'we' instead of 'I', concealing their personal contribution instead of emphasizing it. Furthermore, women communicate in a relation-oriented manner while men rather communicate in a result-oriented way. Finally, research shows that women get less speaking time in meetings and that they are more often interrupted or ignored. Women therefore are disadvantaged when they try to build a career in a predominantly male environment.

From the gender brainstorming

The guided discussions about the gender theme produced the following objections:

- The gender issue and the way it is experienced and approached, strongly depend on the culture within the research group, on the discipline and on the faculty.
- The approach of gender issues in groups consisting mainly of young researchers differs from the approach in groups with many older department heads. In some faculties, there are still too many traditional and conservative researchers.
- Being pregnant has a baleful effect on the CV of many women.

- Career ambitions frequently clash with having a 'fulfilling life'.
- Female characteristics are often appreciated less.
- There are still stereotypes of how women have to behave in society (the traditional family role is still emphasized too much).
- Appraisal commissions often consist exclusively of men.
- For many women, the combination between family and work remains difficult.
- The few female role models and women who do reach the top are often too strong to be encouraging models for other women.
- The selection criteria for making promotion are often non-transparent.
- Men sometimes do not know how to react to ambitious young women.

Not all topics were considered as being equally problematic and they cannot all be taken into account in a training course. That is why the group selected three subjects, which they wanted to tackle in training.

1. Knowledge of the selection criteria at universities
What are the evaluation criteria? How does this work in reality? What do young researchers have to take into account if they want to make it to the top? Can we have an impact on these criteria, and how? What can we do about this?
2. Being gender-aware or learning to look at things through a gender perspective
How do you recognize gender-specific problems as a woman? Is the gender issue merely a generation problem or is it bigger than that?
3. Imposing yourself as a woman in a predominantly male culture
Which female characteristics can have negative consequences? Which characteristics are positive for your career? How can you use female qualities and brio in a positive manner?

From the communication brainstorming

The discussion about communication produced the following objections:

- To obtain success and reach the top, you have to be an excellent communicator.
- Communication increases visibility and includes both internal and external communication. However, women do not like being in the spotlights.
- Communicating about feelings is taboo.
- Women often do not like informal communication and networking and they even doubt whether that is really necessary.
- The university has become more of a society component and that has consequences with respect to communication.
- The social perception of the communication styles of men and women is different.
- Women tend to question themselves more so they need an extra push to communicate more about their research results and ambitions.

Eventually, just like for the gender theme, not all topics were considered equally problematic and they cannot all be taken into account in a training course. Therefore, the group selected four subjects they wanted to tackle in training.

1. Imposing yourself as a woman (self-image)
Do women communicate in a different way? Do they have to behave like their male colleagues? How can they position themselves to fuel their way to the top? How can they fit in when a group mainly consists of men?
2. Communication differences/styles/skills
Are there any differences between men and women? And if so, which are they and how do you handle them? What do you need to pay attention to? Which elements can be positive for one's career?
3. Context-based communication
How do you consider context in your communication? At meetings which unite several target groups with different interests, for example: strategic, informative, diplomatic and targeted.
4. Communication as an instrument
How do you use communication for the benefit of your career? Which importance does non-verbal communication have? How can you use this?

5.3. Communication tips for female researchers

Based on the literature study, the brainstorming sessions and the test trainings, the following communication tips were elaborated for female researchers who want to make their way to the top.

Communicate in a PR-oriented way

- Establish informal contacts, make sure people know you.
- Invest in networking and lobbying, not only within but also outside the university;
- Capitalize on your titles.
- Check if your name is mentioned where it is supposed to be.
- Create a personal website with all of your articles and a copy of your current and translated curriculum vitae.
- Speak more often and more clearly about what you are working on, what you have accomplished and what your merits are.
- Communicate your ambitions in a clear way.
- Communicate enthusiastically about your research, also outside the university.
- Make sure you can formulate in three sentences what characterizes you and what makes you (and your research) interesting.
- Increase your own visibility by giving attention to others.
- Devote proper attention to your e-mail.
- Make your research known to the outside world, both to the broad public and to the media.
- Regularly go on a study trip.
- When attending receptions or other events, think about whom you want to speak to and what message you want to convey.

- Introduce yourself properly when you participate in meetings and work groups, and contribute actively. Carefully consider where you want to sit.
- Always focus on the bigger perspective when communicating.

Develop good relationships

- Find out who makes promotion decisions in the organization and develop a good relationship with them.
- Do not only focus on your work, but also on what happens in your surroundings.
- Establish a good relationship with your boss.
- Work with people who have different core qualities, so that you can learn from each other.
- Try to put irritations into perspective and learn from them. Conflicts can be beneficial if you find out what is causing them.
- Do not try to solve the problem on your own or have it solved by someone else but try to find solutions or alternatives together.
- Be aware that in relationships it is all about 'giving and taking'.
- Maintain your relationships and networks.

Maximize your communication (skills)

- Take part in courses like sales techniques, media training, presentation skills, conflict handling, meeting skills ...
- Practise outside your working environment, for example with your partner or friends.
- Study presentations to make yourself familiar with its contents.
- Always prepare conversations and meetings.
- Exude self-confidence and poise.
- Communication is not only about contents but also about relationships.

Actively plan your career

- Find out who are your allies and your opponents among colleagues and contacts outside work.
- When you suffer misfortune: try to find out in a positive way what the real reason is and learn from it.
- Talk to role models and find a mentor.
- Look at alternative professional opportunities and scenarios.
- Consider building a career as a game. Search actively how you can win.
- Find out who is a member of promotion or selection commissions, how the jury members work, which perception they have of you. If necessary, use intermediaries.
- Make sure you have the support of your partner and your family.
- Make a time line of the past, your current situation and things you want to achieve in the future.
- Develop networks with the people who play an important role in the further course of your career.

- Keep on applying for jobs from time to time to know your market value and to be able to adjust yourself to the current market situation.
- Be selective and do not take on every task or job. The question you need to ask yourself is, will it help me achieve my goals?
- Do not hesitate to apply for a job that you feel you are not yet perfectly qualified for.
- Ask feedback on a regular basis about how you can handle things better.

Be aware of differences in communication styles

- Train yourself in speaking louder and for a longer time and avoid speaking in a high-pitched voice.
- Do not copy the male communication style, but use a style that does not make men feel uncomfortable (no emotions, react casually and exude self-confidence).
- The male communication style works for men, but not for women.
- Let your emotions cool off before having a conversation.
- Do not exaggerate with apologies.

5.4. Recommendations for the policy of a university

The discussions and interactive trainings have led to the following recommendations.

Pay attention to your image

- Promote female professors both internally and externally, not because of their womanhood or motherhood, but because of their work as researchers and their scientific skills.
- Make sure that there is a balanced representation of male and female researchers in university brochures.
- Make sure that not only ‘super women’ are portrayed, as this can discourage other women.

Stimulate women

- Promote actions that enhance the self-confidence and self-image of women. Talk with women about their skills and qualities.
- Encourage women to further their careers and to apply for higher positions.
- Communicate openly and transparently about career opportunities and selection procedures.
- Offer coaching and mentoring projects.

Fully exploit the female potential

- Women are good at teamwork, have organizational talents and communication

- skills and strive towards win-win situations. Exploit these talents to the full.
- Be aware of the fact that women often have difficulties working in a dominantly male culture. But do not overprotect them either, as this can hurt their careers.

Be conscious of gender aspects

- Learn about different communication styles.
- Offer communication skills training specifically for female researchers.
- Make it possible for female researchers to find a balance between work and private life by avoiding organizing meetings at a certain time for example.

These recommendations in many cases can also be applied to male researchers. Paying attention to differences is a positive thing for everyone, both men and women.

5.5. Transferability to other organizations and settings

This training was developed for female academics, but can be applied to all women who are working in a dominantly male culture and who want to increase their chances to reach the top.

Chapter 5

Mentoring

Bie Nielandt (UHasselt)

1. Introduction

The word mentoring originates from Greek mythology. Mentor was an old wise friend of Odysseus, the king of Ithaca. Mentor was Odysseus' advisor, but Odysseus asked Mentor to assist his son Telemachos with advice and to prepare him for his task as a king as well. A mentor takes care of good end results but does not provide victory. Mentor created the conditions for Telemachos and Odysseus to overcome all hazards themselves.

Women are under-represented in higher academic positions: the so-called scissors diagram²⁴³ still is a fact. In almost all disciplines the number of female PhD-students is much higher than the number of female professors. When moving up to the level of associate professor or full professor, the number of women systematically decreases.

Mentoring provides a structure, it is argued, to enable groups that might otherwise find it difficult to access influential networks, to overcome intrinsic or extrinsic barriers to self-development and career progression. The most obvious examples here are diversity programmes, aimed at people disadvantaged by their race, gender or some other form of social exclusion. These programmes prove that mentoring does deliver both career and psychological benefits. Companies such as Aer Rianta²⁴⁴, Proctor and Gamble²⁴⁵ and Volvo²⁴⁶ have all achieved measurable and sometimes spectacular outcomes for women, particularly in terms of promotion.

In general, mentoring is regarded as a powerful tool. But does it work in an academic setting? The success of a mentor relationship depends on the mentor, the mentee and the organization, in this case the university. What are critical factors of success, conditions and limits? These questions have been the starting point for this 'mentoring' Chapter in the Equality Guide (EG).

²⁴³ Figure showing the diagrammed data on the proportion of men and women at each stage of the academic career in six member states in 1997, EC, Osborn, M., ea, 2000, p.13 & p.137-138.

²⁴⁴ Clutterbuck, D. (1997). *Breaking the Glass Ceiling, Mentoring in Action*. London: Kogan Page.

²⁴⁵ Ragins, David (2001). *Mentoring for Diversity*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

²⁴⁶ Antal, Berthoin, A. (1992). *Odysseus Legacy to Management Development*. Berlin.

1.1. Problem definition

Women in management positions are often faced with individual and external challenges. The most important obstacles women have to overcome are in the areas of networking & visibility and career management & work-life balance. To support women in their career paths it is important to offer them a tool and training platform to help them grow and develop themselves successfully.

European research has shown that women's career paths are determined by three internal aspects:

- a lack of female role models or mentors;
- less experience in networking skills;
- a need for management and career training mechanisms.

The top management of an organization should be aware of the need to stimulate women in management. Top-level engagement is a sine qua non for creating the right environment or company culture for women to grow.

1.2. Context UHasselt

1.2.1. Sofia: networking, training and career coaching for women managers

When developing a mentoring tool for women in academic institutions at UHasselt, insights were used from a mentoring programme for women managers, which was developed by SEIN, the Institute of Social Behaviour at the Faculty of Applied Economics of the University of Hasselt. This 'SOFIA networking and career coaching programme' has been used by the company Janssen Pharmaceutica (Beerse, Belgium) for more than six years.

SOFIA offers a tool that women can use to increase their capabilities and to build their careers. By creating a career coaching programme aimed specifically at women, one improves and supports their talent. This tool stimulates and strengthens them in their career management and leadership skills.

The focus is on in-depth research and listing the needs of the participants on the basis of the obstacles described. Furthermore, a clear monitoring and evaluation is integrated to follow the learning insights of the participants. The aim is to extend and optimize women's professional skills to advance their careers. The programme contains a theoretical but pragmatic input by means of interactive training sessions, by means of a sounding board in the form of a strong and motivated network and by means of individual coaching. The programme consists of an HR tool to support the career development of many women.

How does it work?

The SOFIA methodology for women managers is based on two tools: career coaching & training and networking

– Career coaching & training

The SOFIA training is based on formal and informal learning. The course is a framework to support the topics and to create a platform in which the exchange of experiences, networking and career development takes place. The training is an interactive, tailor-made programme, based on the learning objectives, needs and expectations of the participants. The programme takes into account the current management training offer such as the Standards of Leadership (SOL)²⁴⁷. The SOFIA programme is complementary and based on career development and leadership skills.

As a result of the research and the experience in the SOFIA programme, the career coaching training was divided into 5 sessions:

1. Networking

Why is networking important? What are strong network activities? How is my boss networking? How can I improve my networking skills? Who is who in this SOFIA group? How can we strengthen the bonds within this group?

2. Communication & visibility

Why is communication & visibility so important? How can I improve my visibility? How is gender influencing communication? What are strong tips for visibility? How is this working in our organization? How can I improve my visibility and communication style?

3. Women in management: leadership styles

What are management styles for most women? What are challenges for women managers? What is important in this organization? Where do I have to focus on? How can I improve my strategy?

4. Work-life balance

How is this balance for women managers? How can I improve it? Are there any practical tips to improve this balance? What is the perception in the company?

5. Career planning

What are my development goals? What skills do I have to improve? How can I manage my career better? What is my personal development plan?

– Networking

Traditionally, there are different ways inside and outside organizations for men to meet on an (in)formal basis: at meetings, receptions, at the pub or at sport events. Within these groups or networks you can see the effect of discussions and the ex-

²⁴⁷ 'Global Standards of Leadership'. GSL is a credo, used and developed by 'Johnson & Johnson'. It concerns leadership qualities for their managers. The credo values' are: Innovation, Collaboration, Business Results, Customer & Marketplace focus, Complexity & Change, Organizational & People Development.

change of experiences. The networking process continues over a long-term period, exchanging information and tips and can finally result in a coaching or career development process among colleagues. These processes are less accessible to women. Until now, female managers are a minority. There is no experienced generation of women managers or tradition of women networks. In addition, it is not easy for women to enter the – mostly informal – male networks.

Research has also shown that women network differently from men. We see that the needs for networking are more focused on results. Women are more motivated in learning, giving and receiving instead of ‘socializing’. The network process is more target-oriented with less time investment.

Networking is the topic of the first training session of the SOFIA programme and aims at improving women’s networking skills and insights. In the course of five sessions, functional networks are created among the women managers. Within the group of participants, cross-departmental networks are created. This group process is of great importance for the discussions and exchange of experiences during the sessions.

The network provides a platform for colleagues who are active women managers. It is a stimulating forum for the empowerment of women. Together with the trainers/coaches, the women support and challenge each other and provide vision. SOFIA acts as a ‘sounding board’ where women who are willing to pursue their ambitions recognize their challenges and experiences. Within the platform they can look for best practices and solutions.

The participatory and personal development is very important with the programme offering an interactive, experimental and reflexive learning method. So the SOFIA programme is an interactive, training programme of five sessions, combined with networking and personal coaching.

1.2.2. Sofia: women in academic institutions

At universities, women in top positions are still rare. In almost all disciplines, the number of female PhD-students is much higher than the number of female professors. When moving up to the level of associate professor or full professor the number of women systematically decreases. This issue has been the reason for SEIN (UHasselt) and the Diversity Policy Office (K.U.Leuven) to develop the project ‘Women in Academics’.

The aim of the project is to 1) support female PhD-students and female PhDs in developing their professional careers and to 2) find answers for questions such as:

- Do I stay in the academic world or switch to the private sector?
- How do I find a balance between work and private life?
- How do I cope with the academic culture as a starting PhD?

In four interactive coaching sessions the participants improve their insights in their own job wishes and the actions needed to realize those wishes. The participants learn from

each other by discussing and exchanging experiences.

Central issues in the first two sessions were increasing visibility, leadership style and discovering one's own skills and pitfalls. Sessions 3 and 4 were used to elaborate a Personal Development Plan. In business life a Personal Development Plan is a commonly used HR tool but at the university this does not yet exist. Hedwige Nuyens, former financial director of the K.U.Leuven and Female Manager of the Year 2001, lead the first two sessions. Sessions 3 and 4 were coached by Roos van Caeckenberge, Senior Consultant GTP, an international consultancy bureau for career development.

The first 'SOFIA Women in Academics' took place in 2005 with participants of the K.U.Leuven and UHasselt. Because of its success the K.U.Leuven decided to incorporate the project in its regular training and development budget. As a result a new series of sessions, as described above, will be organized for female PhD-students of the K.U.Leuven.

Several participants of the first 'SOFIA Women in Academics' that followed the group sessions programme decided afterwards to follow the Equality Guide's one-on-one mentoring. Their evaluations show that the group sessions programme can be considered a good preparation for the individual mentoring programme.

2. Literature study

Defining a clear concept

Even a brief skim through the academic and practitioner literature on 'role model mentoring' provides us with dozens of definitions. Every mentoring expert has written a slightly different version, but the majority of them have used words such as 'support', 'realizing potential' or 'learning'. Mentoring is described as an effective way to provide encouragement, support and motivation to someone who wants to succeed.

The essence of mentoring is an interpersonal activity, in which a more experienced person (the mentor) guides a less experienced person (the mentee) by exchanging experiences and giving feedback.

These are some of the most common definitions of mentoring:

Eric Parsloe²⁴⁸: *"The purpose of mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be."*

²⁴⁸ Parsloe, Eric & Wray, Monika (2000). *Coaching and Mentoring: Practical Methods to Improve Learning*. London: Kogan Page.

David Clutterbuck²⁴⁹ defines mentoring as: “Off-line help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking.”

Julie Hay²⁵⁰ identifies the range of activities which may be referred to as mentoring:

- showing people the ropes – and helping them to climb them;
- passing on knowledge and/or skills, either formally or informally;
- looking after people;
- acting as a sounding board;
- helping people to put learning into practice;
- being a role model;
- being a guide;
- talking to people about their careers;
- coaching.

The definitions of mentoring can roughly be divided into what can be called the ‘US traditional or godfathering’ and the ‘European or developmental approach’. The former starts from the assumption that the focus of the relationship is the mentor’s extensive experience and willingness to exercise power and influence on behalf of the mentee (typically called a protégé). It can be characterized by long-term relationships that may involve a degree of mutual dependence. Developmental mentoring, on the other hand, emphasizes the mentee’s role in managing the relationship, and focuses on the achievement of personal insight, intellectual challenge and increasing self-reliance.

Mentoring is often confused with coaching, as both development tools are very similar. As Julie Hay has identified, coaching skills come into the mentoring relationship. The mentor will listen and give advice and guidance when it’s appropriate. But the mentor is a ‘senior’ and more experienced in the organization; which is not necessarily the case for a coach.

According to the historical definition, a mentor is a more experienced person who shows the ways to a younger person. Mentoring is a tested method in so-called role model learning. The under-representation of women in higher positions is often linked to the lack of positive role models.

Coaching, networking, training, it’s all about talent development but how to distinguish between these methods and, even more important, how to choose one method or the other? A recent international survey by the ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) examined how companies applied various developmental approaches to talent management²⁵¹. One of the interesting comparisons was between the use of an approach and how useful it was regarded to be:

- coaching was used by 70% of respondent companies and was felt to be useful by 60%;

²⁴⁹ Clutterbuck, David (1999). *Everyone Needs a Mentor*. CIPD, ISBN 0852929048.

²⁵⁰ Hay, Julie (1995). *Transformational Mentoring: Creating Developmental Alliances for Changing Organizational Cultures*. McGraw-Hill.

²⁵¹ Clutterbuck Associates, Electronic newsletter, June 2007.

- mentoring was used by just over 60% and felt to be useful by just under 60%;
- face-to-face courses were also used by 60%, but regarded as useful by only just over 40%.

Mentoring seems to be a very good method. In fact these results must be linked to the goals, vision and target group of the programmes. ‘If you don’t know where to go, any road will do’ (Chinese proverb).

Jive (Joining Policy – Joining Practice) is a partnership of organizations in England, Wales and Europe, working to break down barriers and tackle gender segregation in the science, engineering, and construction and technology sectors. The Jive project is allied with the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering & Technology (SET)²⁵², funded by the Department of Trade and Industry. The UK Resource Centre for Women in SET/Jive is working a lot on mentoring programmes in organizations in the private and public sectors. Their programmes are based on a review of best practices in mentoring in Europe, continually being developed to ensure evaluation feedback and current good practice is incorporated.

They developed a tool to understand the mentoring spectrum²⁵³:

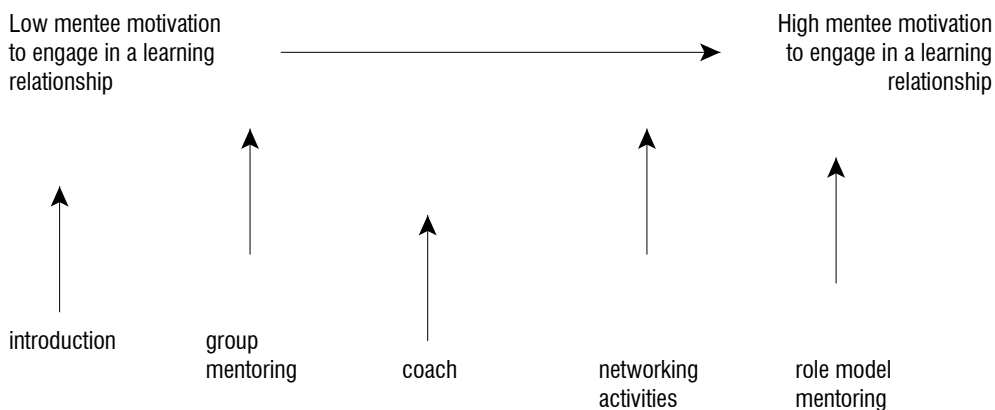


Figure 18: The mentoring spectrum

3. Process report

The process described in this chapter runs parallel to implementing the project and developing the instrument. As a result of the fact that the process can be defined as an

²⁵² One of the three transnational partners in the VLIR-EQUAL Project.

²⁵³ Mentoring spectrum by Jive, UK Resource Centre for Women in science, engineering and technology.

‘on-going development of developing by doing’, the following two parts (part 3 ‘Research Process’ and part 4 ‘Instrument and Case study’) are complementary. Both parts follow the same phases to capture process and content in the same chronology. In part 3 ‘Research Process’, we will focus on the ‘how’ and ‘why’ in the step-by-step plan.

3.1. The concept of mentoring at the UHasselt

3.1.1. Definition

The definition used for this mentoring programme is:

Mentoring in an organization is a specific relationship between two individuals, based on a mutual desire to grow towards an organizational goal.

Based on: *Mentoring, a practical guide*, Janssen Pharmaceutica.

The definition opts for a clear and very challenging concept:

- one-on-one mentoring;
- developmental mentoring;
- mentoring within the organization/ university;
- helping women to overcome institutional and attitudinal barriers to academic advancement.

3.1.2. Vision and values

- It concerns an EQUAL project so it must be **innovative and about equal opportunities and diversity**.
- It concerns a VLIR (Flemish Interuniversity Council) project so it must be evidence-based (**effective, transparent and scientifically founded**).
- It’s about professional development and human interaction so it must be based on an **ethical code**. The existing code of the ‘European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC)’ was taken as an example²⁵⁴. The code of the EMCC describes the ethical/deontological values of the mentors. In our code we make it a mutual interest. Mentor and mentee both agree on the following basic values.

²⁵⁴ European Mentoring and Coaching Council, *Standards for Mentoring Schemes*, www.mentoringcentre.org.

3.1.3. Ethical code

The ethical code of the mentoring programme has five basic values:

- competence;
- learning and development context;
- restriction;
- integrity;
- professionalism.

Table 26: The five basic values of the mentoring programme

	Mentor	Mentee
Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Knows the organization's goals and decision-making processes; – Is positive towards constant professional development; – Is open to personal supervision. 	Has ambitions in the organization and the abilities to realize them.
Learning and development context	Is focused on the learning process and the development of the mentee.	Takes initiative and steers the mentoring relationship based on the learning objective.
Restriction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Admits the restrictions of his/her knowledge and responsibility and can refer to a specialist if necessary; – Avoids all conflicts of interest. 	Realizes that personal development is something she has to achieve herself. It's not the mentor's task.
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Guarantee strict confidentiality; – Admit diversity and equal chances are basic values. 	
Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Make clear agreements; – Are willing to share their personal experiences with each other; – Have a purposeful interpersonal relationship. 	

3.2. Orientation and support

The first phase in starting a mentoring programme is to explore the subject of 'mentoring' and to create support among the people involved. Within UHasselt/SEIN, there was enough experience in working with female networking and mentoring programmes (see 1.2 Contact UHasselt). This expertise proved to be an added value, but the new project also needed to position itself within the existing programmes and assumptions. Former projects were not or insufficiently integrated within the university as an organization. In the scope of the VLIR-EQUAL Project, the university quickly chose the mentoring project as an objective for the university: supporting young female academics in academic careers by means of the personal engagement of mentors –

mentoring in its original meaning.

To prepare this, a conceptual note was written that fit in with the project and its aims. This note described which form of mentoring was to be used and why, as well as the costs and benefits for the university. The definition, vision and values were also explicitly mentioned. The conceptual note was used to get support from the management and key persons within the university. From the beginning, the project was supported by the UHasselt Vice-Chancellor/Director of SEIN Prof. Mieke Vanhaegendoren. A formal engagement of the university was also needed. Therefore, an internal steering committee was created, consisting of the university's general manager, the quality coordinator, the Vice-Chancellor and the project coordinator.

The internal steering committee was particularly important in the preparatory phase. The project concept was approved by the committee, which created a consensus concerning the aims and procedure. This facilitated the practical realization of the project because the Personnel Department quickly provided the information that would be needed to contact the target group of potential mentees in a later phase.

The evaluations of the later participants – mentors and mentees – demonstrate that they did not consider the internal steering committee to be important. However, for the project coordinator this committee did provide an added value with respect to:

- the internal tuning of the choice of mentoring concept;
- the formal engagement of the university, also for co-financing;
- the commitment of the quality coordinator, Personnel Department and top management towards mentoring as a development instrument and equal opportunities in personnel management.

Another advantage of the committee at UHasselt was that they took on an active role in selecting and contacting the mentors. This was only possible thanks to the relatively small scale of the organization. The later evaluation showed that this also created a disadvantage. People were approached personally, which was easy. However, after the pilot project, there was only a limited number of candidates who agreed to act as mentors and no strategies were developed in order to convince less motivated and less 'obvious' mentors. This made the project coordinator aware of the fact that the orientation on mentoring and creating support needs to be a constant point of attention.

It is also vital to keep working on visibility. This happened in various ways: there was continuous communication between the mentors and mentees involved in the project, posters were placed throughout the university and there was project information on the website. Furthermore, an article was published in the university bulletin and another one in *Delta*²⁵⁵, a journal for Secondary Education in Flanders.

²⁵⁵ Nielandt, Bie & Olijve, A. (2007). 'Mentoren helpen vrouwen hogerop'. In: *Delta*, maart 2007, p. 38-41.

3.3. Step-by-step plan

After installing the internal steering committee a practical step-by-step plan was developed. Strategic and operational goals were defined on the basis of vision and values.

- Strategic:
developing an HR-instrument about mentoring at the university with the following aims:
 1. offering opportunities for the development of young female academics;
 2. supporting these women in a career planning focused on higher positions;
 3. being visibly engaged towards equal opportunities and diversity;
 4. developing and valorising leadership skills.
- Operational:
 1. developing an instrument to apply mentoring in the setting of a university (or a similar organization). The instrument will be an easy to use and transferable manual. It will be normative (underlying values) and informative (clear description and explanation of all processes). This also includes portfolios with ready-to-use documents for mentor and mentee;
 2. the documents need to be tested for usability and improved on the basis of the UHasselt project in which five mentees and mentors will complete the programme;
 3. in the final phase, the instrument will be tested and finalized on the basis of a mentoring programme in five Flemish universities, in which ten mentors and mentees will participate.

Apart from defining aims, a plan and timetable were developed.

Table 27: Timetable mentoring project UHasselt

Period	Action	Result
Sept-Dec 05	Preparation	Designing documents
Jan-June 06	Mentoring programme UHasselt	First version of instrument
July-Sept 06	Evaluation	Improved instrument
Oct 06-March 07	Mentoring programme Flemish universities	Mentoring instrument, dissemination
Apr-June 07	Evaluation, writing report	End product Integration in EQUAL

The plan changed in the course of the programme. The first pilot phase at UHasselt was executed according to plan. But the preparation of the programmes at the other universities (dissemination) took more time and proved to be harder than expected. As a result, the planning with respect to the end evaluation and reporting could not be maintained. However, this type of planning can still be useful as a guideline. The time-

table clearly indicated which steps needed to be taken in order to implement the mentoring programme.

Furthermore, on the basis of this timetable, the project researchers were able to determine that the available time for mentoring talks was six months. Later, the programme evaluation by the mentors and mentees showed the majority of participants thought this period of six months was too short. In literature, the appropriate period for a mentoring relation is set between one and two years of time. The project period was suitable for answering a range of specific questions and providing information. The mentees who simply wanted the answers to these questions were satisfied with the project period. The mentees who were looking for more than just information and who took their personal academic development and long-term development as a starting point for the mentoring relationship considered the period to be much too short. Some of them decided to continue meeting their mentor after the formal project period of six months.

3.4. Target group, selection, matching and training

3.4.1. Target group

It is crucial to define the target group before announcing the project. The steering committee used the following criteria:

Mentee

The mentee is a young female academic employee who has a contract that provides possibilities for mobilization, preferably recently employed lecturers, assistant professors or PhD-students in their final year.

Mentor

The mentor is not a hierarchical superior of the mentee. The mentor is a man or a woman with at least fifteen years of experience as a full professor and with good communication skills.

In the pilot phase the mentees were not positioned as professors. Making this career move was the aim of the mentoring programme. Both men and women were allowed as mentors. That was mostly due to practical reasons because there were not enough female professors who met the criteria.

3.4.2. Selection

3.4.2.1. *The selection procedure*

This chapter describes the selection procedure:

Mentees

The Personnel Department provided a list of all female employees who met the criteria. On the list were fourteen women. The Vice-Chancellor sent a letter to the women, containing information about the project, the targets and an invitation to participate.

Mentors

The steering committee selected five mentors. They too received a personal invitation from the Vice-Chancellor and got the information documents that situated the project and the targets. Four of the contacted potential mentors were male, one was female.

What was the result of the invitations to the mentees and mentors?

Mentees

It is important that mentees are motivated to take part; commitment to the relationship is the key to success. Only five out of fourteen potential mentees answered they were interested. The five candidates sent a CV and a short letter of motivation to the project coordinator. One woman asked for a private talk before she decided whether or not she wanted to participate. One of the five women was pregnant and due to the fact that the programme was scheduled during her maternity leave, she eventually decided not to participate. Four women accepted to follow the programme.

What were the reasons for refusing the invitation? Did the non-respondents already face a threshold? An inquiry by telephone probed their motives and resulted in the following replies:

Table 28: Reason of non-response – Number of people/9

No time	6
No interest	3

Table 29: Ambition academic career – Number of people/9

I do not know the possibilities	7
Rather leave for the private sector	2

The inquiry into the reasons for refusing the invitation to participate in the programme

shows that many young female academics at UHasselt do not have clear career perspectives in their heads. This observation does not tell us if the same goes for their male peers.

The women also told us that doing research, often in combination with teaching, absorbs all of their time. They do not have specific career perspectives to focus on beyond their current position. Two of them explained the lack of time by the combination of their jobs with household tasks and young children.

Mentors

Four mentors were asked to mentor the four mentees. All of them were enthusiastic and willing to participate.

This project was the first project coordinated by SEIN in which male mentors were included. It was the result of practical circumstances and did raise some questions. Is it possible for men to serve as role models? Do male mentors recognize gender-related barriers or are they at least open for discussion?

The evaluations showed that cross-gender mentoring was no problem. Stereotyping is a common issue (although not always recognized as such) in both single-gender and cross-gender mentoring relationships. In single-gender relationships, mentor and mentee may share stereotypes (or think they do) which they will not question. Among the ideas that effective mentoring pairs (cross- or single-gender/group) tend to share are:

- that they do think in stereotypes;
- that even favourable stereotypes (women are better at people's management, etc) can influence people's ability to achieve;
- that recognizing and being open about stereotypes is the most effective way of dealing with them.

The best practices at UHasselt with respect to cross-gender mentoring show the power of trust and genuine, open dialogue. The male mentor can display a personal interest in understanding and learning from and about the mentee's (different) world.

3.4.2.2. Mentor competencies

The following is a summary of the model by David Clutterbuck (2003), which is based on the longitudinal study of mentoring behaviours and outcomes, diagnostic instruments and assessments²⁵⁶. Through their work with thousands of mentoring pairs over the past two decades, Clutterbuck Associates have gradually built up a headline framework of mentor competencies, which seems to reflect closely both the practical and theoretical aspects of the roles. The ten core competencies are:

²⁵⁶ Clutterbuck, David (2003). *Developing Mentor Competencies*. Clutterbuck Associates.

- Self-awareness (understanding oneself)

Mentors need high self-awareness in order to recognize and manage their own behaviours within the mentoring relationship and to use empathy in an appropriate way. Interviews with mentors and mentees indicate that having some level of personality and motivational insight is useful for building rapport in the early stages of the relationship. “This is me – this is you” is a good starting point for open behaviours.
- Behavioural awareness (understanding others)

Like self-awareness, understanding other people’s behaviour is a classic component of emotional intelligence. To help others manage their relationships, the mentor must have reasonably good insight into behaviour patterns between individuals and groups of people. Predicting the consequences of specific behaviours or courses of action is one of the many practical applications of this insight.
- Business or professional savvy (insight-comprehension)

The art of purposeful reflection is a valuable support in building this skill. By reviewing the learning from a variety of experiences, the mentor widens his or her range of templates and develops a sense of patterns in events. This competence is the ability to combine stretching experience with focused reflection – either internally or in a dialogue with others – and a substantial acquisition of judgement.
- Sense of proportion/good humour

Laughter, used appropriately, is very valuable in developing rapport, in helping people to see matters from a different perspective, in releasing emotional tension. It’s also important that mentor and mentee should *enjoy* the sessions they have together. Enthusiasm is far more closely associated with learning than boredom.
- Communication competence

Communication isn’t a single skill; it’s a combination of a number of skills. Those most important for mentors include:

 - listening – opening the mind to what the mentee is saying, demonstrating interest and attention;
 - observing as receiver – being open to the visual and other non-verbal signs, recognizing what is *not* said;
 - observing as projector – being open to the visual and other non-verbal signals, as clues to what the mentee is hearing/understanding; adapting tone, volume, place and language appropriately;
 - exiting – concluding a dialogue or segment of dialogue with clarity and alignment of understanding (ensuring the message is received in both directions).
- Conceptual modelling

Effective mentors have a portfolio of models they can draw upon to help the mentee understand the issues they face. These models can be self-generated (i.e. the result of personal experience), drawn from elsewhere (e.g. models of organizational structure, interpersonal behaviours, strategic planning, career planning) or

generated on the spot as an immediate response.

- Commitment to their own continued learning
Effective mentors become role models for self-managed learning. They seize opportunities to experiment and take part in new experiences. They read widely and are reasonably efficient at setting and following personal development plans. They actively seek and use behavioural feedback from others.
- Strong interest in developing others
Effective mentors have an innate interest in achieving through others and in helping others recognize and achieve their potential. This instinctive response is important in establishing and maintaining rapport and in enthusing the mentee, building self-confidence in what they could become.
- Building and maintaining rapport/relationship management
The skills of rapport-building are difficult to define. When asked to describe rapport, in their experience, mentors'/mentees' observations can be distilled into 5 characteristics:
 - Trust: Will they do what they say?
Will they keep confidences?
 - Focus: Are they concentrating on me?
Are they listening without judging?
 - Empathy: Do they have goodwill towards me?
Do they try to understand my viewpoints?
 - Congruence: Do they acknowledge and accept my goals?
 - Empowerment: Is their help aimed at making me stronger?
- Goal clarity
The mentor must be able to help the mentee sort out what s/he wants to achieve, why and how. This is quite hard if you do not have the skills to set and pursue clear goals of your own.

The breadth of the mentor competency framework reflects the complexity of the role. More than any other role in development, mentoring demands high flexibility and attention to the mentee's evolving needs. The most powerful mentoring relationships achieve a balance between getting on well enough together to develop a strong rapport and having sufficient difference of experience to generate high potential for learning. Within the mentoring relationship high functionality typically goes along with mutuality of learning – the mentor gains as much from the exchange as the mentee.

3.4.3. Matching

Like all key processes in the UHasselt pilot project, the matching of mentors and mentees was prepared by the steering committee. Criteria for matching were: no hierarchical relationship and preferably not working in the same department. Due to the

fact that there was a limited number of Faculties/Departments, the latter criterion was difficult to realize for all matches.

The argument against single-department mentoring is the fear of favouritism. Favouritism refers to the mentor's ability to intervene on the mentee's behalf and provide exposure and protection. Another argument for cross-department duos is the assumption that a mentor from a different field of expertise may be better able to give advice on difficult relationships than people who already have their own views on the protagonists. Thirdly, a cross-departmental approach provides a wider perspective and opens up broader and different networks and skills. Although these arguments seem defensible, the good practice in the pilot project at UHasselt gave no evidence. There were extremely good mentoring relations across one specific department. A counter-argument could be that the knowledge and experience of the mentor within the specific academic and scientific field/department is of great importance. And last but not least, protection and sponsorship is something the university (and steering committee/mentors/mentees) wants to avoid. The programme is strongly based on self-reliance and pro-activity of mentees.

The mentees were notified by e-mail with a proposition of their mentor in the programme. They were asked to react if they did not agree with the match. They also got the assurance that all relationships were probationary for the first meeting with their proposed mentor. One of the mentees asked for another mentor because the proposed mentor appeared to be the father of her best friend. As a result of this personal reason the proposed duos changed.

From this pilot can be concluded that good practice appears to be that mentees are guided in their selection, but left to make up their own minds.

3.4.4. Training

Literature, case studies and good practice on mentoring unanimously state that 'training is essential and one of the key processes'.

Together versus apart

Mentors and mentees are often trained together to prepare them for the programme. This is based on the idea that mentor and mentee are involved in a long-term programme (at least one year) of which the joint training is a first explanation on how and on which issues the duos are going to work together. However, at UHasselt the programme took place in a six-month period. The starting point here was that the mentee would shape the relationship in the sense that she had to decide which topics she wanted to work on with the mentor. Because of the specific role of the mentees, they were trained separately from the mentors.

There was also a mentor meeting at the start of the programme. The aim of this meeting was to make mentors aware of the importance of development programmes for

women. The training tackled issues concerning gender-specific characteristics and thresholds. This information was important for creating support for the mentors' engagement towards female academics in order not to get into a polemic concerning positive discrimination.

As the mentors were selected by the steering committee on the basis of their qualities, the mentors were considered to have the skills needed to be good mentors. The evaluations did not question this, but it is important to pay attention to the skills needed to be a good mentor.

3.5. Implementation and continuous support

After the training, the mentees were asked to contact their mentors as soon as possible. Before that, the mentor and mentee had already had the introductory meeting. This conversation was aimed at confirming a mutual commitment to work as a duo and at laying the foundation for 'rapport'.

After the training they had their first meeting in which they were told to discuss the result of the training (their personal development plan) and to sign a contract. This contract underlined the formal aspect of the professional relationship, the development aim of the mentee and the ethical code. After this first assignment, the content of the mentoring relationship was not monitored any further. However, the mentors and mentees did get information about mentoring and conversation techniques.

Mentoring schemes tell us that mentors and mentees do not need micro-managing. The relationship thrives on informality. However, they do need support and back-up. It is important they have someone who they can refer queries to – a scheme coordinator who keeps an eye on each pair. The project coordinator, who could always be contacted for information and questions, asked the mentees to send a summary of the meetings. In practice, the mentees seemed to forget to send in summaries of the conversations with their mentor. An e-mail from the coordinator to remind them was however also an opportunity to keep in touch with the mentees and to get spontaneous reactions about the mentoring programme.

Networking

During the training, the mentees already mentioned they very much valued the networking part and they asked for opportunities to meet again to share experiences. On the other hand, the mentoring relationship is all about personal reflection and is strictly confidential. So it was a challenge to meet again with mentors and mentees, without talking about the content of the personal meetings. A meeting was planned in the scope of the formal conclusion of the mentoring scheme. (see CASE STUDY)

3.6. Measurement and review

The measurement matrix by David Clutterbuck

One of the paradoxes of formal mentoring is that the essence of the relationships is its informality – the chance to reflect in private on a wide range of issues that will help the mentee cope with and learn from issues she encounters, putting aside any hierarchy or status differences that might operate outside the relationship. So the idea of measurement and review is, on the face of it, to some extent at odds with the need to retain a high degree of informality and ad hoc responsiveness. In practice, a certain amount of measurement provides the foundation for the informal relationship to grow in the healthiest of ways. It allows:

- scheme coordinators to recognize where additional support is needed and to improve the scheme;
- mentors and mentees to work together to build the relationship and to get a better idea of what they (can) contribute to the dialogues.

When attempts to measure mentoring become unacceptable, they involve:

- an attempt to assess and report upon the mentee's performance to a third party;
- a link between the mentor's opinion and a direct reward for the mentee (e.g. promotion, diploma);
- disclosure of the content of their meetings.

Mentoring measurements fall into four categories, illustrated in Clutterbuck's matrix below.

1. Relationship processes
2. Programme processes
3. Relationship outcomes
4. Programme outcomes

At the start and middle of the pilot programme at UHasselt, no measurement instrument was used. The programme and relationship between mentor and mentee was reviewed by means of e-mail contact with the project coordinator and registration of the meetings. The period between the first meeting, the training sessions and the mentor meetings was short. The mentoring relationship should have covered six months, but in practice there was only time to have mentor meetings for five months due to the fact that, by the time the duos had a sufficient mentoring relationship to have meetings, it was already mid February. Given the limited time frame, a mid-term evaluation was not considered useful.

At the end of the formal programme at UHasselt, the programme was evaluated by means of a questionnaire for mentors and mentees (see CASE STUDY).

Table 30: The measurement matrix by David Clutterbuck

	Start	Middle	End
Relationship processes	Have they met? Have they established trust?	Frequency of meetings? Who is managing the relationship? Who is preparing for meetings? Level of rapport?	Has the relationship come to a formal conclusion? Are both parties happy?
Relationship outcomes	Was the selection appropriate for mentor and mentee?	Have they set clear (learning) goals? Do both sides have clear expectations?	Has the mentee achieved the desired improvement in skills, confidence, and clarity of career path? Did the mentor learn something from the relationship?
Programme processes	What are the major concerns of participants? Were the key processes appropriate? (selection, matching, training)	Difficulties encountered (e.g. time pressure, skills gaps, cancelled meetings). Do the mentors/mentees feel supported?	Are mentors willing to continue with a new mentee?
Programme outcomes	Do all mentees have a mentor? Have they met?	Frequency of meetings.	Retention. Measured increase in competence.

3.7. Dissemination: testing at other universities

The step-by-step plan included a second mentoring programme at another Flemish university in order to test the usability of the programme in other academic environments and to improve the instrument.

In October 2006, the dissemination of the mentoring project was announced to the partners of the VLIR-EQUAL project. At UHasselt, the second pilot programme was discussed as well. What was the result?

3.7.1. University of Hasselt

In the first days of October, the potential mentees were again contacted with a personal letter of the Vice-Chancellor. As nobody responded, the project coordinator decided not to take action immediately.

How can the lack of responses be explained?

- The number of candidates at UHasselt who met the criteria was too small (see ear-

- lier phase: fourteen candidates).
- The second invitation letter was sent quickly after the first call. The situation of the target group had not or only slightly changed.
 - The criteria for the candidates had not changed.
 - Just before the candidates received the invitation, the University of Antwerp had sent an invitation to participate in a course on scientific communication. Afterwards, the candidates appeared to have been overcharged, which happened at the expense of the mentoring programme.

3.7.2. University of Antwerp (UA)

The timing of the UA project and the UHasselt project was different. At the UA, the project team members worked on their module fulltime in the first project period, as a result of which the autumn of 2006 was a very busy period for their own course on scientific communication.

At the end of 2006, both the project coordinator and the project promoter had left the organization. At the start of 2007, a substitute promoter was contacted and a manual for the mentor project at the UA was set up with the support of UHasselt and within the VLIR-EQUAL project. The manual was discussed with a working group of female professors of the UA, but as a result of the lack of engagement (people and resources) from the departments and the central administration, the project did not get a follow-up.

3.7.3. University of Brussels (VUB)

On the basis of the exchange of Equality Guide courses within VLIR's Working Group on Equal Opportunities, the VUB also showed interest in the mentoring project. The promoter, Prof. De Metsenaere, chose to get the project out of its marginal existence and into the management of the university. In February of 2007, an estimate of real costs was made but this turned out to be impossible within the project period of VLIR-EQUAL.

3.7.4. University of Ghent (UGent)

The UGent module was organized later than at the other universities. This, and the regional differences between Ghent and Hasselt, explains that no concrete commitments were made.

3.7.5. Catholic University of Leuven (K.U.Leuven)

The K.U.Leuven has a tradition of career development for female academics (see 1.2.2 Sofia: Women in Academic Institutions) and had the dynamics needed to construct the project. The Rectorial Advisor for Gender and Diversity, Prof. dr. Sabine Van Huffel, and the (project) assistants of the Diversity Policy Office acted as the driving forces. Due to circumstances (the long-term absence of assistants), the project started later than planned.

The manual, sample forms and supporting documents (the instrument) were provided by the UHasselt. The process coaching was provided by K.U.Leuven employees, in cooperation (back-up) with UHasselt. Mentoring can not be standardized – the methodology has to be tailored to each specific context.

Below is a description of the project at the K.U.Leuven, paying particular attention to the specific accents and differences compared to the pilot project at UHasselt.

3.7.5.1. *Orientation and support*

As a result of the organization of Women in Academics and the projects of the Diversity Policy Office, the project already had support. The Rectorial Advisor for Gender and Diversity promoted the mentor project in all departments.

That meant a separate steering committee for mentoring was not needed at the K.U.Leuven, as opposed to the UHasselt for example. The subject was discussed within the existing structures, among which the Advisory Board for Gender of the K.U.Leuven, and the Study Group Woman and University.

3.7.5.2. *Step-by-step plan*

The step-by-step plan was used as a manual. In Leuven the mentoring programme was part of the EG project, which shortened the project period (March-June 2007), because there had to be time left for reporting on the project.

The test phase at the K.U.Leuven was not a project in itself, but the preparation for the future use of mentoring as an integrated methodology at the university. That is why two new training meetings were planned: one in September 2007 and one in December 2007.

3.7.5.3. *Target group, selection, matching and training*

Target group

The criteria for a mentee in Leuven was defined on a higher academic level than at the UHasselt; only PhD's and young women who were recently employed as a senior lecturer/researcher were invited to participate. PhD-students could not apply.

Similarly, the criteria for mentors were also narrower than at UHasselt; only female professors could be a mentor. On the other hand, no minimum experience was requested (versus a minimum of fifteen years at UHasselt).

Selection

The mentees who participated in the SOFIA-meetings (see 1.2.2 Sofia: Women in academic institutions) and the mentees who followed a training, organized by JIVE in November 2006 (see 4.2.2.1) were invited by e-mail. There was a total of eight candidates. Four mentees responded positively and sent their CV's and motivations to the project coordinator.

The mentors were recruited via e-mail as well, beginning with the professors who already showed interest by participating in the Jive training.

Matching

First, the mentors were selected. The mentees were given the names of the four mentors. In a confidential e-mail, the mentees could write down which mentor they would prefer (multiple possibilities). The coordinator used these lists to propose a match, based on the condition of cross-departmental duos.

Training

Three mentors and two mentees took the Jive course on mentoring (see 4.2.2.1), making additional training redundant. The mentor who did not follow the course received the 'Jive Mentoring Training Manual'. The mentees got half a day of training at UHasselt.

3.7.5.4. Implementation and continued support

After the training, the mentees followed the pattern:

- first meeting between mentor and mentee and confirmation of the match;
- defining action plan and signing contract during the first meeting;
- meetings at the initiative of the mentee;
- monthly meetings.

The mentees notified the external coordinator at UHasselt when they had meetings. From the follow-up, it appeared one of the mentees did not take the initiative for meeting her mentor, even after recurrent e-mails from the coordinator. In the end, this mentee withdrew from the project due to a lack of time.

3.7.5.5. Measurement and review

The mentors and mentees completed the questionnaire that was also used for the evaluation of the UHasselt programme.

4. Instrument and case study

4.1. Instrument: mentoring programme

It is impossible to ‘steer’ the entire mentoring project. It is a learning and development process between two individuals of which neither an organization nor a coordinator can determine the course. However, a formal mentorship needs guidance. That is why the organization offers a mentoring context. The more convincing the organization, the more powerful the mentoring relationship.

A mentoring project implies careful preparation and choices:

- What do we want to achieve?
- With or without mentoring?
- Which kind of mentoring?
- For whom?
- Defining key processes.
- Which kind of support and follow-up do we need?
- How can we evaluate and adjust the mentoring relationship?

The mentoring module is part of the larger Equality Guide Project. That meant the parameters were largely determined (project period, strategic objectives, target group). When people engage in a mentoring relationship without a well-defined project context, those parameters are not fixed. The consequences are both positive and negative. The schedule was limited in time and all participants agreed there was not enough time for the mentoring sessions themselves.

On the other hand, the relatively short preparation time within the project frame was also an advantage as there was no need to negotiate crucial matters (objectives, target, group, etc).

4.1.1. Instrument part I: checklists

For the instrument: see Tool Annex.

As the decision to introduce mentoring in an organization is not necessarily project-related, five different checklists were elaborated, which together constitute a manual for starting a mentoring programme. The checklist answers five fundamental questions. However, a mentoring instrument can never provide the one and only correct answer to these questions. Typically, mentoring within an organization cannot be dissociated from the organization and its strategy. The checklists contain the following questions to provide a pattern for managing the start-up of a mentoring programme:

1. Should we start a mentoring programme or not? Is this method suited for our purpose?
2. What is our step-by-step plan? It contains the vision and values as well as the strate-

gic and operational targets, agreements to be made, actions to be taken and a specific time frame.

3. What is our target group, how are people selected and matched and how do we organize the training?
4. How is mentoring embedded in the organization's culture? Who is the point of contact? How to organize internal consultation? How are people appointed?
5. How to organize the evaluation and adjustments?

These questions are chronologically related to the five key processes in a mentoring programme:

1. orientation and basis;
2. step-by-step plan;
3. target group, selection, matching and training;
4. implementation and follow-up;
5. evaluation and adjustments.

4.1.2. Instrument part II: content records

For the instrument: see Tool Annex.

The second part of the mentoring instrument consists of content records conveniently supplying the information the mentor and mentee need to conclude the mentoring programme successfully. The form chosen is compact and focuses on the essence as the people involved specifically asked to take into account the mentor's and mentee's busy schedules. These are the topics covered in the different content records:

1. Mentoring as a development instrument within the university

- Contents:* The definition chosen.
The benefits mentoring can provide for the organization.
The profile and selection criteria for mentor and mentee.
The engagement asked from the mentor and mentee, both in terms of time investment and of shared vision and values.
- For whom:* The potential group of mentors and mentees and the large group of people who are involved or interested.
- Use:* For the recruitment of mentors and mentees. For keeping all the people involved or interested and wanting more practical information up-to-date. These can be the superior or promoter of the mentee, the HR department, the people responsible for training, commissions, etc.

2. Overview of the mentoring path

- Contents:* Contains the phases and points of interest of the detailed mentoring project. It provides the people involved with a clear view of what the project entails. It determines the formal steps and contains a number of content

guidelines with respect to the roles of mentor and mentee.

For whom: Potential mentors and mentees.

Use: When recruiting mentors and mentees, to give them more information about the project and to assist them in deciding whether or not they want to participate.

3. First acquaintance

Contents: Manual for the first meeting between mentor and mentee.

For whom: The selected mentors and mentees who received a 'match proposition'.

Use: Before starting the cooperation, mentor and mentee have a first meeting to see whether they 'click' and what their expectations are. This way, the mentee can endorse the choice of mentor.

4. Mentor training

Contents: Starting points for discussion in a mentor training. Information about women and careers, the academic organizational culture and practical tips for mentors to support their mentees.

For whom: Mentors.

Use: To be discussed in a meeting with the mentors at the start of the project. Mentors reflect about the skills needed for a successful academic career, emphasizing the gender aspect.

5. My development plan

Contents: Training pack for mentees, consisting of:

- an overview of the content and the subsequent steps of the training course;
- my motives: exercises to discover the underlying motives and values. In this first exercise, the value cards and spheres of life cards are used. For training purposes, these are printed on separate cards to allow working with a 'book of cards';
- my situation: exercise to list the strong points and weaknesses of the current situation. The spheres of life cards book is used again for this exercise;
- my objectives: the mentee formulates clear objectives and learning points.

For whom: Mentees.

Use: Exercises for mentees to prepare for the meetings with their mentors. It offers practical materials to elaborate on in the mentoring talks. The exercises can be done individually or in a group under the supervision of a coach. This allows people to share their ideas, which stimulates the creation of networks.

6. A contract

Contents: Formal agreement between mentor and mentee with respect to the objective, values and practical agreements.

For whom: Mentor and mentee.

Use: This contract is discussed and signed during the first meeting. Both partners keep a copy.

7. A mentoring talk

Contents: Information about mentoring as a conversation technique. The meaning and preconditions are explained, as well as the ‘phasing’ aspect, which is typical for target-oriented communication.

For whom: Mentor and mentee.

Use: To be supplied as background information.

8. The art of asking questions

Contents: Mentoring is based on the coaching skill of asking questions to create new insights.

For whom: Especially for the mentor, who acts as a coach for the mentee.

Use: To be supplied as background information for mentor and mentee.

9. Evaluation by mentors – Evaluation by mentees

Contents: Questionnaires for evaluating the mentoring path.

For whom: For the coordinator of a mentoring programme.

Use: This is an example questionnaire that is easy to complete and easy to process.

4.2. Casestudy and evaluation

4.2.1. Mentoring programme at the UHasselt

4.2.1.1. Training

In the beginning of the pilot project at UHasselt, both mentors and mentees received half a day of (separate) training.

The mentor training took place on February 1, 2006. The training course had been contracted out to a female consultant/trainer, Hedwige Nuyens. She provided management advice from a gender perspective and is the author of ‘*Waarom vrouwen geen*

*baas worden*²⁵⁷. This meeting was intended to develop a common view on the importance of mentoring projects for young women at the university, rather than as a training course.

The training of the mentees took place on February, 8. The mentoring project focused on personal professional development and academic careers. In a half-day workshop, the mentees worked out their own development plan. The mentee determined which way she wanted to go and how the mentor could help her with that.

The training course is conceived as a fundamental learning process in which core reflections result in action points and behaviour changes.

Motives and ideals → My current context → Concrete aims → Contract with mentor

Besides working on the individual development and action plan there was also room for exchanging experiences. The mentees said to value the construction of a network of mentees very highly.

4.2.1.2. *Implementation and conclusion*

Three out of four duos had their first mentoring meeting before March 1. One duo started later (March 30) due to being abroad. All duos met once a month at Campus for a two-hour meeting during office hours. One duo organized the meetings during lunch.

At the end of the project (end of June 2006), two duos had had five registered meetings, one duo four meetings and one duo three meetings. Three out of four mentees said they planned to continue the mentoring meetings.

On June 26 of 2006, the mentees and mentors met with the project coordinator and the steering committee led by Dirk Brants, an external expert on team and organizational development, group dynamics and experience-based learning. The idea of the meeting was to evaluate the cooperation by conducting action-oriented role plays and to reflect on them afterwards. Another objective of the meeting was the formal conclusion of the mentoring scheme. The afternoon session not only focused on the intellectual part of mentoring but on the relationship in a mentoring programme as well. Nevertheless, the later evaluation showed that there was insufficient clarity on the transfer of the role plays to the content and aim of mentoring.

4.2.1.3. *Evaluation of the programme*

The questionnaire deals with the entire process of the mentoring scheme. For mentors and mentees the questions are largely the same, except with respect to their different roles. The written questionnaire is anonymous, easy to complete and not time-consuming.

²⁵⁷ Nuyens, Hedwige (2005). *Waarom vrouwen geen baas worden*. Leuven: Davidsfonds.

ing. All mentors and mentees reacted quickly to the request to fill in the questionnaire. To measure the appreciations in terms of satisfaction, most questions were two-fold: the importance in terms of success and their degree of satisfaction for this aspect.

In the following the results of the evaluation:

4.2.1.3.1. Orientation and support

All mentors and mentees agreed it is important to very important to have an internal steering committee that initiates and follows the project. Three out of four mentors and three out of four mentees were satisfied to very satisfied with the UHasselt steering committee. One mentor and one mentee took a neutral opinion on the matter (not satisfied nor dissatisfied).

4.2.1.3.2. Step-by-step plan

All mentors considered it important or very important to be informed beforehand about the objectives and expectations of the mentoring programme. They were equally satisfied with the documents they received. The four mentees argued that it is very important to be informed beforehand about the aim and method. Three mentees were satisfied with the provided material, one mentee was very satisfied.

The formal confirmation of the mentoring relationship by means of a contract was of no importance to the mentors and mentees. All four mentors took a neutral stance, three mentees considered this unimportant. Only one mentee claimed to consider the contract important. This confirmed what is said in literature, namely that the success of mentoring depends on the informal qualities and competences.

4.2.1.3.3. Target group

The mentees considered clarity about the selection criteria for the target group as important. According to them, they were clear in the UHasselt project; they were satisfied on this item.

Selection

The mentors unanimously argued that it is important to very important that they were contacted in person with the question if they were willing to become a mentor. They were satisfied with the UHasselt approach of having the Vice-Chancellor ask them. The mentees considered the personal invitation to participate important to very important as well. They were equally satisfied with the personal letter they received.

One of the mentees suggested including the experience of the participants in future projects. She suggested using her positive experience to convince her colleagues to participate.

Matching

Two mentees preferred to have a say in the choice of the mentor. One mentee took a

neutral stance and one thought it was unimportant. Three out of four mentees were satisfied to very satisfied with the possibility to accept or reject a proposed mentor, one mentee took a neutral stance.

In the UHasselt project the committee proposed a match; the lack of having a say on this matter may have influenced the fact that not all mentees identified this as being important. At the same time, this was not considered problematic either.

Both mentees and mentors considered it important to have an introductory meeting between mentee and mentor. They all were satisfied to very satisfied with this first meeting. All mentors and mentees said they found it very important that there was no hierarchical relation between the mentor and mentee.

All mentees considered it to be important that their mentor knew the organization very well. Two of them thought it was very important that their mentor was a role model for them; the two others took a neutral stance. Both mentors and mentees said it is very important for the duos to get along well.

This 'rapport' is closely linked to the quality of communication, so all four mentors and mentees considered 'open communication' as very important in a successful mentoring relationship.

Training

All mentors considered it important to very important to have a mentor training and they were equally satisfied with the half-day training by Hedwige Nuyens.

All of the mentees considered it to be very important that there was training for the mentees and they were very satisfied with the training they received. The mentee training focused on 'personal development' and a proactive attitude towards the mentor.

The four mentors thought it was important to very important that the mentee formulated clear aims the duo could work with. Two of them thought it was also very important that the mentee took the initiative in the relationship. The other two mentors took a neutral stance on this matter. Three mentors said it is very important to prepare the meeting, one took a neutral stance. Three out of four mentees considered it to be very important that a mentee has clear objectives. One of them did not think it is that important.

4.2.1.3.4. Follow up, networking and conclusion

Mentors considered it to be important to very important that there was a person who monitored the process and coordinated the project. They were equally satisfied with the way the project coordinator organized all of that. The mentees agreed.

Both mentors and mentees said it is important to very important to have documents and forms to support the programme. They were equally satisfied with the way this was organized in the pilot project.

Three out of four mentors considered it very important to have a clear and formal project period, one took a neutral stance. The latter also took a neutral stance towards the period of time in which the pilot project took place. Two other mentors were very satisfied, one was satisfied.

Two of the mentees took a neutral stance on whether the formal duration of the project has to be defined before the project starts. The two other mentees considered it important to very important. Three mentees were satisfied with the duration of the programme, one mentee thought it was too short.

One mentor considered it to be important to have a network of all participants, but took a neutral stance in evaluating the network activity as led by Dirk Brants. The other three mentors took a neutral stance concerning networking in this group. One mentor was dissatisfied with the meeting of Dirk Brants, one took a neutral stance, and one was satisfied. The mentees' opinions were divided as well. Two of them said networking is important in a mentoring programme, for one of them, it is very important and one mentee took a neutral stance. Two of them were satisfied with the network activity while the two others took a neutral stance. Three of the mentees argued that they “*missed reflection, interpretation and background about the role play approach*”.

4.2.1.3.5. Outcomes

Programme outcomes

All mentors and mentees were satisfied to very satisfied with the number of meetings with their mentoring partner. The four mentors and two of the mentees were very satisfied with the duration of the meetings. One mentee was satisfied and one mentee took a neutral stance.

Two of the mentors prepared the meetings; all mentees did this. All mentors were satisfied or very satisfied with the time investment needed for this project. Three out of four mentees were satisfied or very satisfied with the time investment for this project. One did not answer the question.

Relationship outcomes

Both mentors and mentees were very satisfied with the content of their mentoring talks. All mentors said they were “*happy with the conversations*” and all mentees said every meeting resulted in “*new insights*”.

Three out of four duos planned to continue meeting each other after the formal project period. Two mentors declared they wanted to be a mentor again next year. One would think about it and one did not want to be a mentor anymore. One mentee planned on finding a mentor at her own initiative in the future, the other three mentees responded they would not.

Performance and appreciation of mentoring at the university

The four mentors argued that they “*learned something about and for themselves*”.

Three out of four mentees said their “*career perspective*” became clearer; one mentee said this was not the case for her.

The table below presents the average value judgments of the mentor programme at UHasselt. The scale was 1 (low) to 5 (high).

Table 31: Average value judgments of the mentor programme at UHasselt

Mentoring as	Mentors	Mentees
An instrument for career support for young scientists	5	4,75
An equal opportunities instrument: career support for young women	4	3,25
A tool for networking within the university	3,25	4
A tool for promoting the internal communication and relationships	3,50	4

4.2.2. Mentoring programme at the K.U.Leuven

4.2.2.1. Training

Training sessions provided by Jive Mentoring

At a meeting with the transnational partners of the VLIR-EQUAL Project (Spain, UK and the Netherlands)²⁵⁸ in Bradford (May 2006) there was an inspiring session on ‘mentoring for academics’. The meeting was organized by the experts of Jive.

Aims of Jive²⁵⁹:

To promote the use of mentoring to support, inspire and keep women in their study/work in Science, Engineering, Construction and Technology environment (SECT) or to help them return to their SECT careers after a break.

The Jive Legacy:

- high quality mentoring training materials;
- experience in running mentoring programmes since 2002;
- nationwide training of mentoring coordinators;
- model for corporate mentoring;
- the good practice guide and mentoring tool box.

The Bradford method and the pilot programme in Flanders appeared to overlap. In order to benefit from the Jive experiences, we invited them to give training sessions in Belgium. On November 7, 2006, Rachel Tobbell (Mentoring Strategy Manager) and Jacki Mason (National Mentoring Coordinator) came to Belgium and provided two

²⁵⁸ Mentoring spectrum by Jive, UK Resource Centre for Women in science, engineering and technology.

²⁵⁹ Mason, J. & MacInnes, L., *Mentoring at the UKRC & Jive*, presentation at the transnational meeting 29th June 2006, Bradford.

training sessions at the UHasselt.

The first of them was a ‘Train-The-Trainer’ session. Topics were:

- What is mentoring?
- How to implement a mentoring programme?
- Who is the programme for?
- Considerations.
- Key processes.
- Content of training.

The group consisted of twelve participants, nine of whom were programme coordinators from four participating Flemish universities (K.U.Leuven, UAntwerpen, VUBrussel en UHasselt). The three others were Dutch partners. The training was interactive and informative to all participants.

The second training was a ‘Mentoring Training’. It was given according to the model developed and used by Jive to train mentors and mentees at the same time. Apart from the programme coordinators, participants were potential mentors (3) and mentees (8) from the above-mentioned Flemish universities and Dutch partners (3). It was a positive and useful training session with mutual learning and exchange of experience between all partners involved.

The training session on mentoring was supported by a practical ‘*Mentoring Training Manual*’. This manual contains practical information and exercises on how to start a mentoring programme in any organization. It was not only used at the training of November 7 but was used to inform and introduce potential mentors at the K.U.Leuven, who started mentoring in the beginning of 2007. (see 3.7.5.3)

As three mentors and two mentees of the K.U.Leuven programme took the Jive course on mentoring, no additional mentor training was needed. The mentees received half a day of training at the UHasselt on March 21, 2007.

4.2.2.2. Implementation and conclusion

Two of the three duos had met by the time the mentee training took place. At the end of the formal project (end of June), one duo had met five times, one had met four times and one had had three meetings.

On July 6, 2007, a lunch meeting was organized for the mentors, mentees and project coordinators to get to know each other in an informal setting, to exchange experiences and to officially end the programme.

4.2.2.3. Evaluation of the programme

The mentors and mentees filled in the questionnaires that were also used for the evaluation of the UHasselt project. As mentioned before, the questions are two-folded; first, the importance in function of the success is measured, secondly, the satisfaction.

In the following the results.

4.2.2.3.1. Orientation and support

Two out of three mentors said it is important to have an internal steering committee that monitors the project; they said to have been satisfied with the committee. One mentor thought it was unimportant and took a neutral stance about satisfaction. The third mentor was satisfied.

4.2.2.3.2. Step-by-step plan

All mentors considered it important to very important to have written information on the project beforehand. Two of them were satisfied with the information they got, one took a neutral stance. The three mentees also thought it was very important to get sufficient information. They were all very satisfied with this.

All mentors took a neutral stance in confirming/formalizing the relationship by means of a contract. One mentee shared this opinion; another mentee said it to be unimportant. One mentee did think it was important to have a contract.

4.2.2.3.3. Target Group, selection, matching, training

All mentees thought it was important that the selection criteria were clear and they were all satisfied.

Selection

All mentors thought it was important to be contacted personally with the question of becoming a mentor. Two of them were satisfied with the way this was done, another mentor took a neutral stance. The mentees also said to value the personal approach. They were very satisfied with the e-mail they received.

Matching

Two mentees argued that it was very important to have a say in the matching of mentor and mentee. One took a neutral stance. As for their satisfaction level: one was very satisfied, one was satisfied and one was not satisfied. At the K.U.Leuven, the mentees could hand in a list of preferred mentors on the basis of which the coordinator decided the matches. It is possible that the degree to which the match followed the mentee's preference determined the satisfaction. However, this is just an assumption, because it was not part of the research.

The matching question produced some spontaneous reactions. One mentee suggested asking which qualities the mentee is looking for in her mentor (for example career policy, developing a research group, combination work-family). On the basis of these qualities a better match can be made. All mentees and one mentor thought the pool of mentors was too small. Two mentees mentioned regretting the fact there were no male mentors. Two mentors mentioned this as well.

Mentors unanimously agreed upon the importance of an introductory meeting between mentor and mentee. They were satisfied or very satisfied with this. Two mentees mentioned it to be important as well and they were satisfied with their introductory talks. One mentee said this is unimportant, but she was satisfied with her talk. She did make an additional remark saying that it is “*a bit a waste of time and it is better to get to the point immediately*”.

Two of the three mentors thought it was very important to have no hierarchical relation between mentor and mentee, one mentor took a neutral stance. All mentees said it to be important or very important not to have such a relationship with their mentor. With respect to a cross-departmental match, one mentee notified that it is sometimes difficult to give advice from a different field of expertise because the approach is “*very different*”. A mentor also mentioned this and suggested to form duos within the own faculty.

It was very important for all mentees that the mentor knew the organization and acted as a role model. Both mentors and mentees thought that it was very important for the mentor and mentee to ‘click’ and that there should be an open communication.

Training

All mentors thought it was important to very important that the mentors attended a training course. Two of them attended the Jive training and were very happy they did. Mentees also agreed that training is important to very important. One of them was very satisfied; the two others took a neutral stance. Of the latter, one remarked that you do not only have to know ‘what’ you want to discuss with your mentor but also ‘how’ to do so. She asked for tips to get the mentor to help her to the maximum.

The mentors thought it was important or very important that the mentee had clear goals about what she wanted to work on, that the mentee took the initiative in the relationship and prepared the meetings. The mentees also said that it is important that the relationship is guided by the aims of the mentee.

4.2.2.3.4. Follow up, networking and closing

One mentor said it is important that a process supervisor follows the project and was satisfied by the way this worked in the project. Two other mentors took a neutral stance both on the presence of such a supervisor and on the degree of satisfaction. Two mentees thought it was important to have such a process supervisor and were satisfied; one mentee took a neutral stance. The variety of the answers might be related to the fact that there was an internal and an external coordinator. It could be that there was insufficient clarity about the roles of both coordinators.

All mentors thought it was important to have supporting forms and documents. Two of them were satisfied, one took a neutral stance. Two mentees argued that supporting forms are important and one of them was satisfied, the other took a neutral stance. The third mentee thought this was unimportant and took a neutral stance.

Two mentors said it is important that the duration of the project is clear beforehand

and were satisfied with the formal project period. One mentor took a neutral stance and she was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

One mentee took a neutral stance on the matter of duration, but she was not satisfied with the period. She argued that the project period was *“too short to get to the practical implementation”*. The other two mentees thought it was important to have a fixed period of time but were dissatisfied with the duration chosen. The remark was the same: *“I would rather have a longer period of time, for example nine months or a year, to spread the time and to anticipate to new developments and opportunities that arise”*.

All mentors thought it was important to have networking events and were satisfied with the dinner. One of them made the remark that she would *“rather have had a formal final meeting in which each mentee gives a summary of the realizations and a plan for the future”*. Another mentor suggested that *“networking among mentors is important for good practices, one or two meetings per year on a voluntary basis”*.

The mentees also thought a network meeting with all participants was important. Two of them filled out the questionnaire before the dinner. The other mentee said to be satisfied with the dinner, but mentioned *“it was pleasant but I maybe expected more of it with respect to the content”*.

4.2.2.3.5. Outcomes

Programme outcomes

Both mentors and mentees were satisfied or very satisfied with the number of meetings. The same goes for the length of the meetings. None of the mentors prepared the meetings. The mentees did prepare them.

All mentors were satisfied or very satisfied with regard to the time invested in the project. Two mentees were very satisfied with regard to the time investment/return, one mentee took a neutral stance.

Relationship outcomes

Both mentors and mentees were satisfied to very satisfied with the content of the meetings. All mentors mentioned they got satisfaction out of the meetings. Only one out of three mentees said that all of the meetings provided her with *“new insights”*.

Two mentors and two mentees made clear they wanted to continue the mentoring meetings after the project period. Three mentors were willing to be a mentor again for a different mentee. None of the mentees intended to search for a mentor at her own initiative.

Performance and appreciation of mentoring at the university

One mentor had learnt something about herself/for herself. The two other mentors answered negatively. One mentee mentioned she had a better idea about her career perspective after the project. Two other mentees said that their career perspectives did

not become clearer.

What is the average value judgment of the mentor programme on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high):

Table 32: Average value judgments of the mentor programme at K.U.Leuven

Mentoring as	Mentors	Mentees
An instrument for career support for young scientists	5	4,70
An equal opportunities instrument: career support for young women	4,30	4,30
A tool for networking within the university	4,70	3,70
A tool for promoting the internal communication and relationships	4,30	3,70

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The assessment of ‘mentoring as a means for supporting careers within the university’ is positive. Even though the number of experiences is limited, both at UHasselt and K.U.Leuven the reactions were positive. The other aims of mentoring (gender, networking and internal communication) were also recognized as positive. In comparison to the mentees at UHasselt, the mentees at the K.U.Leuven however -on the average- think the effect on networking and internal communication is lower.

As a result of the small numbers of people included in the projects and the short project periods, it is impossible to draw conclusions. The focus of this course was not *research* on the effects of mentoring, but rather the *development of a mentoring scheme that fits the academic organization*. With regard to the latter, both mentors and mentees are convinced of the positive possibilities of mentoring:

“In my view, mentoring is the most efficient instrument (low costs, limited time investment and leverage effect) to help young promising female scientists to move to an academic position or top position.” (mentor)

“I strongly believe in the value of mentoring.” (mentee)

“In my opinion, mentoring can be a very powerful instrument to help promising people to better develop themselves and to grow more quickly.” (mentee)

Most of the knowledge²⁶⁰ about the positive effects of mentoring result from post-hoc surveys, which are not specifically geared to measure the effects of a specific mentoring programme, but obtained by surveying a large sample of employees by asking them about their career paths and whether they have had mentoring or not, and comparing the mentored with the non-mentored group. So, the overall conclusion is a positive

²⁶⁰ Nielandt, Bie & Olijve, A. (2007). ‘Mentoren helpen vrouwen hogerop’. In: *Delta*, maart 2007, p. 38-41.

fame of mentoring as a development and career supporting tool. But not all mentoring relationships are equally effective and there is a variety of mentoring programmes and a variety of goals. So what is considered to be effective depends on the goals set.

The goal of the mentoring course in this project has been to develop a mentoring instrument within the university. The questions at the start have been: does it work in an academic setting? What are the critical keys to success, conditions and limits?

The focus of this mentoring course was not on research, but on the effectiveness of the methodology. There were no practices concerning formal one-on-one mentoring in a Flemish university which we could study. An 'orientation to mentoring and creating support' was yet to be created.

This happened by developing a mentoring programme that was continuously being applied and evaluated in two pilot programmes: one at UHasselt and one at the K.U.Leuven. The experiences from the pilots have been relatively positive.

Positive, because:

- mentoring can be implemented into a university in a relatively short period of time at relatively low costs;
- the people involved highly valued mentoring as an instrument for career support for young scientists.

Relatively, because:

- the number of people involved in these pilot programmes was small and the formal project period was short;
- mentoring is not something that happens between two people *just like that*, on the contrary, successful mentoring needs fine-tuning between the different actors (mentors, mentees and coordinators) and the organization.

5.1. Transferability to other organizations and settings

Clarity about the purpose of the programme (why is it being done, what is expected of the participants, what are the respective roles and responsibilities of mentor and mentee and what are the desired outcomes) is the framework within which successful mentoring relationships can grow. By means of concepts, descriptive cases and checklists we offer a manual to adjust this fine-tuning to the organization. This was primarily developed within and tailor-made to a university environment but is aimed at providing basic principles that can be applied to all kinds of organizations. Hopefully, there will be a possibility of verifying this general applicability. However, within the university this VLIR-EQUAL project is just a first step, which could be a chance to further knowledge development and longitudinal study to measure the impact of mentoring on the distant goal: career support for target groups.

5.2. Mentoring at universities: supporting the happy few?

The aim of mentoring within this VLIR-EQUAL project is to support women to overcome institutional and attitudinal barriers to academic advancement. But is this realistic as a goal? Most of them (men and women) consider an academic career as a short-term and fixed-term perspective: ‘up or out’.

Offering mentoring as the one and only instrument to have a career in those conditions is not right. Research on the relatively low response to the pilot project at UHasselt indicates that the majority of the target group know their chances of a long-term career are limited and do not aspire to a long-term academic career. However, as mobility is not self-evident or structurally embedded in the organization, mentoring is important to those who do have the ambition and/or skills. That is why both in Hasselt and in Leuven various mentors and mentees asked to “*offer mentoring to all scientists, male and female, so they can explore their possibilities*”. The problem of the lack of career perspectives is felt to surpass the gender gap.

It is typical of universities to have non-standard career paths. Careers are built individually in diverse contexts (department and field). As a result, the need to have a mentor who is focused on long-term development, broader and more integrated learning and personal wisdom conflicts with the need for short-term, immediately applicable skills. This continuum is recognizable in both pilots: on the one hand there is the American sponsorship model of ‘sharing knowledge’ and ‘giving advice’ and on the other, there is the so-called European development model which focuses on ‘acquiring knowledge’ and ‘building the mentee’s insight and self-resourcefulness’. The question of practical advice was primarily raised by mentees who recently moved up the academic ladder (more senior than newly qualified PhD holders). To the extent that their mentor could give them advice and information – in most cases the mentor was a (non-hierarchical) senior from their own field or department – they were satisfied with the programme. Furthermore, some mentees asked their mentor to help open up new horizons towards learning opportunities and a wide variety of career-enhancing experiences. This proves that it is crucial to prioritize the goals and to prepare the recruitment, selection and matching profoundly. This also emphasizes the need to study the short- and long-term effects of different kinds of mentoring within the academic world.

General conclusion

The goal of this Equality Guide is to offer gender-neutral HR instruments for introducing equal opportunities in the personnel and career management of universities. To this end, each of the partner universities in the project (VUB, UGent, K.U.Leuven, UA, UHasselt) chose a different HR-topic to work on, depending on their specific interests, experience and expertise. The aim of the authors is to get these different modules incorporated in the policies and management systems of universities and other organizations, via the method of gender mainstreaming.

In the scope of each module, a literature study and case study at the own university (and others) were carried out. A report of the whole process of setting up the modules at the universities, developing the instruments and carrying out the case studies and evaluations can be found in each chapter.

In the first chapter, the VUB reported on the development of two surveys that measure how students on the one hand and personnel (AP and ATP) on the other hand perceive their working climate and how they think about equal opportunities/diversity and related initiatives and services. Results of the case studies at the VUB, at the European University College Brussels EHSAL and at the universities of two foreign partners, were also discussed. The case studies proved that the surveys are tools that take into account the different aspects of diversity in an organization and that they provide an idea of the level of equal opportunities and diversity the organization has reached. They also help raise awareness since they urge personnel and students to think about issues they may never have thought about before.

The second chapter of the UGent on the whole academic career (inflow-promotion-outflow) consisted of four different parts: a part on inflow in which the wishes and expectations of UGent last-year students with regards to an academic career, and the gender differences on these topics, were explored; a part on inflow/through-flow, with the development of a vacancies checklist, and the screening of UGent vacancies; a part on through-flow ('promotion of women') in which a survey was developed for all staff members on the various aspects of a (scientific) career and potential gender problems at the university; and part four on outflow with the report on in-depth exit interviews carried out with former employees – both male and female – of the UGent. The goal of these four parts was to take a closer look at the academic careers of women and men, from inflow to outflow, and to investigate possible gender differences and bottlenecks throughout those careers. To this end, surveys, interviews and a vacancies checklist were developed. Part one showed – among other things – that students' perceptions about an academic career are closely in line with their expectations regarding the ideal job. However, this raises the question whether this perception conforms to

reality. Part two focused on the difficulties that may arise when a vacancy is put together. Gender inequality can be found in job titles as well as in vacancy texts, but is also caused by the inconsistent use of style, layout, phrasing and structure. Part three showed that there are gender differences with regards to the perception of whether or not gender problems exist at the UGent. Gender differences are also found with regards to the perception on promotion and the clearness of the appointment and promotion system at this university. Part four showed that the main reason for both women and men to leave Ghent University is the work insecurity and short-term contracts. The second major motive for women to leave university is their desire for applied research that 'makes a difference'. The third and fourth reason, reported by both women and men, are the lack of support and weight of personal animosities, and the competition and political games.

In chapter three, the K.U.Leuven reported on the development of a module on career management (focus on promotion). The aim of this chapter was to offer tools, recommendations and a step-by-step plan to introduce equal opportunities in the career management of a university. The career opportunities of the entire personnel database – both AP and ATP – of the K.U.Leuven were examined and clarified. Different smaller projects on the topic of career management were set up in collaboration with diverse entities of the K.U.Leuven and six different tools were developed: 'Mapping Career and Promotion Opportunities', 'Survey Career Management', 'Gender-aware Job Descriptions', 'Profile Mainstreaming Promoters', 'Equal Opportunities and Diversity Training for Mainstreaming Promoters' and 'Evaluation Form Equal Opportunities and Diversity Training'.

In chapter four, the UA reported on the process of development of a training in Scientific Communication for female researchers, and on the actual test trainings that took place at the UA and at other Flemish universities. The training is aimed at showing (female) researchers how they can sell themselves and their research better, and at making them aware of the need for visibility. The training was developed through the organization of focus groups with female researchers of the UA.

Chapter five tackled the process of development of a mentoring programme for female academics at the UHasselt. Checklists for the organization of a mentoring programme at the own organization/university and content records on mentoring for mentors and mentees were created. Chapter five also reports on the case studies that were carried out at the UHasselt and at the K.U.Leuven. Evaluations showed that the reactions to the mentoring programme at UHasselt and K.U.Leuven were positive.

Although the Equality Guide is mainly focused on universities, a lot of the developed instruments are also applicable to other organizations and settings. The transferability of the tools was shortly discussed in each of the chapters.

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Appendices

Appendices I: Tables

Chapter 1

Table 1.1: Working units of personnel at VUB

	Absolute number N (%)
<i>Personnel category</i>	
Administrative Technical Personnel	229 (32.2%)
Assisting Academic Personnel	127 (17.9%)
Special Academic Personnel (scientific employee)	202 (28.5%)
Independent Academic Personnel (professor)	132 (18.6%)
<i>Faculties</i>	
Arts en Philosophy	68 (9.6%)
Law and Criminology	32 (4.5%)
Economic, political and social sciences and Solvay Business School	59 (8.3%)
Psychology and Educational Sciences	44 (6.2%)
Sciences	110 (15.5%)
Medecine and Pharmacy	113 (15.9%)
Engineering	109 (15.4%)
Physical Education and Physiotherapy	20 (2.8%)
Vesalius College	18 (2.5%)
<i>Departments</i>	
Department of the Chancellor	32 (4.5%)
Department of vice-chancellor Research	23 (3.2%)
Department of vice-chancellor Student Policy	19 (2.7%)
Department of vice-chancellor Education	15 (2.1%)
Department of the General Director	26 (3.7%)
Facility Management	8 (1.1%)
Department of Personnel	23 (3.2%)
Technical Department	10 (1.4%)
Financial Administration + policy	3 (0.4%)
ICT Department	9 (1.3%)

Table 1.2: Differences in the well-being of personnel at VUB

Characteristics	Difference in well-being score
Faculties	Ns
Departments	Ns
Human / exact sciences	Ns
Women / men	Ns
Hetero/ LGB	U = 13957; p = 0.053
Disabilities/ No disabilities	U = 8921; p < 0.05
Belgian nationality/ non Belgian nationality	Ns
Dutch speaking/ no Dutch	Ns
Age categories	Ns
Experiencing discrimination or not	U = 10590; p < 0.00

Table 1.3: Differences on the scales of part one (organizational climate)

Scale/ groups	Faculties	Department	ATP/AP	Human/ Exact sciences	Women/ men	Hetero/ LGB	No-disabilities/ disabilities	Belgian nationality/ non Belgian nationality	Age categories
Relationships colleagues	H(8)=21.04; p<0.005	Ns	Ns	U=50679; p<0.03	Ns	U=12268; p<0.005	U=8659; p<0.006	Ns	Ns
Competition atmosphere	H(8)=18.4; p<0.05	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns
Welcoming and integration	H(8)=37.75; p<0.001	Ns	U=41245; p<0.001	U=54447; p<0.03	U=54682; p=0.05	U=12574; p<0.002	Ns	Ns	Ns
Communication openness	Ns	Ns	U=47522.5; p<0.05	Ns	Ns	Ns	U=8975; p<0.05	Ns	H(5)=13,1; p<0.05
Influence informal networks	H(8)=16.11; p<0.05	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns	Ns
Openness superior EO	H(8)=47.09; p<0.001	Ns	U=45153; p<0.05	Ns	Ns	Ns	U=8409; p<0.05	Ns	H(5)=12,8; p<0.05
Total organizational climate	H(8)=15.85; p<0.05	Ns							

Ns= non significant

Table 1.4: Discrimination, intimidation and aggression grounds

	Absolute number	Percentage from total
Discrimination because of gender	13	1.87%
Intimidation/bullying because of gender	10	1.43%
Aggression because of gender	0	0.00%
Discrimination because of age	5	0.71%
Intimidation/bullying because of age	3	0.42%
Aggression because of age	0	0.00%
Discrimination because of skin colour	3	0.42%
Intimidation/bullying because of skin colour	3	0.42%
Aggression because of skin colour	1	0.14%
Discrimination because of background	10	1.43%
Intimidation/bullying because of background	10	1.43%
Aggression because of background	1	0.14%
Discrimination because of appearance	6	0.85%
Intimidation/bullying because of appearance	7	1.00%
Aggression because of appearance	1	0.14%
Discrimination because of sexual orientation	2	0.28%
Intimidation/bullying because of sexual orientation	4	0.57%
Aggression because of sexual orientation	1	0.14%
Discrimination because of physical disability	3	0.42%
Intimidation/bullying because of physical disability	2	0.28%
Aggression because of physical disability	2	0.28%
Discrimination because of clothes	4	0.57%
Intimidation/bullying because of clothes	4	0.57%
Aggression because of clothes	2	0.28%
Discrimination because of way of talking	7	1.00%
Intimidation/bullying because of way of talking	8	1.14%
Aggression because of way of speaking	2	0.28%
Discrimination because of ideas	11	1.57%
Intimidation/bullying because of ideas	15	2.16%
Aggression because of ideas	6	0.85%
Discrimination because of belief/religion	4	0.57%

Intimidation/bullying because of belief/religion	2	0.28%
Aggression because of belief/religion	0	0.00%
Discrimination because of unknown reasons	6	0.85%
Intimidation/bullying because of unknown reasons	11	1.57%
Aggression because of unknown reasons	5	0.71%
Discrimination because of other reasons	5	0.71%
Intimidation/bullying because of other reasons	16	2.31%
Aggression because of others	5	0.71%

Table 1.5: Differences in attitudes on equal opportunities and diversity of personnel at VUB

Characteristics	Difference in attitude score
Faculties	H(8) = 17,7; p < 0.05
Departments	Ns
Human / exact sciences	U = 22590; p < 0.05
Women / men	Ns
Hetero/ LGB	U = 5780, p < 0.05
Disabilities/ No disabilities	Ns
Belgian nationality/ non Belgian nationality	H(2) = 10,7; p < 0.01
Dutch speaking/ no Dutch	Ns
Age categories	Ns

Table 1.6: Differences in attitudes about projects of personnel at VUB

Characteristics	Difference in attitude score
Faculties	H(8) = 29.3; p < 0.001
Departments	Ns
Human / exact sciences	U = 22590; p < 0.02
Women / men	U = 18073, p < 0.001
Hetero/ LGB	U = 5107; p < 0.005
Disabilities/ No disabilities	Ns
Belgian nationality/ non Belgian nationality	U = 1809; p < 0.01
Dutch speaking/ no Dutch	Ns
Age categories	Ns

Table 1.7: Differences in well-being score of students at VUB

Characteristics	Difference in well-being score
Faculties	Ns
Human / exact sciences	Ns
Women / men	Ns
Hetero/ LGB	Ns
Disabilities/ No disabilities	U = 51706; p < 0.000
Background	Ns
Dutch speaking/ no Dutch	H(2) = 8.496; p < 0.05
Age categories	Ns

Table 1.8: Discrimination, intimidation and aggression grounds

	Absolute number	Percentage from total
Discrimination because of gender	15	1%
Intimidation/bullying because of gender	12	0.8%
Aggression because of gender	2	0.1%
Discrimination because of age	10	0.7%
Intimidation/bullying because of age	8	0.5%
Aggression because of age	1	0.1%
Discrimination because of skin colour	11	0.7%
Intimidation/bullying because of skin colour	4	0.3%
Aggression because of skin colour	0	0
Discrimination because of background	28	1.9%
Intimidation/bullying because of background	13	0.9%
Aggression because of background	0	0
Discrimination because of appearance	13	0.9%
Intimidation/bullying because of appearance	24	1.6%
Aggression because of appearance	3	0.2%
Discrimination because of sexual orientation	3	0.2%
Intimidation/bullying because of sexual orientation	6	0.4%
Aggression because of sexual orientation	2	0.1%

Discrimination because of physical disability	2	0.1%
Intimidation/bullying because of physical disability	2	0.1%
Aggression because of physical disability	1	0.1%
Discrimination because of clothes	13	0.9%
Intimidation/bullying because of clothes	11	0.7%
Aggression because of clothes	0	0
Discrimination because of way of talking	15	1%
Intimidation/bullying because of way of talking	13	0.9%
Aggression because of way of speaking	1	0.1%
Discrimination because of ideas	22	1.5%
Intimidation/bullying because of ideas	16	1.1%
Aggression because of ideas	4	0.3%
Discrimination because of belief/religion	16	1.1%
Intimidation/bullying because of belief/religion	7	0.5%
Aggression because of belief/religion	1	0.1%
Discrimination because of unknown reasons	9	0.6%
Intimidation/bullying because of unknown reasons	14	0.9%
Aggression because of unknown reasons	4	0.3%
Discrimination because of other reasons	11	0.7%
Intimidation/bullying because of other reasons	10	0.7%
Aggression because of others	4	0.3%

Table 1.9: Attitude scores on equal opportunities and diversity for students from VUB. Absolute numbers are given with percentages between brackets

Item	Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree	No opinion
I wouldn't mind helping fellow students with a disability	591 (43.7)	633 (46.8)	60 (4.4)	20 (1.5)	49 (3.6)
It's the task of the VUB to form critic, independent thinking people	704 (52)	530 (39.2)	49 (3.6)	9 (0.7)	58 (4.3)
It's the task of the VUB to form people in an open atmosphere of free inquiry, freedom, tolerance and diversity	779 (57.6)	504 (37.3)	22 (1.6)	7 (0.5)	27 (2)

I have no problem with the fact that fellow students wear religious attributes at the university	502 (37.1)	497 (36.7)	180 (13.3)	105 (7.8)	65 (4.8)
I think more diversity within the staff and student population at the VUB would increase tolerance for each other	340 (25.1)	582 (43)	193 (14.3)	36 (2.7)	198 (14.6)
I have no problems with fellow students being LGBT	998 (73.8)	314 (23.2)	10 (0.7)	13 (1.0)	9 (0.7)
It's the task of the VUB to learn students to go in relationship with other people with different life styles, backgrounds and cultures	370 (27.3)	580 (42.9)	242 (17.9)	33 (2.4)	122 (9.0)
I think studying in a diverse surrounding contributes to my personal development	661 (48.9)	561 (41.5)	64 (4.7)	9 (0.7)	52 (3.8)
I have no problem studying with fellow students with another culture	902 (66.7)	405 (29.9)	17 (1.3)	11 (0.8)	12 (0.9)
I think we should make more efforts to promote equal opportunities at the VUB	282 (20.8)	497 (36.7)	289 (21.4)	49 (3.6)	231 (17.1)
Diversity should be included in the courses to bring students more understanding about this matter	169 (12.5)	372 (27.5)	459 (33.9)	171 (12.6)	174 (12.9)
I have no problems studying with students from the other sex	1107 (81.8)	213 (15.7)	10 (0.7)	7 (0.5)	8 (0.6)
The advantages of diversity outweigh the disadvantages	448 (33.1)	527 (39.0)	57 (4.2)	25 (1.8)	287 (21.2)
Freedom of expression is a fact at the VUB	379 (28.0)	697 (51.5)	128 (9.5)	27 (2.0)	121 (8.9)
The attention that is given to diversity at the VUB is one of the reasons why I chose to study here	135 (10)	286 (21.1)	473 (35.0)	234 (17.3)	224 (16.6)

Table 1.10: Differences in attitudes on equal opportunities and diversity of students at VUB

Characteristics	Difference in attitude score
Faculties	Ns
Human / exact sciences	Ns
Women / men	U = 36775; p < 0.01

Hetero/ LGB	Ns ($p = 0.06$)
Disabilities/ No disabilities	Ns
Ethnic background	Ns
Dutch speaking/ no Dutch	Ns
Age categories	Ns

Table 1.11: Differences in attitudes on projects about diversity of students at VUB

Characteristics	Difference in attitude score
Faculties	$H(7) = 16.253; p < 0.05$
Human / exact sciences	Ns
Women / men	$U = 47297; p < 0.001$
Hetero/ LGB	$U = 19349; p < 0.05$
Disabilities/ No disabilities	Ns
Ethnic background	$H(5) = 20.914; p < 0.01$
Dutch speaking/ no Dutch	Ns
Age categories	Ns

Table 1.12: Differences in organizational climate in the transnational testing (Spain and UK)

Characteristics	Difference in climate score
Spain/ UK	$U = 3248.5; p = 0.001$
Women/ men	Ns
Hetero/ LGB	Ns
Spain/UK on item about equal opportunities for men and women	$U = 4986.5; p = 0.007$
Women/men on scale 'welcoming and integration'	$U = 5760.5; p < 0.05$
Women/men on scale 'openness superior to EO'	$U = 4657; p < 0.001$
Hetero/LGB on scale 'influence informal networks'	$U = 680.5; p < 0.05$
Age categories on scale 'welcoming and integration'	$H(5) = 13.458; p < 0.05$

Table 1.13: Factor analysis of EHSAL

	Component	
	1	2
Welcome	,777	
Respected	,762	
Accepted	,746	
Free	,745	
Atmosphere that gives feeling to be part of it	,714	
Excluded	,703	
Valued	,702	
Neglected	,677	
Ideas can be expressed	,668	
Students give help and advise	,628	
Students pass information to each other	,575	
Thwarted	,564	
Minimalize background	,552	
Humiliated	,536	
Activities outside the classroom	,507	
Students consider each other as concurrents	,492	
Expression of culture is respected	,488	
Freedom of speech	-,459	
Different	,422	
Threatened	,414	
Competition atmosphere	,292	
No problem working with students from the other sex		
More efforts		,811
Diversity in Brussels is an added value		,762
Increased tolerance with more diversity		,747
Personal development		,698
Diversity in the curriculum		,671
No problem with religious attributes		,606
No problem with students with another culture		,595
Handling differences		,582
Advantages diversity		,562
Diversity influenced my choice to study here		,515
No problem with LGB students		,396
No problem with helping student with disability		,314
Mission statement		,297

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
 A Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Chapter 2

Table 2.1: Answers to the statement 'In my department women and men are treated equally', by sex and statute

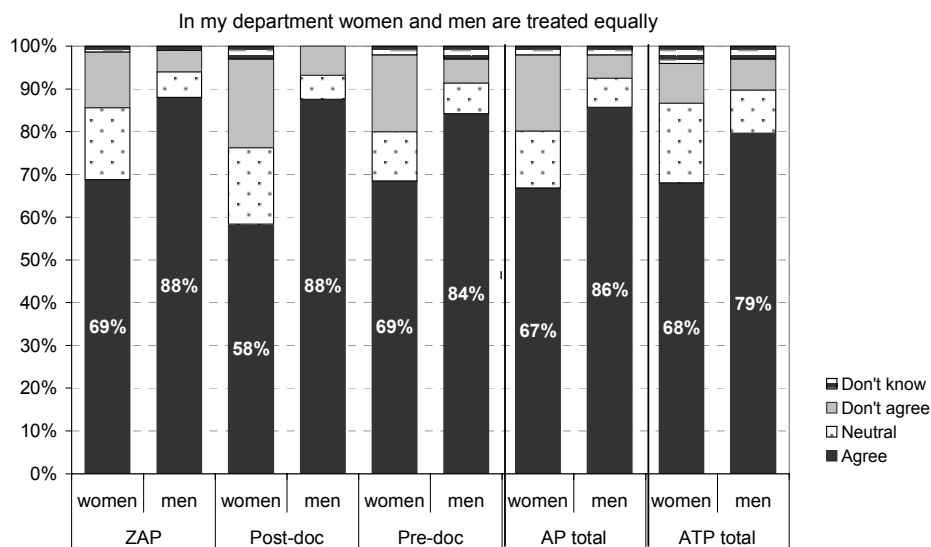


Table 2.2: Answers to the statement 'I experience more obstacles in my career at UGent than my colleagues of the other sex', by sex and statute

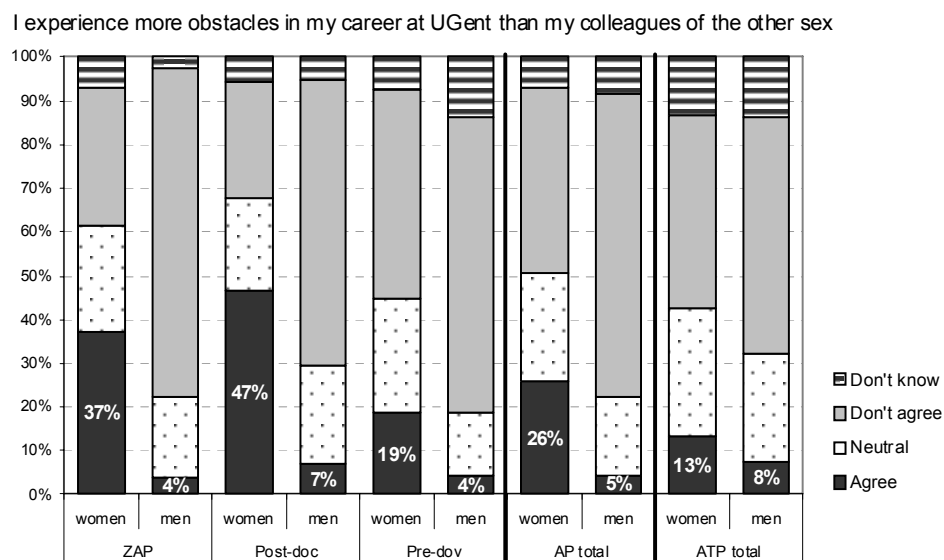


Table 2.3: Answers to the statement ‘men are more often than women with similar expertise asked to participate in congresses, projects etc’, by sex and statute

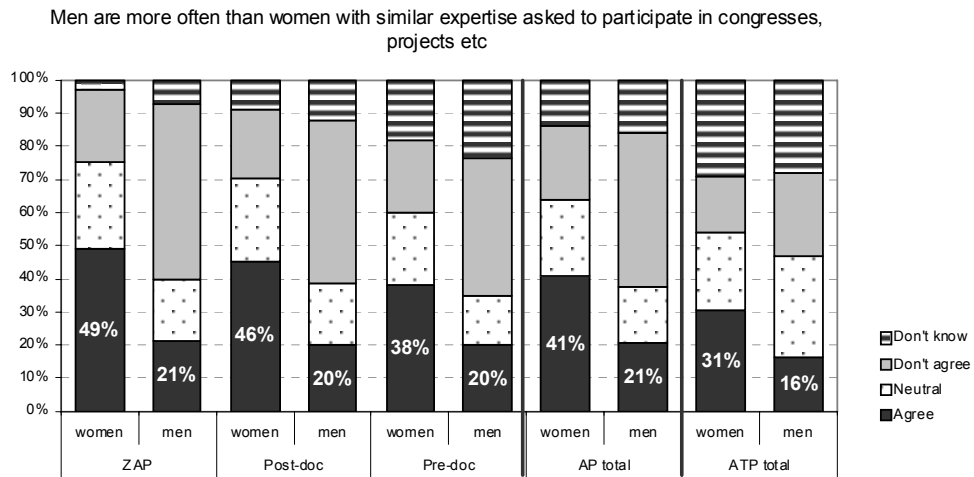


Table 2.4: Answers to the statement ‘a higher number of women in boards and committees would have a positive impact on the careers and opportunities of women at UGent’, by sex and statute

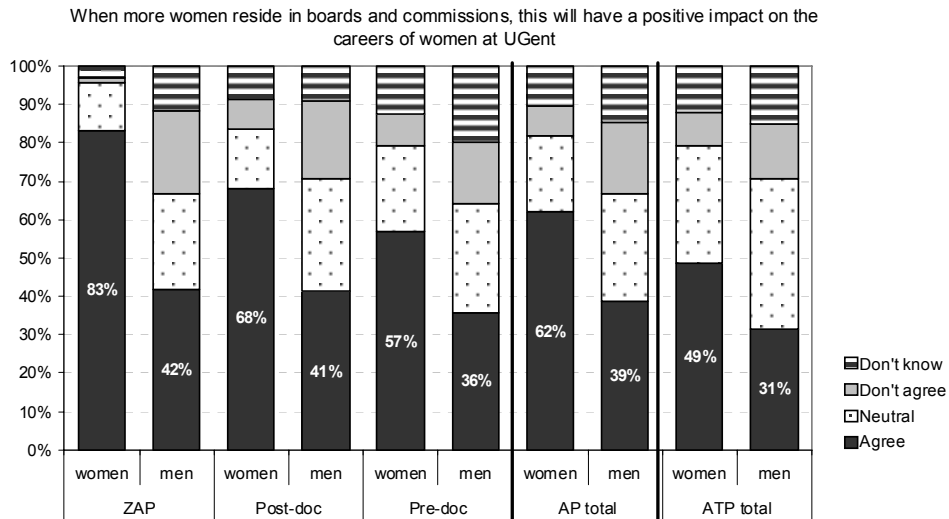


Table 2.5: Answers to the statement 'I believe that my gender influences my promotion opportunities', by sex and statute

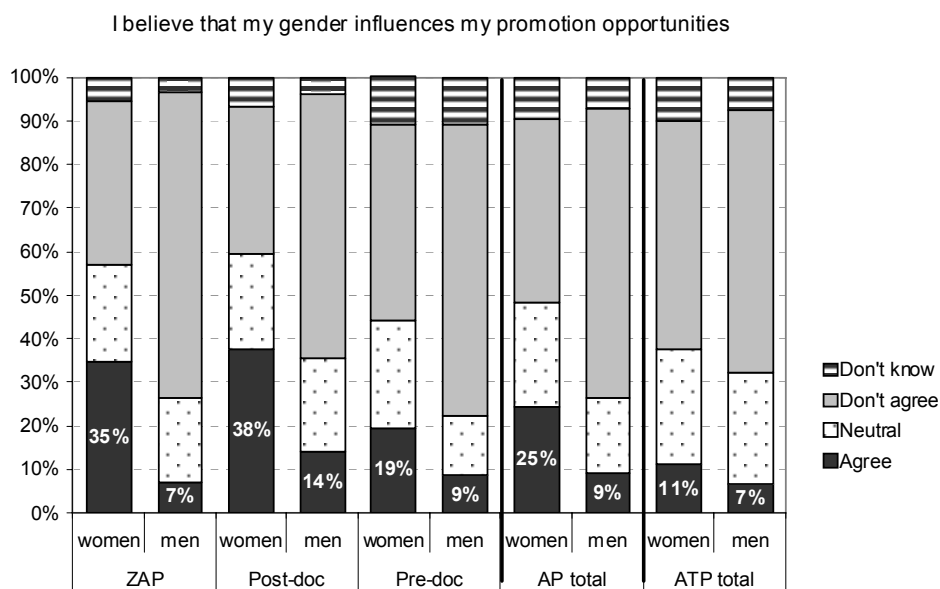


Table 2.6: Answers to the statement 'Having children influences the promotion opportunities of women and men at UGent', by sex and statute

	AP man					AP woman					X ²
	(+)+	+/-	(-)-	?	Number	(+)+	+/-	(-)-	?	Number	
Having children influences the promotion opportunities of men at UGent	17%	16%	39%	28%	879	3%	12%	64%	21%	576	***
Having children influences the promotion opportunities of women at UGent	35%	13%	20%	32%	872	61%	12%	12%	16%	587	***
	ATP man					ATP woman					
	(+)+	+/-	(-)-	?	Number	(+)+	+/-	(-)-	?	Number	X ²
Having children influences the promotion opportunities of men at UGent	7%	22%	45%	26%	277	4%	19%	46%	31%	411	-
Having children influences the promotion opportunities of women at UGent	15%	23%	26%	35%	271	38%	18%	22%	22%	430	***

Table 2.7: Self-reported reasons to leave Ghent University (additional responses on which the qualitative results were based)

	Male employees	Female employees
job insecurity	11	9
permanent position outside academia	7	11
still working in an academic setting	9	3
explicitly asked to stay	4 (+ 1 refused)	1 (+ 2 refused)
applied for a scholarship	5	2
fundamental research	5	10
university as an ivory tower	3	5
never planned to stay	3	4
involved in science outside university	12	8
applied research	4	5
practically oriented research not granted funding	0	2
lack of support	4	4
in their research groups	2	2
no research group	1	0
from a key figure	1	2
competition	3	3
competition is demoralizing	8	7
no competition involved	6	6
personal motivation	3	2
bureaucratic atmosphere	0	4
strict hierarchy	5	0
number of respondents	16	16

Table 2.8: Views on gender in academic circles

	Male employees	Female employees
competitiveness & ambition		
women are less competitive	3	3
clear choice for a PhD	8	8
no ambition to stay	7	8
doubts to stay	3	0
clear ambition to stay	0	3
support is indispensable	4	10
less self-confidence	3	8
pregnancy & family life		
personal choice	7	2

obstacle for women	7	10
no effect	2	2
not appreciated	1	6
the requirement of international experience obstructs women's careers	4	7
as difficult for men as women to go abroad	5	2
other job to combine with family-life	3	3
recruitment & networking		
gender mattered in the past	4	6
no influence	9	3
gender matters	4	7
supervisor prefers men	3	7
no gender issues in networks	8	10
men have better networks	6	6
women have better networks	2	2
support matters	4	4
number of respondents	16	16

Chapter 4

Table 4.1: Male/female associations of certain types of language use

Male language use	Female language use
deep voice, harder	high-pitched voice, softer
dominant	supportive, concurring
aggressive	passive
consistent	unstructured
simple	integrating, making links between things
concise	detailed
longer time	friendly
unfeeling	discussing emotions
shorter sentences	longer or interrupted sentences, illogical links
more imperative	more questioning
use of observations	more words like 'maybe', 'actually', 'should', etc.
hierarchical	confirming others
feign expertise	shut up if they do not have the expertise
not very personal	talk about things from their own experience

Source: Based on an enumeration from KAV training about women in politics.

Appendices II

Chapter 4

Appendix 4.1: The lecturers

Ann Theys. She works for Impuls, training and educating people about gender and diversity. She also writes training manuals. A few years ago, she worked as a researcher at the K.U.Leuven and as a journalist for De Standaard.

Ann Van der Auweraert, Equal project assistant, University of Antwerp.

Bob De Groof used to be a journalist, producer and manager at the Flemish Radio and Television (VRT). He founded the company COPLA and is now a trainer/lecturer at training centres, colleges and universities.

Brigitte Hertz, author of 'Presenteren van onderzoek'. She is a trainer and a coach of academics in presentation, communication, career and personal effectiveness courses. She was also a coordinator of the EQUAL project at the VU Amsterdam from 2002 to 2005.

Hedwige Nuyens is the author of 'Waarom vrouwen geen baas worden'. After having worked as the Belgian credit manager at ABN Amro Bank, she is currently employed as a financial manager at the K.U.Leuven. She was also elected manager of the year a couple of years ago.

Mieke Van Haegendoren, Vice-rector at the University of Hasselt and co-author of the report "M/V gezocht".

Nico Steegmans, LUC and gender cell coordinator of the steunpunt gelijke kansen.

Sonja Spee, director of the steunpunt gelijke kansen.

Appendix 4.2: Result Gender priority list scores

Assignment

Please rate the subjects according to their importance for you: from 1 (most important topic for you) to 7 (least important topic).

Result

Sum of the scores (the smaller the total score, the more important the topic was for the group of female researchers as a whole)

SUBJECT	TOTAL SCORE
Best practices:	47
What do other universities do in practice (e.g. abroad)? Sharing experiences.	
Evolution in gender issue:	56
Is there any progress? In other words, can the gender issue be cleared?	
Profiling as a woman:	24
How do we as women come across with men? How do we need to behave to maximize our chances to a successful career? How can we profile others, both men and women? Which influence does the social image of working women and learned women have? Which role can female researchers play without losing their individuality as women?	
Selection criteria:	27
What is the deal? How can female researchers obtain that education and services, two areas they are good at and consider important, do not have a negative influence on their careers? How can they stimulate innovation at the university? What can be measured and what cannot? How to play a social role without limiting their career opportunities?	
Gender aware:	19
What do the 'gender glasses' look like and how can we find out where gender has an influence? What do 'male and female glasses' look like? What components are they made of? How to sensitize the environment? How to sensitize female researchers who have yet to be promoted?	
Delegating:	36
How does this work? How do female top managers do it? How do they plan their work and family?	
Information UA:	43
What does the equal opportunities policy at the UA contain? Which measures are taken? What about the other universities?	

Appendix 4.3: Result communication priority list scores

Assignment

Please rate the subjects according to their importance for you: from 1 (most important topic for you) to 7 (least important topic).

Result

Sum of the scores (the smaller the total score, the more important the topic was for the group of female researchers as a whole)

SUBJECT	TOTAL SCORE
<i>Profiling as a woman/self-image:</i>	35
Do women communicate in a different way? Should they behave like their male colleagues? What are the best practices? How to behave to increase your career opportunities? How to fit in in a predominantly male group? What can we work on as women, how can we reinforce our self-image?	
<i>Communication differences/styles/skills</i>	29
Are there any differences between men and women and if so, what are those differences, how can we deal with and adjust them, which differences can we use to further our careers?	
<i>Networking, social talks</i>	53
Is this really necessary? Is there a way to make this more pleasant? What's in it for you? How do you do it? How can you use this at conferences for example to support your career?	
<i>Media communication</i>	48
Communicating with the media: overcoming your initial inhibition, important elements, how to steer the communication yourself	
<i>Context-based communication</i>	36
How to take into account the context? e.g. in meetings, with different target groups, with other purposes: strategic, informative, diplomatic, target-oriented	
<i>Presenting research: how?</i>	54
Presenting your own research, structure, style, language, humour, etc.	
<i>Communication as a tool</i>	39
How can you use communication to further your career? What is the importance of non-verbal communication? How to use it?	
<i>Role models/mentor</i>	61
Both men and women, who are they? And how can you be a role model or mentor for young women yourself?	