

Gender Studies Centre



Fakulty of Philosophy Comenius University
in Bratislava

CENTRUM
RODOVÝCH
ŠTÚDIÍ



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Gender Studies Centre (GSC)

- is an university based research and educational institution at the Faculty of Philosophy at Comenius University in Bratislava
- established in June 2001, as the first institution in Slovakia of its kind
- with the aim to approximate the education and research at the university to the standards of the countries where gender studies are a legitimate part of social sciences and humanities
- to contribute to the implementation of the principle of gender equality and of the democratic policy of education

Main focus:

- **research and teaching activities in the field of feminist theory and gender studies.**

Fields of interest

- issues of gender identity
- gender stereotypes
- the gendered structure of society
- topics on feminist philosophy, ethics and epistemology
- methodology of feminist research
- issues concerning women and science

Main objectives:

- providing knowledge, theoretical conceptions and reflection of problems tackling gender studies, providing gender analysis of various socio-political problems
- supporting gender sensitivity for the existing structural inequalities between genders, cultivate critical thinking and ability of argumentation
- promotion of scientific research activities thematically focused on gender issues
- integration of the gender perspective into social sciences and their enrichment by new issues, approaches and results
- opening up the space for interdisciplinary discussions on gender issues

Most important fields of activities :

- educational – courses for all students at the Faculty as well as for public at large
- research – conducting research in this field and initiating interdisciplinary gender research
- expert-consulting – analysis of conceptual material from the gender perspective for government- and non-government institutions
- publishing – publishing studies, translations and study materials

Some pioneering projects realized by GSC:

- research projects on theoretical and epistemological aspects of feminist thinking and feminist research
- transdisciplinary working groups on the methodology of oral history used in the Women's Memory Project
- international workshops on the application and evaluation of the methods of oral history for educational purposes

Some pioneering projects realized by GSC:

- workshops on the results of research on the situation and status of women - university teachers and researchers at the Faculty of Philosophy at CU
- interdisciplinary educational project of Slovak and Austrian students and teachers from the Vienna University and Comenius University on gender issues, which resulted into the publication of the book “The Problems of Gender Identity in Art, Architecture, Film and Literature”

Some pioneering projects realized by GSC:

- GEBIGE "Gender relations in the light of biographical self-representation and social development. Socrates, Grundtvig 2
- EQUAL: Elaboration of a conception of education towards equal opportunities on the bases of Gender Mainstreaming

Recently completed international project

- **POWER, Promotion of Women in European Regions**

A Grundtvig 2 project realised within the SOCRATES programme of the EU, August 2004 – July 2006

Cooperating institutions:

- **Research Society Burgenland, Eisenstadt, Austria (project coordinator)**
- **Gender Studies Centre at Comenius University, Bratislava, Bratislava**
- **Women for the XXI. Century, Keszthely, Hungary**

Main focuses:

- the situation of women in the border region of the neighbouring countries Austria, Hungary and Slovakia
- examination of similarities and differences between the regions
- establishing contacts between women's NGOs and institutions dealing with gender issues by networking activities
- developing common strategies to improve the situation of women, especially their situation within the common labour market

The main activities:

- workshops in every region, speeches of experts and discussions
- study visits at women's organisations and institutions dealing with gender issues.
- final conference presenting the results of all three workshops

Currently running international research project:

- **Knowledge, Institutions and Gender: an East-West Comparative Study (KNOWING)**

a specific targeted research project funded by the European Commission in the Structuring the ERA specific programme of Framework Programme 6

Cooperating institutions:

- academic and research institutions (Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Faculty of Humanities, Charles University in the Czech Republic, Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University in Bratislava in Slovakia, University of Leeds and University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom, University of Vienna in Austria, University of Turku and Turku School of Economics and Business Administration in Finland).

Main goals of the project

- To examine the production of knowledge contexts and cultures, including the role of gender, from an “East-West” perspective,
- To identify structural and institutionalised practices and procedures, including standards of excellence, that hinder and/or promote the equal participation of women in science,
- To encourage the establishment of feminist science studies in the partner countries, especially in the new EU member states
- To influence policy on higher education and research and development at the national and EU levels in order to promote gender equality and increase the engagement of young people in science

Key issues and methodology

- role of gender in the production of knowledge
- multi-method approach
- simultaneous research in five countries
- statistical data, LCQ, discourse analysis, FG, interviews
- comparative cross-national analysis

Topics for a possible research cooperation in the future

- **Comparative study of gender issues, especially issues concerning:**
 - women in science and technology
 - gender stereotypes in education (at various level of educational system)
 - gender stereotypes in media
 - changes in the position of women in the enlarged labour market
 - violence against women, its various forms, especially sexual harassment

Suggestions for joint research activities in the area of Central Europe

- Research on common social and political issues with a comparative potential, identifying commonalities and differences between Central European countries:
- current social and political frameworks for implementing gender mainstreaming as a common strategy for achieving gender equality, wider social and cultural factors supporting and factors hindering the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategy
- the history of women in various fields of public life, but also in the private sphere during the 20. century, especially during the socialist era (for example women in science or in politics)

New topics/field, which may gain an important position in the future

- the position of minority women, the problem of their double disadvantagedness
- the role of men in achieving gender equality, the problem of “new fatherhood”



- Thank you for your attention!

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Gender Stereotypes in HE institutions

- **Stereotypes identified in the academic environment**
- **Research conducted via questionnaire**
- **Number of respondents: 386 (50% women, 50% men) 5 HE institutions in Slovakia**

Gender Stereotypes

- **a/ Women tend to be less ambitious to gain academic degrees (associate professor, full professor) than men :** 19, 3% of male and 38,8% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .
- **b/ Men usually are more identified with their career than women:** 57, 3 % of male, 74,4 % of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .
- **c/ Women tends to avoid some scientific fields which are regarded as not feminine:** 45,0% of male, and 54,9% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .

Gender Stereotypes

- **d/ Men's chances in science are higher because their thinking is more original/inventive and creative:** 18,1% of male and 15,1% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .
- **e/ Academic career is a male domain:** 11,7% of male and 26.3% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .
- **f/ Women prefer caring for family instead of building scientific career:** 48,9% of male and 53,6% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .

Gender Stereotypes

- **g/ Women in academic environment have no interest in leading positions:** 13,3% of male and 24.3% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed .
- **h/ Women in academic works much more realize their potential in teaching than in researching:** 61,9% of male and 59,4% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed.
- **i/ Men should have higher salary because they are breadwinners :** 11,2% of male and 10,3% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed.
- **j/ It is natural that management have in their hands men and services women :** 10,8% of male and 3,6% of female respondents agreed and rather agreed.

Lived stereotypes

- a/ Women tend to be less ambitious to gain academic degrees (associate professor, full professor) than men
- b/ Men usually are more identified with their career than women
- e/ Academic career is a male domain
- f/ Women prefer caring for family instead of building scientific career
- g/ Women in academic environment have no interest in leading positions
- h/ Women in academic worlds much more realize their potential in teaching than in researching

Symbolic stereotypes

- **c/ Women tends to avoid some scientific fields which are regarded as not feminine**
- **d/ Men´ s chances in science are higher because their thinking is more original/inventive and creative**
- **i/ Men should have higher salary because they are breadwinners**
- **j/ It is natural that managment have in their hands men and services women**