

“Gender Equality in EU-Funded Projects”

Practical guidance for coordinators, partners and project teams

Clear Roles

Effective Communication

Practical Tools

Monitoring & Support



Why It Matters

Gender equality is not only a formal requirement. It can influence project eligibility, research quality, stakeholder engagement, communication, ethics and long-term impact.

Project Eligibility

Meeting gender equality criteria is a prerequisite for many EU-funded calls.

Research Quality

Integrating gender improves the rigour and relevance of research outcomes.

Long-Term Impact

Inclusive projects produce results that are more credible and widely applicable.

✓ **Key message:** Gender equality should be part of project design from the beginning.



Three Levels in Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe addresses gender equality across three distinct and interconnected levels. Understanding all three is essential for full compliance and genuine impact.



Gender Equality Plans

A valid GEP is an eligibility criterion for public bodies, research organisations and higher education institutions.



Gender Dimension in Content

Integrating sex and gender analysis into research and innovation content, methods and outcomes.

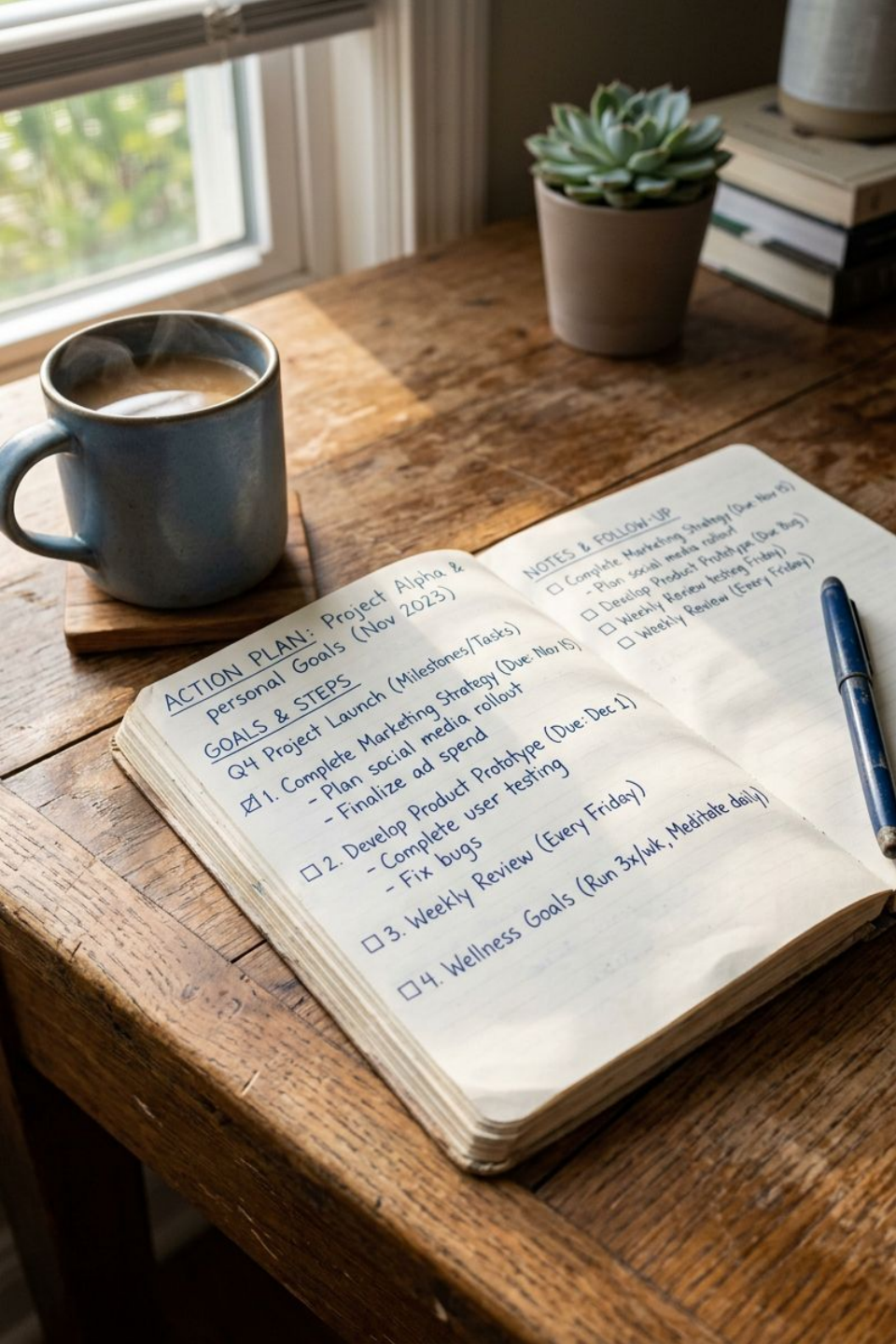


Gender Balance in Teams

Ensuring balanced representation in teams, boards, expert panels and project activities.



Key message: A valid GEP is important, but it is not the whole picture.



GEPs Are More Than a Checkbox

A Gender Equality Plan should not be a static PDF sitting in a shared folder. To be meaningful, it must be embedded in the organisation's everyday practices and decision-making.



Leadership Support

Senior commitment is essential for driving real change.



Resources

Dedicated time, budget and staff capacity must be allocated.



Data & Monitoring

Collecting disaggregated data and tracking progress over time.



Key message: A GEP should be a living framework, not only a document.

From Compliance to Implementation

The Compliance Question

Do we have a GEP?

Is it submitted and approved?

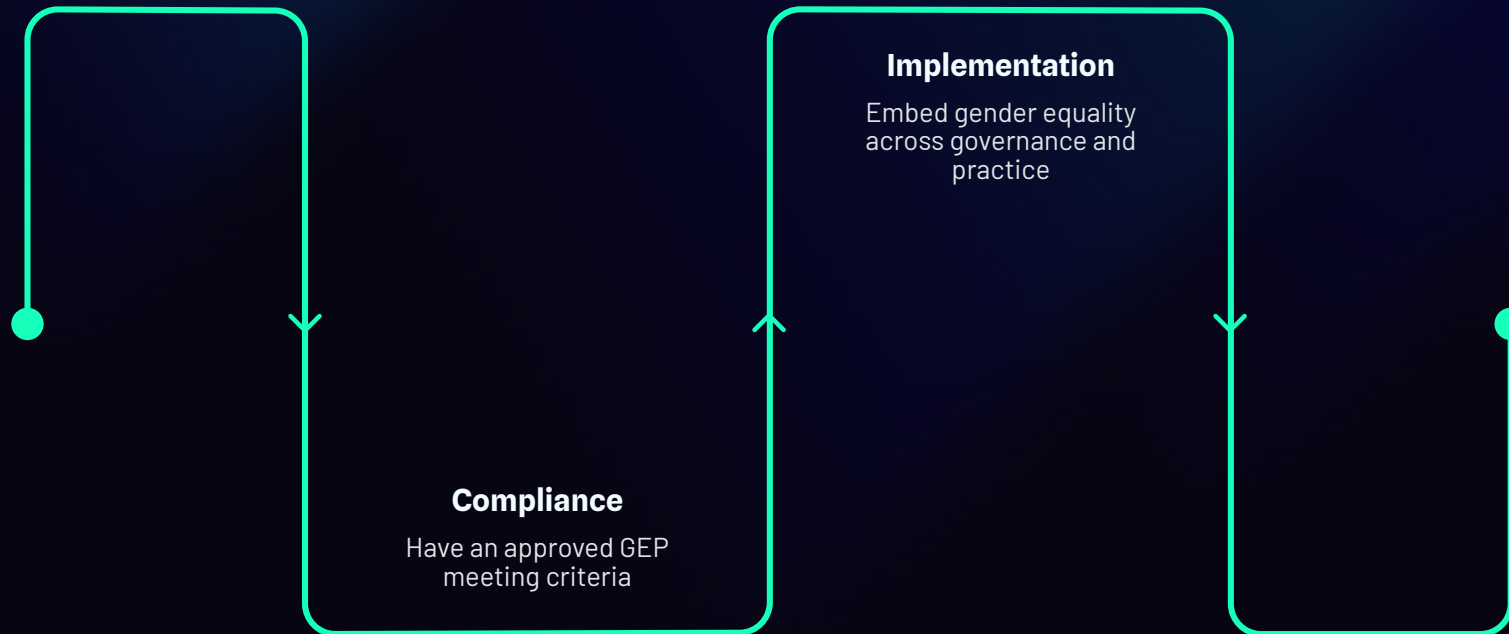
Does it meet the minimum criteria?

The Implementation Questions

How is gender equality reflected in our governance structures?

Are our methods and data reviewed for bias?

Are our events, communication and monitoring genuinely inclusive?



Key message: Implementation is where credibility is built.



Gender Dimension in Project Content

The gender dimension is not only about who is on the team – it is about whether sex or gender differences are relevant to the substance of the work itself.

1

Topic & Scope

Does the research topic affect men and women differently? Are gender-specific needs addressed in the problem definition?

2

Users & Pilots

Are pilot participants or end users diverse? Are user needs assessed with a gender lens?

3

Data & Methodology

Is data collected and analysed in a sex-disaggregated way? Are methodological assumptions checked for bias?

4

Risks & Outcomes

Could results have differential impacts? Are gender-related risks identified and mitigated?



Key message: Ignoring gender when it is relevant can weaken project results.

Stakeholder Engagement

Meaningful stakeholder engagement goes beyond counting participants. It requires actively considering who is reached, who is excluded and what barriers exist to participation.

1

Reach

Are we reaching diverse stakeholder groups, including underrepresented communities?

2

Access

Are workshops and events accessible in terms of location, timing, language and format?

3

Voice

Are underrepresented voices actively included and given space to contribute meaningfully?

4

Barriers

Are practical barriers to participation – such as childcare, travel or digital access – considered and addressed?



Key message: Strong engagement needs diversity, not only numbers.



Communication and Dissemination

Project communication is not neutral. Every image, word choice and speaker list sends a signal about whose knowledge counts and who the project is for.

Clear, Inclusive Language

Avoid jargon and gendered assumptions in all written and spoken communication.

Balanced Visuals

Use images that reflect diversity and avoid reinforcing stereotypes.

Diverse Expert Voices

Ensure speakers, authors and quoted experts represent a range of backgrounds and genders.

Accessible Events & Materials

Design events and outputs so that all audiences can engage fully.



Key message: Communication is where project values become visible.

Ethics and Safeguarding

Inclusive projects must also be safe and responsible. Ethics and safeguarding are not bureaucratic hurdles — they are the foundation of trustworthy research and engagement.

Safe Participation

Ensure all participants can engage without fear of harm, discrimination or retaliation.

Informed Consent

Obtain meaningful, voluntary consent — especially from vulnerable or marginalised groups.

Data Privacy

Handle personal and sensitive data responsibly, in line with GDPR and ethical standards.

Harassment Prevention

Have clear policies and reporting mechanisms in place for all project events and spaces.

Sensitive Survey Design

Review survey questions for potentially harmful assumptions or triggering content.

⊗ **Key message:** Inclusive projects need safe and responsible processes.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Even well-intentioned project teams can fall into predictable traps. Recognising these patterns early helps avoid them.

Treating the GEP as a Checkbox

Submitting a plan without any intention of implementing it undermines both credibility and compliance.

Assuming Gender Is Irrelevant

Skipping the analysis without checking whether sex or gender differences apply to the research topic.

Nice Wording, No Action

Adding inclusive language to deliverables without assigning tasks, timelines or indicators.

Leaving It to One Person

Concentrating all gender equality responsibilities on a single team member, often without recognition or resources.

Confusing Balance with Dimension

Achieving a 50/50 team split does not automatically mean gender is integrated into the research content.



Key message: Good intentions are not enough. Structure matters.

Practical Project Checklist

Use this checklist to review gender equality integration across your project at any stage – from proposal to final reporting.

- Do relevant partners have valid, up-to-date GEPs?
- Is gender relevant to the research content – and has this been checked?
- Are data collection and analytical methods reviewed for gender bias?
- Are stakeholder groups diverse and actively engaged?
- Are project visuals, language and events inclusive?
- Are gender equality indicators defined and monitored?
- Are responsibilities assigned to specific people with resources?
- Are ethics and safeguarding measures in place for all activities?

✓ **Key message:** What gets planned and monitored is more likely to happen.

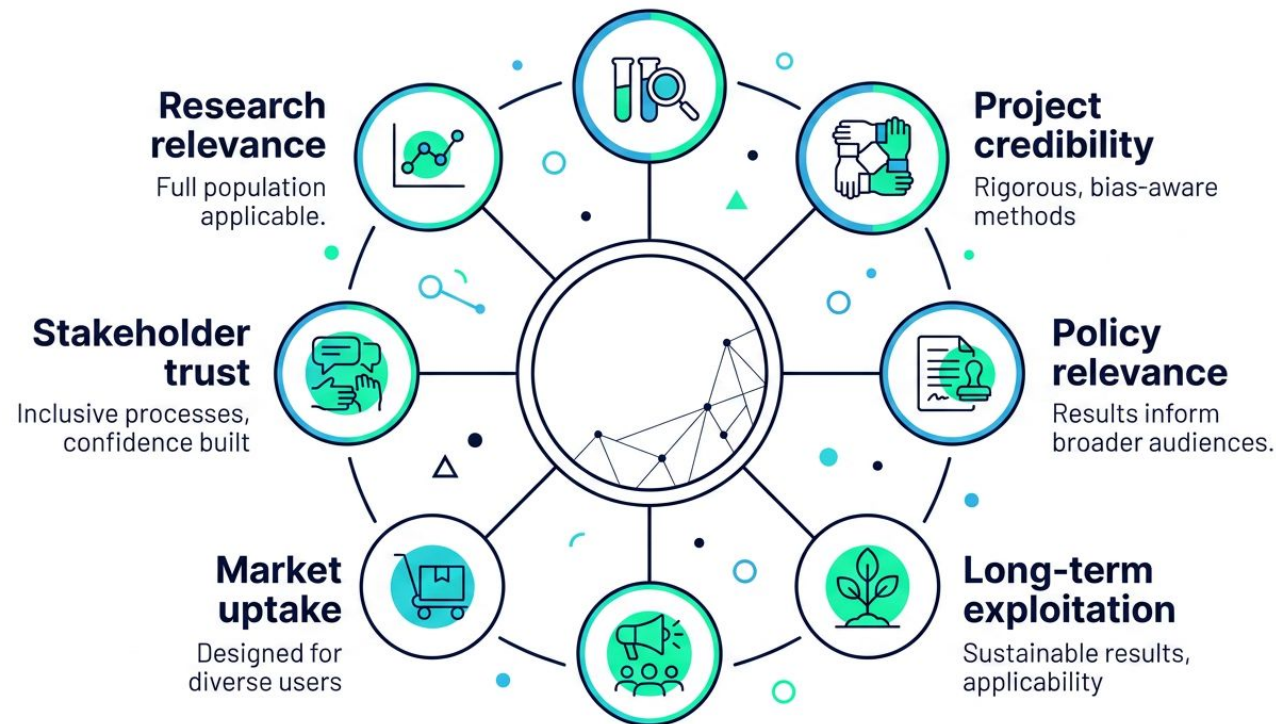
Why It Matters for Impact

Gender equality is not only about doing the right thing – it is about producing better, more credible and more useful results. Projects that embed gender equality throughout their lifecycle are better positioned to achieve lasting impact.

7

Impact Dimensions

Research relevance, project credibility, stakeholder trust, policy relevance, market uptake, public engagement and long-term exploitation.



✓ **Key message:** Inclusive projects can produce more useful and credible results.

Final Takeaway

Gender equality in EU-funded projects is not only about compliance. It is about better design, stronger implementation, inclusive communication and more credible impact.

1

Eligibility

Valid GEPs and meeting formal criteria

2

Implementation

Embedding gender in governance, methods and data

3

Communication

Inclusive language, visuals and dissemination

4

Real Impact

Credible, relevant and lasting project results

Formula: Eligibility + Implementation + Communication + Monitoring = Real Impact



How Nexuswelt Supports EU Projects

We support EU-funded projects with the full range of communication, dissemination and impact services — helping teams move from good intentions to visible, credible results.



Communication & Dissemination

Strategic project communication that reaches the right audiences with the right messages.



Impact Strategy

Planning and monitoring frameworks that connect project activities to meaningful outcomes.



Stakeholder Engagement

Designing inclusive engagement processes that bring in diverse voices and build trust.



Policy-Oriented Communication

Translating research results into accessible, policy-relevant outputs and briefings.

We help projects make their results **understandable**, **visible**, **inclusive** and **useful**.

