



DIVERSITY, INCLUSIVENESS & GENDER EQUALITY STYLE MANUAL



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- PUT: Poznan University of Technology
- BTU: Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg
- UC: University of Cantabria
- UMONS: University of Mons
- UNICT: University of Catania
- UPHF: Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France
- UVA: University of Vaasa
- FR: French
- IT : Italian
- SP: Spanish

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INTRODUCTION

REUNICE's Style Manual establishes some common criteria on the cross-cutting theme of Reunice Project related to inclusiveness and gender equality, values that are highlighted in the project's proposal and the Communication Strategy (D 6.1, *Introduction*) in alignment with Erasmus+ Program

- **Diversity**, to enrich the individuals who work in the project and therefore those reached by its results.
- **Inclusiveness**, to ensure the project benefits a global society based on European values and free of discrimination.

"REUNICE's communication will reinforce messages related to four main topics: collaboration (between universities, researchers, society and industry), research and innovation, sustainability and social equality.

These four main topics will ensure that the contents of our communication activities will cover all the angles related to the activity of the project."

(...)

Social Equality

Inclusiveness (of people at risk of exclusion) is not only identified as one of REUNICE's values, but also it will be demonstrated by some tangible activities, such as WP4's task to identify deficiencies in this field and propose a specific strategy to correct them, and WP6's task to develop a specific communication plan to promote diversity, inclusiveness and gender equality. Given its direct relationship with the overall objectives of the European Universities initiative, our communication strategy will pay special attention to this topic".

D 6.1 Communication Strategy, *REUNICE's Topics*, page 8

OBJECTIVES OF THE MANUAL

The following recommendations shall be taken into consideration when developing the variety of tasks set in the Work Packages and at the time of disseminating externally good practices and outcomes.

People are limited by barriers in society, not by their physical abilities or differences. It is essential to be an example and transmit the importance of this topic to society in order to achieve the expected impact of the project. Its aims are:

- To raise social awareness against discrimination issues and remove obstacles for recruitment and scientific career development, seeing diversity as a richness.
- To encourage gender-consciousness at decision-making, learning and research levels.
- To reduce the discriminating, especially sexist, language at the universities.
- To contribute to eliminate the inequalities in all fields of research as a way to promote creative talents, reach excellence and enhance innovation.

USE OF LANGUAGE AT EUNICE RESEARCH (REUNICE)

From a pragmatic point of view, the vision of Reunice Project in this Style Manual is to highlight the importance of an inclusive language, understood as representative of all members of the academic and student community, and to provide some tools which help removing obstacles in this path towards equal opportunities...

It would be limited to affirm that language has a merely descriptive use, as it prescribes a certain value to circumstances, it is a social convention that helps to shape reality, it teaches us how to see the world.

Therefore, language is not only a vehicle of communication, but a living instrument for the transmission of ideas too, including the ideas of social hierarchy, stereotypes and the positions that people occupy in the society. Along History, language has constituted a strong tool for social change and must be carefully used to promote specific interests.

The purpose of this guide is to reflect on how to take advantage of the richness and flexibility of the language to share scenarios and effectively represent, accordingly to the reality, the role of people that otherwise could remain hidden, undervalued or excluded. To do so, it provides the reader with some recommendations on how to make a sensitive approach to this topic and provides examples of how to apply them.

CONTEXTS WHERE TO THINK ABOUT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Information given to students:** they are the ones who will pass what they learn to the next generations.
- **Research:** women can be invisible if they are not explicitly named.
- **Communication activities, websites, forms** are highly effective places to promote the use of inclusive languages.

CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

Equality (/i'kwɒləti/)

Noun. The fact of being equal in rights, status, advantages, etc.

Diversity (/daɪ'vɜ:səti/)

Noun. A range of many people or things that are very different from each other.

Inclusiveness (/ɪn'klu:sɪvnəs/)

Noun. The fact of deliberately including people, things, ideas, etc. from all sections or society, points of view, etc.

Stereotype (/ˈsteriətaɪp/)

Noun. A fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is often not true in reality and may cause hurt and offence.

Source: Oxford Dictionary (oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com)

Gender

Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context.

Source: [UN Women, Gender Equality Glossary](https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36)

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GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. USE PREFERABLY NEUTRAL-GENDER FORMS

Grammatical gender is one of the aspects of language that usually rises to controversy in terms of its impact on gender inequality. In some languages -like French, German, Polish Italian and Spanish-, the use of masculine nouns and pronouns to refer to both women and men is grammatically correct, while other languages -such as English, Finnish, Hungarian, Estonian- have gender-neutral forms to referring to two or more genders or to refer to a person to unknown gender.

However, even if grammatically is correct, the use of the masculine as a generic valid for all genders has effects: it generates ambiguity and confusion; identifies the masculine with the universal; reinforces already overrepresented male part of the population; derives in asymmetries causing the under-representing of the female half of the population, making it invisible.

What can you do?

- Think if there are **epicene forms (neutral), synonyms or collective terms** you could use.
- In languages that have masculine and feminine forms: you can use **direct speech, passive constructions or subordinate clauses** to omit gendered-pronouns.
- In languages that have masculine and feminine forms **use of verbs** instead of nouns.
- In languages that have masculine and feminine forms, if you don't find alternatives, please avoid using only the masculine form and use instead both forms (masculine and feminine) put in the alphabetical order so as not to always put the same form first.
- In communications in English, use the **generic pronoun "they"** when possible to avoid gendered-pronouns.

Note that writers should always consider the text as whole and its nature when choosing among the different strategies. Gender-inclusive writing should not affect the readability of a text. Choosing to vary strategies can be helpful because epicene forms can make the text more impersonal while doubling function names can make the style heavier.

Some examples:

Better...	Than...
Dear all, colleagues...	Dear Mr. and Mrs.
You should submit your application...	Students should submit
Participated in the meeting: ...	Participants in the meeting were: ...
A participation certificate is only awarded to	Students only receive a participation certificate

those who were present for at least 80% of the seminar time.	if they have been present for at least 80% of the seminar.
Candidates should submit their transcript by the end of May	The transcript should be submitted by the end of May.
Chères collaboratrices et chers collaborateurs (FR)	Only the masculine form because it is shorter

2. BE SYMMETRIC IN THE TREATMENT YOU GIVE TO WOMEN AND MEN AND BE SPECIFIC

One way to achieve equality is to address all persons in equivalent ways

What can you do?

- If your language doesn't have an epicene noun for them, **feminise names of professions, functions, titles... in official documents when referring to a woman.**
- Try **not to add the gender of a professional designation** when there's a gender-neutral noun that is possible to use.
- When possible, **ask the affected person how they want to be addressed.**
- As is generally irrelevant in a professional environment, **avoid referring to marital status**, especially of women. i.e. Is it Miss. Or Mrs.? You can always use Ms, which is a neutral address for women.
- **A good way to check whether a word or expression is inherently sexist is to ask whether a male equivalent of the word is used . i.e. Nobody says "working father"**

Some examples:

Better...	Than...
She's a professional...	She's a working mother
Jueza (SP)	La juez
Nurse	Male nurse, female nurse
Birth name	Maiden name

3. AVOID USING STEREOTYPES

Associating specific characteristics to any social groups contributes to maintain prejudices, stigmas, intolerance and discrimination. On the contrary, making an effort to eliminate them from our vocabulary helps to raise awareness about the issue. Remember that on first place we are all persons and we are all different.

Some examples of people affected by this kind of association are people with disabilities, people with health conditions, women, people presenting characteristics linked with discrimination (such as age, religion, sexual orientation, weight, ...), people from different cultures/ethnicities or geographical locations, from different training systems or from different social or economic backgrounds.

Note that sometimes idioms and **figures of speech** can recall discriminating or diminishing practices and the use of this should be avoided. Also, in multiple occasions the **language discrimination is doubled**. i.e. health problem + gender.

What can you do?

- **Avoid reducing someone's whole identity to only one of their circumstances** i.e. health problem, religion or gender, when it's not relevant in the context.
- **Don't extend an individual defect** to a whole social group.
- **Check if you used frivolous, sensationalist or dramatic expressions** in your writing to make it more attractive.

Some examples:

Better...	Than...
The immigrant families	<i>The immigrants, their wives and children</i>
Use their name	<i>Young lady (EN), chica (SP), signorina (IT), jeune fille (FR)</i>
It's time to be tough	<i>It's time to man up</i>
Person with a disability, with depression(EN), ... Persona con disabilità (IT).	<i>Invalid, impeded, depressed person (EN)</i>
She has a disability	<i>She suffers from a disability. She isn't normal.</i>
Nome+ cognome ha vinto il premio (IT) Name+ Surname won an award (EN)	<i>Una giovane ricercatrice di origine africana ha vinto un premio (IT)</i> <i>A young researcher of African origins won an award (EN)</i>
Centre for mental health	<i>Madhouse</i>

4. DEALING WITH PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS

Diversity perspectives, gender roles, age, sexual orientation and identity, disabilities, skin colour, religion and culture are conveyed in pictorial representations through the arrangement and selection of people and the activities they perform. Therefore, when selecting images we transmit to the audiences a non-verbal message as well.

Captions also send messages that can be descriptive of the image or give extra information, making them an important tool to pay attention.

What can you do?

- Ensure that the imagery is non-discriminatory and **reflects diversity** when representing people.
- **Aligning the meaning of the image to the verbal message.**
- When the goal of the communication activity is to involve a defined target audience, select images that pursue this objective so person from the audience **can identify themselves with them.**
- **Captions** should be formulated in a correspondingly inclusive manner.
- In the case of **video clips**, **add subtitles** or captions for an easier understanding by people with hearing or learning difficulties, have a different native language, etc.

Some examples:

Better...	Than...
Show different looks (hair, skin...)	Only white people
Represent women, men and undefined gender	Only men
Persons with disabilities as productive members of the society	Persons with disabilities as passive receptors of help

5. USE A SENSITIVE PERSPECTIVE ON REGISTRATION FORMS, SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRES, GATHERING DATA

The term 'gender perspective' is a way of seeing or analysing which looks at the impact of gender on people's opportunities, social roles and interactions. This way of seeing is what enables one to carry out gender analysis and subsequently to mainstream a gender perspective into any proposed program, policy or organization.

This kind of analysis usually is flagged as relevant by authorities and experts in the case of research fields that affects directly to people such as medical topics, human resources, students, economics...

What can you do?



- **Include gender in profiling data fields when designing forms** to allow analysis by gender dimension to detect potential disparities
- **Avoid** to generate forms, minutes, records and other **official documents written in generic-masculine, especially** in the case of **personal documents** such as certificates.
- When relevant in forms include questions about any **special requirements needed in terms of health problems, disabilities, learning barriers and other special needs.**
- **Use simple language structures, a foreign person may not understand complicated grammar formulas.**
- When writing the text, make it easier to read by using a simple, (11 size and above) **sans-serif font like Calibri or Monserrat** (official fonts of Eunice Alliance).

Some examples:

Better...	Than...
Forms. i.e. For statistical purposes ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other. Specify how you'd like to be addressed _____	Forms written in generic-masculine or which don't specify the gender of the person.
Analyse the data segregating it by gender to detect potential disparities	No data analysis from a gender perspective
Add a field: "Is there any special need or additional information regarding your personal situation that we should be attentive to?"	No possibility for participants to share their specific needs.
The acceptances of these terms and conditions...	The acceptances of these terms and conditions...

6. RESEARCHING AND TEACHING MATERIALS

Considering that language has a key role in the transmission of knowledge, academics of universities can contribute to avoid perpetuating gender inequalities and stereotypes when developing their research projects or teaching materials, and disseminating their results.

In addition to language, other elements of communication, such as pictures, audiovisuals or text fonts can be consciously chosen to make them accessible to people of all kind of conditions: i. e. using devices with small screens; older people with changing abilities due to ageing; people with "temporary barriers" such as a broken arm or lost glasses or using a slow Internet connection; or expensive bandwidth.

What can you do?

- Enrich your results by including the gender **dimensions** when is relevant to the topic in the **design of your research project, data gathering or recruiting processes.**

- **Highlight explicitly the approach** taken on gender or inclusivity perspective **in the abstract** of your paper or the **executive summary** of the report and why is relevant to the topic.
- Make sure the contents you disseminate online in your website **comply with accessibility requirements**. i.e. high-contrast images, readable font, transcriptions, subtitles, ...
- Ensure that dissemination actions such as **conferences or press releases highlight “why gender matters”** in your study.
- When elaborating researching or teaching contents reflect about if you could **include innovative references** of relevant female authors or examples of **roles** impersonated by women or other typically **under-represented social groups**, when applicable.
- If relevant to the context of the research, **raise the visibility of women or other** by including pictures of them in presentations, brochures, websites and other communication channels.



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