



CLIMATE ALLIANCE
KLIMA-BÜNDNIS
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Equality-related support criteria in EU programmes – research and recommendations

in collaboration with LIFE e.V./Women's Environmental Network and supported by Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF)

As part of the "Climate for Change – gender equality and climate change policy"¹ project, research was carried out to establish, among other things, how gender aspects are reflected in the EU's financial support programmes on climate protection. This resulted in recommendations as to how equality of opportunity should be integrated into the funding programmes.

The following programmes were examined:

- Intelligent Energy – Europe 2003-2006
- Interreg III C
- LIFE
- Community Framework for Cooperation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development
- 5th and 6th Research Framework Programmes (thematic priorities: sustainability, energy, climate protection)

Intelligent Energy – Europe 2003-2006

IEE promotes efficient energy use as well as the use of renewable energies through the removal of market barriers and through awareness-raising among energy suppliers, investors, advisers, training personnel, agencies and policy makers, as well as consumers, of the need for a European energy policy with appropriate statutory provisions. Under the programme adopted for the period from 2003 to 2006, approx. 250 million euros are being made available within the four-year term for measures aimed at increasing the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources and at improving efficiency in the area of energy consumption.

Consideration of gender mainstreaming and of gender balance is referred to twice in the information/documentation for this support programme: "*Community rules concerning public access to information, transparency and gender mainstreaming shall be taken into account in the work programme*". (p.8) and "*Referring to the Community's commitment to gender mainstreaming²⁷ a balanced gender distribution among proposers is encouraged*" (p.32) [²⁷ defined as "*the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages*"]

The "**Annual Work Programmes**" set out the priorities for each individual year and the financial framework for the projects to be supported in that year. However, there is no mention of "gender equality" or of any criteria which would include it in the decision-making about such support, either in the currently available "Annual Programme 2004" or in the "**Call for Proposals**". Similarly, there is no mention of it in the tender for applications from experts for the selection procedure.

Interreg III C

The INTERREG Community initiative of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) promotes increased cooperation between the regions of the European Union. The goal of INTERREG III (in the Structural Fund period from 2000 to 2006) is the strengthening of economic and social cohesion in the European Union through the promotion of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation and balanced regional development. Special attention has been placed on remote regions and on regions sharing borders with the candidate countries. INTERREG III has at its disposal an EU-wide overall budget of 4,875 million euros and covers three areas (A – cross-border cooperation, B – transnational cooperation, C – interregional cooperation). Only Interreg III C is relevant for cities and municipalities.

The following is a quotation from the "**Practical Guide for Proposals**": "*Finally the programme should link the INTERREG programme strategy and objectives to wider regional development policies and, in particular, should explain co-ordination with the following instruments:(...) economic competitiveness, sustainability and gender mainstreaming.*"

The application form asks explicit questions about the contribution of the project to other EU policies, including gender equality (*extract from the application form*):

Please explain how the operation will (directly and indirectly) contribute to the other EU policies, in particular:

- *Sustainable development of the participating regions.*
- *Equal opportunities for men and women. Please state if the operation will:*

¹ The project was carried out by the Climate Alliance of European Cities with gender expertise provided by LIFE e.V./Women's Environmental Network. It was supported by the European Commission under the 5th Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

- (a) have equality between the sexes as its main focus
- (b) be positive in terms of equality
- (c) be neutral in terms of equality

Framework for Cooperation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development

The now completed "Framework for Cooperation to Promote Sustainable Urban Development" programme of the Environment Directorate-General was a development programme for all European city networks working in the area of sustainable development and, as well as supporting individual projects by the networks, served to coordinate cooperation between them. ("Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign"). Perusal of the call for proposals guidelines and forms did not yield one single source of criteria for the consideration of equality-related aspects.

LIFE

The LIFE programme is – next to the Structural Fund – the most important instrument for the implementation of EU environmental policy, as laid down in particular in the Sixth Environment Action Programme. Priority areas here are deemed to be industry, energy, traffic, agriculture and tourism as well as the integration of environmental aspects into other EU policies.

The three priority areas of the LIFE programme are the environment, nature conservation and action with third countries. Around 100 million euros are available annually for supporting projects. During the overall term of the LIFE programme to date (since 1992), around 2,500 projects have been supported.

The search for equality-related criteria produced similar results as in the case of the Intelligent Energy programme: on page two of the introduction to the "Application Guide 2005" for LIFE-Environment (the priority area of the programme relevant to climate-protection projects) the following statement appears:

"... The LIFE programme promotes equal opportunities and therefore encourages applications from organisations who themselves implement such principles and from organisations that represent women's issues. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to consider gender balance in respect of staffing for projects proposed under the LIFE programme (including the appointment of female project managers). The above assumes that applicant organisations and proposed project staff have the relevant environmental expertise and experience that the proposed project requires."

LIFE-Environment also distinguishes between demonstration projects and preparatory projects. While there is no mention of the consideration of equality-related aspects in the "Guidelines 2005-2006 for 'LIFE-Environment' preparatory projects", the "Guidelines for LIFE-Environment demonstration projects" state (similarly to the Application Guide):

"... The LIFE programme promotes equal opportunities and therefore encourages applications from organisations who themselves implement such principles. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to consider gender balance in respect of staffing for projects proposed under the LIFE programme."

In the application forms, however, there is again no mention of it, apart from a specific question relating to the consideration of equality in the project which is the subject of the application.

Consultations are currently taking place on the further development of the LIFE programme. Among other things, there is to be a programme line which will be targeted at city networks and which will thus serve as a replacement for the "Cooperation Framework" programme, which has now expired (see above).

Climate Alliance is one of the organizations which were invited to participate in developing the new LIFE+ programme to follow on from LIFE, so we will be contributing toward the adoption of specific criteria relating to issues of equality / gender mainstreaming in this programme, which is planned to start in 2007. Examples of these specific proposals can be found at the end of this paper.

EU research programmes

The research activities of the individual Directorates General are summarized in the EU's Research Framework Programmes. In the currently ongoing 6th Research Framework Programme, one of the seven priority subject areas is "sustainable development, global change and ecosystems". The research programmes on energy, transport and climate protection also fall within this area. The overall budget of the 6th RFP is 17.5 billion euros over a programme term of 4 years (2002-2006).

The gender aspects of research are supposed to be taken into account in all areas and so-called 'thematic priorities'. This happens at the application, evaluation and reporting levels. The evaluation of an application involves a series of criteria, which vary according to the instrument concerned. However, the questions asked about gender aspects in a research project are always the same: *"Are there gender issues related to the subject of the project? If so, have they been adequately addressed?"*

All experts appraising the applications are briefed before the evaluation and are given training, at least in condensed form, on this aspect.

Despite this progress, consideration of the gender perspective in the RFP still leaves a lot to be desired, as ultimately it does not play a crucial role in the evaluation process and no negative consequences are likely if the gender perspective is ignored during the course of the project. Nonetheless, of all the EU funding programmes, this one has the most far-reaching plan for integrating the gender perspective. It is based among other things on the results of a Gender Impact Assessment which was carried out ex post for the entire 5th RFP and clearly showed the blindness to gender issues of the research programmes conducted, as well as revealing the need for an effective "Gender Watch System"².

Summary

As mentioned above, within the Research Framework Programme the Research DG has the most extensive experience of integrating the gender perspective. This experience should be made available for use by other funding programmes.

As a matter of principle, all funding programmes should be reviewed to establish how the gender perspective is currently being integrated / is to be integrated in future.

In addition, two sets of questions should be incorporated into all forms and/or terms of reference for project applications: one relating to the participation of women (as a target group, as persons directly and indirectly affected by the project, and as persons implementing/managing the project) and a second relating to the subject matter.

Possible questions on the application form could be as follows:

- At what points and in what positions are women involved in project planning and implementation?
- Were gender-specific aspects taken into account in the development of the project?
- To what extent did these aspects influence the stipulation of the project's subject matter and goals?
- Were gender-specific aspects taken into account in defining the target group(s)?

It is important that the questions should not be answerable with a simple yes or no, but that explanations and reasons should be given.

Where there are no pre-printed application forms, then gender aspects should be included in a) the programme description and b) the requirements for projects. As regards a) this could be either a general sentence about the fact that gender aspects might have a role to play and/or should be identified, or, if the gender aspects are known, a short description of these aspects. Where b) is concerned, it should be a requirement for gender-relevant aspects of the project to be described or for reasons to be given why the project has no gender relevance.

This relatively simple procedure will have two effects, which should not be underestimated: firstly, the applicants will be made aware of issues of gender equality, and secondly, provided the procedure is implemented consistently, the projects will be improved by virtue of the fact that more consistent account will be taken of the diversity of target groups and users. This is subject to the proviso, however, that the responses to the questions form part of the project evaluation and that their actual implementation is reviewed in the course of the project.

Gender mainstreaming is part of a dual strategy: targeted support for women's projects is necessary for empowerment and for the further development of concepts which relate to the environment and climate protection and focus primarily on the situation faced by women in their daily lives. On the other hand, the universal integration of gender aspects into all projects and measures will, as well as bringing about the improvements to project planning mentioned above, also in the long term contribute toward improving the poor situation with regard to the availability of data on gender aspects in the area of the environment and climate protection.

Integrated impact assessment

For the purposes of an integrated impact assessment, as proposed by the European Commission, all projects funded by the EU should not only demonstrate that they manage their budgets efficiently and show how they contribute to environmental protection, but also show how the project contributes to the goal of gender equality. Here, too, it is a question of paying attention not just to the quantitative level of the participation of women, but also to possible impacts which projects can have on the social situation of men and women in different areas of their lives (paid employment, leisure, care work). This can prevent projects from contributing unwittingly and unintentionally to the perpetuation of traditional role models.

² For a detailed study of the GIA, covering among others the area of climate protection, of the 5th RFP see e.g. <http://www.isoe.de/literat/giafin.htm>; for details of the Gender Watch System of the 6th FRP see <http://www.eubwero.de/arbeitsbereiche/fraueneuforschung/gendermainstreaming/genderwatch> (in German) or http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women-science/women-science_en.html (in English); the "Gender Mainstreaming Vademecum for the 6th FRP" as an aid for applicants can be found at <ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/science-society/docs/gendervademecum.pdf>.