Manual for the integration of the gender dimension in the allocation procedures for subsidies
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After the ‘Manual on gender mainstreaming’ (2009) and the ‘Manual on gender budgeting’ (2010), the Institute for the equality of women and men wishes to provide with this publication concrete support for another aspect of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007: the integration of the gender dimension in the allocation procedures for subsidies.

The intention of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ is that attention should be paid to the gender dimension in a structured manner throughout the entire allocation procedure. The ultimate objective of this is to ensure that the recipient of a subsidy uses it in a manner that takes into account the possible differences between women and men. At whom is the subsidy aimed? Does it concern both women and men? What are their respective needs? All these questions will support a better definition of the target audience. This improves the equality of women and men and leads to a more efficient use of government funds.

Just as the previous publications, this one is not only meant to inform and sensitize, but also to provide practical guidelines. The manual explains concepts that are useful for the integration of the gender dimension and describes for all the stages of the allocation procedure how this integration can be applied. All of this is illustrated with concrete examples.

We wish you an interesting read and hope that together with you we can come to a fruitful collaboration on the integration of the gender dimension in the allocation procedures for subsidies.

Liesbet Stevens
Deputy Director

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Director
Gender and integration of the gender dimension
1. The notion of ‘gender’

In order to be able to understand the ‘integration of the gender dimension (gender mainstreaming)’, one should first clearly understand the concept of ‘gender’.

First of all, it must be stated that the terms ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ are not synonymous. ‘Sex’ indicates the biological differences between women and men. These differences are universal and timeless. They do not change in space (different countries) or in time (various periods).

On the other hand, ‘gender’ is a cultural construction created by society around each of the two biological sexes. It therefore concerns characteristics associated with the status of women and men that are not innate, but are dictated by society. Gender is therefore a cultural and time-bound phenomenon, and is often associated with stereotypes peculiar to a particular society.

2. Integration of the gender dimension

A policy, measure, action, etc. contains a gender dimension if it concerns an area in which women and men are in a different situation.

A policy, measure, action, etc. is analysed from a gender perspective when its potential impact on the respective situation of women and men is evaluated. Sex-disaggregated statistics concerning the persons to whom the policies, measures, actions, etc. apply are often indispensable. Such statistics can provide a clear image of the respective situation of men and women and of potential differences between the sexes. Not all differences between women and men are necessarily inequalities between women and men. A difference is considered as problematic in the area of equality of women and men when for one of the sexes, it limits the access to resources (income, employment, responsibility/power, health/well-being, safety, knowledge/education, mobility, time, etc.) or the exercise of fundamental rights (civil, social and political rights).
A policy, measure, action, etc. has the **gender dimension integrated into it**, if it contributes to avoiding or correcting potential inequalities between women and men.

The identification of differences between women and men sometimes starts from **generalizations** (sometimes backed by statistics, sometimes not) about the situation of women and men. The goal is not to confirm or strengthen these generalizations by creating separate solutions for women and men. The goal is to use the identified differences in situation to extend the reach of a policy, measure, action, etc. so that it takes into account both situations. This improves the equality and efficiency because anyone, regardless of their sex and situation, can find him- or herself in the policy, measure, action, etc.

For **more information** about gender, the gender dimension and other concepts, please consult the following resources:

- The gender mainstreaming component on the website of the Institute for the equality of women and men (http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be);
- The ‘Manual for the application of gender mainstreaming within the Belgian federal administration’ that explains the concept of the gender mainstreaming and the application of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ on the basis of concrete examples;
- The ‘Manual for the application of gender budgeting within the Belgian federal administration’ that uses concrete examples to explain the concept of the gender budgeting and the way in which it has to be applied;
- The checklist on the gender dimension that can help determine whether a project or activity does or does not contain a gender dimension.

If these tools do not offer a solution, the following may also be **contacted**:

- The gender mainstreaming coordinators of the own administration (FPSs, PPSs and ministry of Defence);
- The gender mainstreaming unit of the Institute for the equality of women and men (see the colophon of this publication for the contact information).
Integration of the gender dimension in subsidies at the Belgian federal level
1. Introduction

Section 3.3 of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007¹ expressly states that procedures for the allocation of subsidies must take the equality of women and men and the integration of the gender dimension into account. Whether it concerns structural subsidies for organisations (operating subsidies) or subsidies for specific projects (project subsidies), effort should constantly be directed toward integrating the gender dimension in all stages leading to the allocation and the final disbursement of the subsidy.

Within Belgian administrative practice, the concept of ‘subsidy’ is not clearly defined, and a lot of terms such as allowance, subsidy and grant are used interchangeably. Here, we apply a definition of the State Audit Office, and regard a subsidy as “a financial contribution granted by persons under public law, to encourage certain situations, activities or operations”. In this publication, the term subsidies refers to all types of allowances that organisations can avail of to support the realization of their own missions or to execute specific projects. Therefore, this also includes contract research, competitions/prizes, etc. for which various organisations can submit a proposal in order to be eligible for financial support.

It may also be clarified that the integration of the gender dimension primarily applies to operating and project subsidies for organisations such as NGOs, NPOs, etc. Subsidies to persons and families (for example, for the installation of solar panels or the security of a private home) are not taken into account here.

¹ Law of 12 January 2007 aimed at monitoring the application of the resolutions from the world conference on women held in Beijing in September 1995 and at integrating the gender perspective into the whole of the federal policies (Belgian Official Journal of 13 February 2007).
A subsidised project or organisation has the gender dimension integrated into it, if it contributes to avoiding or correcting potential inequalities between women and men. In order to obtain this, these projects or organisations must be submitted to an analysis from the gender perspective that evaluates the impact on the respective situation of women and men. In general, sex-disaggregated data are necessary so that the analysis can help identify which differences between women and men (the gender dimension) exist within the final target group of the project or organisation.

Throughout the allocation procedure for subsidies, measures must be taken in order to stimulate an analysis that helps to avoid that certain projects or organisations are not adapted to the needs of both women and men and that a part of the target audience does not benefit from the positive effects of subsidies that are granted by the federal government.

An important observation: even though subsidies that are specifically aimed at women can definitely be useful to promote the equality of women and men, this is not the objective of the integration of the gender dimension. Nor is it the goal of the integration of the gender dimension to require that all subsidised projects target exactly the same number of women and men.

This may for example, include:

- adapting the collection of data so they are disaggregated by sex (for example, a survey on mobility should ask the sex of the respondents in order to be able to produce sex-disaggregated data);
- adapting the project content to take into account differences between women and men (for example, a drug prevention project must take into account the fact that women and men often do not use the same types of drugs; a homelessness organisation must be aware that women traditionally have a better safety net than men, but they are more susceptible to sexual violence on the street);
• adapting the **organisation** of events to times and places that are accessible to women as well as men (for example, women avoid visiting poorly lit areas after dark more than men do; men are less available during the traditional working hours while outside school hours, women more often look after children);
• adapting the **communication** to appeal to women as well as men (for example, men would traditionally be put off by a pink flyer, while women would probably not feel that a folder featuring only men in suits could possibly be aimed at them).

It is important to realize that the gender dimension is generally **overlooked** and is often more widely present than is generally thought. Ideally therefore, applicants for subsidies should be generally advised to think about the respective situation of the women and men composing the target group of their activities.

It is of course possible that a project or organisation concerns an area where the **gender dimension is weak or nonexistent**. In such cases, it is best to ask the applicant to explain the absence of the gender dimension. This may help to prevent that applicants indicate out of convenience that there is no gender dimension.

The rest of this chapter explains how the different situation of women and men (the gender dimension) can be taken into account during the subsidy allocation procedure. The manner in which this can be done is discussed **for each stage of the allocation procedure**, starting from the application, through to the allocation, and to the evaluation.

The manual attempts to examine the situation at the Belgian federal level as concretely as possible. There are however different types of subsidies and sometimes government services have different procedures for the allocation of similar subsidies. It is also easier to take into account the gender dimension in the subsidy allocation procedure if this procedure is clearly structured and regulated. Application forms, annual plans, evaluation reports, etc. are tools in which attention for the gender dimension can generally be included. But the gender dimension can and must be integrated even in less regulated procedures.
Taking into account the possible differences between government services, the intention is to issue *general instructions* that can be adapted by every government service to its own reality. The *examples* should help to clarify what is intended with the general instructions and how they can be specifically applied.

While drafting the manual, the choice was made to ensure that the description of the different stages of the allocation procedure would separately be as understandable as possibly. This choice entails certain repetitions.

The guidelines apply both to *structural or operating subsidies* (subsidising an organisation, often in the long-term) as well as *project subsidies* (subsidies for a specific project). If provisions apply specifically to one of the types, this is clearly indicated.

When complying with the guidelines, it is important to strive for *coherence*: ideally, instructions about the integration of the gender dimension are repeated throughout the different stages of the allocation procedure (notification, instructions, contract, etc.). Applicants will be more inclined to take into account the gender dimension if it is clear this is part of the selection criteria, that this aspect will be included in the contract and that reporting will have to be done concerning this aspect before funds are disbursed.
2. Integration of the gender dimension in the various stages of the allocation procedure

2.1. Decision to make subsidies available

The first step in the procedure for the allocation of federal government subsidies is the decision by a federal authority to distribute government funds to organisations for their operations or to execute projects in the areas of competence of the public authority. As soon as such a decision is taken, it should be noted that section 3.3 of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007 makes it mandatory to integrate the gender dimension in the allocation procedure for subsidies.

In case this decision is laid down in a law, royal decree, or action plan, it is best to explicitly state that due account must be taken of the possible different situation of women and men (the gender dimension) when using the subsidy. This may constitute a sound basis to take into account this aspect throughout the allocation procedure.

A general, separate section on the integration of the gender dimension can be added or the attention to the gender dimension can be integrated in articles concerning specific steps in the allocation procedure (conditions that must be satisfied, evaluation criteria, etc.).

Sustainable development is based on three pillars: social, economic and ecologic development. Differences between men and women may occur not only at the social level (for example, the poverty risk is not the same for women as for men), but also at the economic level (for example, in some sectors, there are more women than men and vice versa) and the ecological level (for example, women and men do not have the same attitude with regard to consumption and recycling). In order to ensure that the gender dimension is taken into account, a law or action plan making it possible to provide subsidies for sustainable development would ideally include a reference to the differences between women and men (the gender dimension).
Example: mention of the gender dimension in a law to promote sustainable development
In order to be eligible for the allocation of a subsidy, the project/organisation should promote sustainable development and should take into account the possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension).

2.2. Information about the subsidy

2.2.1. Notification

Subsidies must be applied for and therefore information about this possibility should be disseminated. Any form of notification should already make clear that taking into account the differences in the situation between women and men (the gender dimension) is a legal obligation for receiving a subsidy.

A lot of development cooperation projects directly or indirectly relate to the situation of the inhabitants (both women as well as men) of the partner countries. It is highly probable that such projects contain a gender dimension, particularly with regard to specific priority subjects. There are still large differences in educational level between women and men. The same applies to health, where there are differences between women and men not only in the illnesses that are contracted, but also in the access to health care. For this reason, a general reference to the gender dimension must be included in every announcement for subsidies relating to development cooperation. How this can be actually achieved in concrete terms may be explained in the information about the specific subjects and steps in the allocation procedure (see below).

Example: mention of the gender dimension in an announcement for subsidies relating to development cooperation
In accordance with section 3.3 of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007 and section 11, §2.1 of the law of 19th March 2013 relating to the Belgian Devel-
The Belgian Development Cooperation integrates the following in its interventions in a manner that cuts across several spheres:

1° the gender dimension, which aims to achieve the empowerment of women and the equality between women and men in society.

There is a strong gender dimension in criminality and lack of security: women and men commit and suffer different types of criminal acts, women are troubled by feelings of insecurity to a greater extent, women and men have different expectations concerning security, etc. In calls for applications for subsidies regarding crime prevention, it may always be mentioned in the general information that due account must be taken of possible differences between women and men. The above mentioned differences relating to criminality and feelings of insecurity may be mentioned as an example to clarify the above.

**Example: mention of the gender dimension in a call to participate in a competition for crime prevention related projects**

Projects must fit within the principles of the federal government, including the equality of women and men, and, in accordance with the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007, they should take into account the possible different situation of women and men (the gender dimension) in the context of safety. Some examples of such differences are the difference in the feeling of insecurity and the difference in committing and suffering crimes.

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2 Art. 11, § 2. The Belgian Development Cooperation integrates the following in its interventions in a manner that cuts across several spheres:

1° the gender dimension, which aims to achieve the empowerment of women and the equality between women and men in society.
Often, **more detailed information is provided** than is the case with a general notification. It generally takes the form of a separate document with specific instructions. The gender dimension should also be integrated in these documents (see below).

However, if the information about the allocation procedure is limited to a **general, concise communication**, even this should ideally contain a short description of how the gender dimension will play a role during the further stages of the allocation procedure.

If the notification is not made in writing, but during a **presentation or a meeting** (primarily for operating subsidies), it is best to mention on such occasions that taking due account of the differences between women and men (the gender dimension) is a precondition to obtain such subsidy.

### 2.2.2. Instructions

Often, there are **specific instructions** relating to the manner in which subsidies can be applied for. These specify the actions that must be taken to obtain a subsidy. These instructions generally clarify the terms and conditions that such applications and applicant organisations must satisfy.

First of all, the **introduction** to the instructions may refer to the mandatory integration of the gender dimension in the subsidy allocation procedure by mentioning section 3.3° of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007.

In the area of **food safety**, each subsidised research project should contribute to the identification of potential differences between women and men, in order to better evaluate the impact of certain measures on the health of women and men. This may relate to biological differences (for example, differences in tolerance limits, other hormonal regulation and different reproductive organs), as well as sociological differences (for example, different eating habits and different attitudes toward food safety). The necessity of the identification and comprehension of these differences within the framework of the subsidised research project, could already be mentioned in the introduction of the instructions.
Integrating the gender dimension in subsidies at the Belgian federal level

Example: mention of the gender dimension in an introduction to the instructions for applying for funds for food safety research

These subsidies are allocated for scientific research for the support of the policy relating to food safety. All research institutes established in Belgium can subscribe to this call. In accordance with the ‘law on gender mainstreaming of 12 January 2007, all research projects should identify differences between women and men (the gender dimension).

More specific information about the gender dimension may also be included. This can explain what is expected from the applicant. This can be done in a limited manner by simply presenting the importance of the gender dimension of the area in question and by clarifying that the applicant will have to explain how he or she will take into account potential differences between women and men.

Gender affects the times and places at which an individual drives, the attitude with regard to traffic safety and the actual safety of women and men in traffic. By clearly specifying, in the instructions for how to apply for subsidies in relation to this topic, that gender will be an important factor, and that projects will only be eligible for subsidy if they take gender into account, one can ensure that this dimension is not overlooked.

Example: mention of the gender dimension in a regulation for the application for subsidies to promote traffic safety

The gender dimension plays an important role in traffic safety and in the efficiency of projects concerning this subject. Twice the number of men are involved in traffic accidents in comparison to women, and three times more men die due to traffic accidents. Women, on the other hand, are more often involved in accidents, as passengers, than men. Three times the number of men drive under the influence of alcohol, in comparison to women. In your subsidy application, clearly mention in what manner your project will take this and other comparable differences between women and men (the gender dimension) into account.
However, the instruction may also be formulated more broadly. It may be clarified that the application must specify details of the sex-disaggregated target group (or an approximation thereto) of the organisation or of the project, the differences between these women and men, and the manner in which the applicant organisation shall take the same into account.

In order to be as effective as possible, projects and organisations in the area of conflict prevention and peace building must take into account the fact that women and men do not experience armed conflict in the same manner. Men as fighters are more directly confronted with violence, while women and girls represent a large proportion of civilian casualties and are the primary victims of sexual violence. In addition, during periods of reconstruction, it is best to also ask women what they require, since their daily needs are not always the same as those of men.

The attention of applicants for subsidies may best be directed toward these aspects. By asking specific questions relating to the composition of the sex-disaggregated target group and possible differences between women and men, it is possible to clarify to the applicants what exactly is expected from them.

*Example: specific instructions on the gender dimension in applications for subsidies for conflict prevention and peace building*

State the target group to which this project shall apply.
What is the proportion of women and men in this target group?
Are there differences between women and men within the scope of application of this project? If yes, how will they be taken into account?

The subsidy guide or manual for applying for subsidies represent a specific form of instructions. These documents often provide a more detailed explanation of the manner in which the application should be submitted. They offer an excellent opportunity to discuss the expectations relating to the integration of the gender dimension, in more detail. Examples may be provided.
Poverty reduction and social inclusion contain a strong gender dimension. Under the influence of traditions, women and men often still have other roles in our society. As a result, the poverty risk and possibility of social exclusion is not the same for women and men. In a subsidy guide or manual about the application for subsidies for projects in these domains, attention should therefore be focused on these differences between women and men (the gender dimension). This may be done by making a general mention about this, followed by a clarification of what this means in concrete terms for different aspects of the area in question.

Example 1: general mention of the gender dimension in a subsidy guide relating to poverty reduction and social inclusion
Gender is an issue that cuts across several spheres, and requires attention within all projects that apply for a subsidy. If this requirement is not met, the subsidy will not be granted.

Example 2: specific mention of the gender dimension in a subsidy guide for subsidies relating to poverty reduction and social inclusion
Area ‘healthy food’: In disadvantaged households, attention is not always paid to healthy nutrition. Projects in this area must take differences between women and men into account. Some examples of this are the different nutritional needs of women and men (calcium, fibre content, etc.), especially with regard to young girls and boys in their puberty (iron content). Pregnant women and lactating women also have specific requirements that require attention. Please specify in your application, how the proposed project will take into account possible differences between women and men within this area.

Area ‘extracurricular initiatives for underprivileged children’: children from poor families do not always have access to the same opportunities to participate in extracurricular initiatives. This limits their development and can lead to social isolation. Projects in this area should be focussed both on girls and on boys. The choice of extracurricular activities may not lead to the indirect exclusion of girls or boys because the activities do not please them. Ideally, the chosen activities should please both boys and girls and increase the composition of mixed groups. If this is not possible, the project should propose several activities: some that will rather interest boys and
Whether the instructions take the form of a short document with guidelines, or a more comprehensive manual, it is best that they should explain the manner in which account will be taken of the differences between women and men (the gender dimension), throughout the procedure. Thus, it may be stated that the extent to which the gender dimension is taken into account, will constitute an exclusion criterion and/or an evaluation or approval criterion. Also, the effective fulfilment of this commitment can be included in the contract. If there are expectations relating to the gender dimension in the reporting and the evaluation stages this can also be explained here (see below).

2.3. Application to obtain a subsidy

2.3.1. Documents required for the application

If a standard application form is provided, it may be modified to make it clear to the applicant organisation what precisely is expected with regard to the integration of the gender dimension.

The form may contain a general query concerning the manner in which the applicant of the subsidy shall take possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension) into account. Even the belief that it is not relevant to pay attention to these differences or that there are no differences has to be justified. This may help avoid applicants from conveniently stating that there is no gender dimension.

For research projects in general, it is always advisable to mention the importance of the gender dimension since this will prevent this aspect from being overlooked, and it will lead to the collection of more scientific information about the gender dimension within the research domain. In the specific case of drug abuse women traditionally do not take the same type of drugs as men. The Federal Research Programme on Drugs 2014 of the PPS Federal Science Policy offered sound practical guidelines in this area.
The application form\textsuperscript{3}, that clarifies what information should be provided, states that due account must be taken of the gender dimension. The form also states that applicants who feel that their project does not contain any gender dimension, must justify this.

Example: enquiry about the gender dimension in the application form for projects within the Federal Research Programme on Drugs

1.7. Gender dimension:
Developments in society have significant gender dimensions. Applicants will explain below how the gender dimension is taken into account in their proposal and how it can enhance the understanding of the theme. Should applicants feel this dimension is not relevant for their proposal, they are invited to justify. “

A more detailed approach may also be adopted by asking specific questions. The advantage of this is that there is at least a chance of preventing evasive and vague replies and that the applicants start reflecting on the different situation of women and men (the gender dimension). Questions may be asked about the sex-disaggregated target group (or an approximation thereto) of the organisation or project, about the possible differences between the women and men within this target group, and about how the applicant organisation will take these into account. This also provides the applicants a clear idea of what exactly is expected of them in terms of integrating the gender dimension in the execution of the project. Questions about the gender dimension may be asked separately or included in questions already anticipated.

In the area of consumption, there are differences between women and men with regard to the types of goods that are purchased, the amounts that are spent and susceptibility to marketing and impulse purchases. By including specific questions about this type of differences (the gender dimension) in the application form for subsidies, it is possible to motivate applicant organisations to take this dimension into account.

\textsuperscript{3} http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/Call/forms/drug2014/drug2014_subform_en.doc
Example: questions about the gender dimension in an application form for subsidies relating to sustainable production and consumption pattern
What is the target group that you wish to reach with this project, and what is the sex-disaggregated composition of this group?
Are there differences between women and men within the scope of your project, and in what manner will you take such differences into account?

2.3.2. Action plan

Sometimes an action plan has to be attached to the application for structural subsidies to organisations in particular, but sometimes for project subsidies as well. The action plan must then specify what actions the organisation intends to execute within a specified period (mostly one year). A request can be added to take into account the differences between women and men (the gender dimension) during various actions comprised in this action plan.

In some cases, a model of action plan that has to be used, is provided. By including one general question or several more specific questions about the gender dimension, one can prevent this dimension from being overlooked.

There are many differences between male and female self-employed persons. Women can often be found in other sectors and often start on a smaller scale than men. They consequently also have fewer role models in this regard. The traditional role distribution relating to caring responsibilities may also cause differences relating to availability and the scope of their activity.

Organisations that receive subsidies for the support of self-employed persons must take into account such differences. If these organisations have to submit an action plan before they can receive a subsidy, a request may be made to specify in this action plan how account shall be taken of the differences between women and men (the gender dimension). This may be done in two ways.
Example 1: general mention of the gender dimension in instructions on drafting the action plan
Under all actions in the action plan, specify how due account shall be taken of possible differences in the situation between women and men (the gender dimension).

Example 2: specific mention of the gender dimension in instructions for the drafting of the action plan
Specify what actions you have planned with a view to achieving the proposed targets and specify how due account shall be taken of the possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension).
Specify the indicators that you will use to evaluate whether or not the targets have been achieved. Disaggregate these indicators by sex, if these relate to individuals. Specify how you will disseminate information about your organisation and its actions, and in what manner you will ensure that this information will reach women as well as men.

In case of projects relating to community service⁴, differences in abilities, interests, needs, etc. of women and men need to be taken into account, with a view to making the projects as efficient and successful as possible. If organisations have to submit an action plan for their project, the instructions for this plan could mention that the plan must clarify how due attention shall be paid to the different situation of women and men (the gender dimension).

Example: mention of the gender dimension in the questions facilitating the formulation of the action plan
What are the objectives of the project? Will actions be taken to ensure that these are achieved for women as well as for men?
Are training courses and educational materials provided? Do these take into account the possible differences between women and men?
Will training be provided for support staff? Does this training mention possible differences between women and men?

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⁴ Community service consists of a number of hours of unpaid work benefitting the community. The task of the justice assistant consists of performing a survey to determine the content of the punishment and subsequently of providing follow-up.
2.3.3. Recognition as organisation

Sometimes, organisations must first apply for recognition from a subsidising body before applying for subsidies. This is primarily done for structural subsidies for operating costs of organisations, but may also be required for project subsidies. In the context of applications for recognition, it is also best to include a criterion involving attention to the situation of women and men (the gender dimension) and ideally speaking, one should ask the organisation to specify, along with its application, what differences between women and men they identify in their field of work, and how these shall be taken into account.

Attention must be paid to potential differences between women and men in the social as well as in the economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development, so that development benefits everybody and everyone can make his or her contribution to it. Authorised organisations that are eligible to apply for subsidies must focus on this aspect. Paying attention to the differences between women and men (the gender dimension) should therefore be included as a pre-condition for call for applications and possible legal bases (laws, royal decrees, etc.; see above) for the recognition as an organisation that is eligible to receive subsidies. Candidate organisations should, in their recognition request dossiers, specify which differences between women and men they identify in their work domain, and how they should take these into account.

Example: criterion relating to the gender dimension for a recognition as an organisation eligible to receive subsidies, with a view to promoting sustainable development
A pre-condition to be eligible for recognition: have due regard for the different situations of women and men (the gender dimension).

2.3.4. Informal application

In case there is no regulation for the allocation of subsidies and there is no formal application procedure, due account should still be taken of the differences in the situations of women and men (the gender dimension) in application of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’.
If applications can be submitted in an unregulated manner, the person in charge of such applications should request applicants to clarify how they shall take the gender dimension into account and should explain to them what this means. If the application is considered during a meeting, the aforesaid elements must be discussed at such meeting.

2.4. Allocation of the subsidy

2.4.1. Allocation terms and conditions

After an application is submitted, it must be decided whether the subsidy can or cannot be allocated. In most cases, this is done on the basis of (pre-agreed) allocation terms and conditions. This is the ideal moment to stress the importance of the gender dimension and to indicate to the applicants what is expected of them. Normally, these terms and conditions were already presented during the notification of the subsidy and throughout the application procedure.

The fact that no account is taken of the gender dimension can be used as a criterion to exclude applicants: if the application does not (adequately) specify how possible different situations of women and men shall be taken into account, the project shall in no case be approved. If the application form contains a question concerning this aspect, the failure to (adequately) answer this question shall mean exclusion from the allocation procedure.

Concerning health and the use of medication there are quite some differences between women and men: difference in life expectancy, illnesses, attitude towards medication, effects of medication, etc. Therefore it is necessary to ask to take these differences between women and men (the gender dimension) into account during the execution of the projects. Pilot projects in particular provide an excellent opportunity to conduct more detailed examinations of various aspects and to highlight information in the form of recommendations.
This can be achieved by including attention for the gender dimension in the mandatory criteria that the project must satisfy. If these criteria are not met, the project will automatically be rejected.

**Example: the gender dimension as an exclusion criterion for pilot projects on the use of medication**

All projects must ensure that the representation of women and men in the group of patients is in proportion to the representation of women and men within the group of future users of the drug.

All projects must specify how due account shall be taken of the possible differences between women and men during the project, and in the recommendations.

Attention for gender can also be included in evaluation or allocation criteria. The degree to which account is actually taken of the gender dimension can then be assessed and thereby be included, along with the other criteria, in the final assessment when determining whether or not the subsidy will be allocated.

In 2014, the PPS Federal Science Policy made a call\(^5\) under the **BRAIN-be (Belgian Research Action through Interdisciplinary Networks) program**. This call focused on three axes of the program. Within these axes, there was scope for possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension): Axis 2 - Geosystems, universe and climate, Axis 3 - Cultural, historical and scientific heritage, and Axis 5 - Major societal challenges.

A strong gender dimension can certainly be said to exist in Axis 3 (for example, attention to the different roles of women and men in the creation of this heritage, and the social context that made it more difficult for women to exercise influence), and Axis 5 (for example, knowledge differences between women and men about digitisation, and different attitudes towards consumption and recycling). Axis 2 may possibly have a gender dimension (for example, differences in the impact of climate change on women and men).

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because of their different socio-economic situation, their consumption patterns, their interests, etc.). Hence it is relevant to include the integration of the gender dimension in the assessment criteria underlying the allocation decision. Furthermore, this is reinforced by the following question that is included in the application form: “Wherever relevant, describe and specify in detail how account will be taken of the gender dimension during this research”. This motivates the applicants to effectively reflect on this aspect, and also provides the scientific experts responsible for deciding on the allocation, with a basis for assessing the integration of the gender dimension in the project.

**Example: the gender dimension as an evaluation criterion for network projects under BRAIN-be**

**4.3.3 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

*The general evaluation criteria to be taken into consideration by the experts are the following:*

- positioning/relevance of the research with regard to the orientations of the call;
- potential use or integration of the project results by the scientific community, society and decision-makers;
- relevance of the proposals for distributing the results and making them available;
- the profile of the members, the role and the functioning of the follow-up committee;
- integration of relevant societal themes such as sustainability, the gender aspect, etc.

It may possibly also be clarified that **points** may be assigned to the evaluation criteria. In that case, all the criteria can have the same value or certain criteria may have higher point values than others.
In the context of projects that support and shelter migrants and asylum seekers, differences between women and men concerning the level of education, literacy, family situation, care work, interests, etc. have to be taken into account for example when arranging shelters and organising activities and projects aimed at capacity building. Projects that overlook this aspect may unknowingly exclude half the target group and thereby be less efficient. This justifies supplementing the criteria that will form the basis for the quantification and final approval or rejection of the projects with 'attention to the differences between women and men (the gender dimension)’. This will ensure that projects that do not take the gender dimension into account or fail to do so adequately will be assigned fewer points, which in turn will affect the chances of the approval or rejection of the project.

**Example: the gender dimension as a quantitative evaluation criterion for projects relating to the support and reception of asylum seekers and immigrants**

The projects must meet the following criteria. Each of these criteria will receive a score of 0 to 10 (0 is the lowest score):

- new and innovative;
- carriers of social surplus value;
- attention to differences between women and men (the gender dimension);
- …

Just as in the case of other allocation terms and conditions and in order to increase clarity, it is best to highlight in advance (at the time of providing information and instructions) that gender shall be applied as a criterion (see above).

### 2.4.2. Allocation committee

If there is a committee or group, or if one is established, that assess applications and grants the subsidies, it should also be ensured that this committee takes decisions that take into account the different situations of women and men (the gender dimension).
In the first instance, the **statutes** or the **guidelines** of the committee should contain a reference to section 3.3 of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ that also obliges them to take into account the gender dimension.

It should then be ensured that the decisions of this committee are effectively in line with the aforesaid section of the law. This can be done by notifying all the members or even giving them training relating to the gender and the gender dimension. This manual and the tools that have been mentioned in the introduction may be of assistance to the committee members. Another option is to provide for a **gender expert** within the committee who shall be responsible for monitoring the integration of the gender dimension into the decisions of the committee, for example, by providing advice to the other members, or by formulating recommendations.

One cannot speak of development if half of the population is excluded from it. **Development cooperation** projects that aim to improve the general situation of a specific community must take into account the possible different situation of women and men in those communities. This applies to more obvious subjects such as education and health, but also to domains like water management for example. In many developing countries, it is mainly women who go to fetch water for household use. When constructing wells, it is advisable to also examine the wishes of primary users, in addition to technical criteria. It would be a waste of resources to invest in a well that will not be used because women do not feel it is safe enough (absence of lighting, remote location, etc.) or do not regard it as worth the effort (it is located too far away from the usual place where the water is required, and other, albeit less pure, water sources are available).
If projects are presented to an allocation committee, it is important that this committee also evaluates the attention paid to possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension) within all the projects. The committee has to be informed about this task. If there are guidelines for the committee, this task should also be incorporated in them. Furthermore, calls for projects that present the role of the committee could mention that, when assessing projects, the committee shall pay attention to the integration of the gender dimension in the projects. This will ensure that applicants will also be clearly aware of this aspect.

**Example 1: mention of the gender dimension in the evaluation criteria of an allocation committee for development cooperation projects**

An allocation committee will assess which projects meet the technical requirements, and determine which projects shall receive a subsidy. In this connection, due account shall be taken of the effectiveness, the scope and sustainability of the project, and the extent to which the project is taken up by the local community, and the degree to which attention is paid to possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension).

**Example 2: mention of the gender dimension in the guidelines issued to allocation committees for development cooperation projects**

Assessment of which projects are eligible to receive a subsidy. How the project scores on the following:
- effectiveness;
- scope;
- sustainability;
- acceptance by the local community;
- attention to possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension).
- ....
Finally, a **written result or justification** is sometimes expected concerning the decisions of such committees. By including a fixed component on the gender dimension in these, the committee members are reminded in a structural manner about the obligation to focus their attention on this aspect.

Commemorations of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War have commenced in 2014. The emphasis is often on battles and soldiers and therefore – on the men. This war however, also had an impact on women and they also played a major role – albeit a less visible one – as nurses, workers, resistance fighters, etc. Projects that take this into account provide a fuller picture and may also appeal to a wider public. If the applications are analysed by a scientific committee or an allocation committee, it is entirely possible that this committee will prepare a written analysis. Ideally, in this context, there should be a request to provide information concerning the manner in which the different situation of women and men (the gender dimension) is integrated in the project. Using a fixed template for all assessments, and including a point therein relating to the gender dimension as a standard feature, will of course make it easier to prevent this aspect from being overlooked.

*Example: mention of the gender dimension in a model report for the assessment by an allocation committee, of projects relating to the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War*

**Evaluation of the project on the following points:**

- **Subject:** Does the subject of the project relate to the commemoration of the First World War?
- **Added value:** What is the added value of this project for the commemoration of the First World War? Is the project innovative?
- **Gender dimension:** Does the project mention the situation of women as well as men?
- …
2.5. Agreement granting the subsidy

2.5.1. Commitment documents

Finally, the documents that determine the allocation of a project subsidy or an operating subsidy should also mention that the subsidy will only be granted to applicants provided the applicants effectively take into account the differences between women and men. The inclusion of this expectation in the agreement will strongly motivate the recipients of the subsidy to fulfil it and will provide the subsidising body with a tool to enquire about the fulfillment of this expectation.

This may be done by at least including an explicit mention in the relevant document to the following effect: ‘In conformity with the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007, the subsidised project/organisation that is the subject of this agreement should take the possible differences between women and men into account’.

The commitment documents may also specify concrete expectations in writing. At the procedural level, attention may also be directed towards the integration of the gender dimension in, for example, the methodology or the execution of the project, in steering committees, in interim and evaluation reports. Expectations may also be listed that specifically apply to the objective of the project or the tasks of the organisation: the addition of a component on gender in a publication or document with recommendations, the collection of sex disaggregated data, the organisation of a conference in a gender-sensitive manner (time, location, handling of the subject), the publication of a brochure that appeals to both sexes, etc.

The agreement and the communication about it, can also state that the evaluation of the project or the organisation will examine whether the gender dimension is taken into account (see below).

If the allocation of the subsidy is the subject of a royal decree, a reference may be made to the mandatory integration of the gender dimension.
Equality between women and men is considered one of the aspects of the diversity policy and therefore subsidies specifically aimed at promoting the equality of women and men amongst the personnel may be granted. The integration of the gender dimension however requires that the gender dimension should be examined in other projects as well, for example, projects for the benefit of persons with a disability or with a migration background, since the situation of women and men within these target groups is not necessarily the same. Taking into account the differences between women and men will make the actions more inclusive and efficient.

If a royal decree has been issued for the awarding of such projects, the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ may be mentioned in the preamble and an article may be added clarifying that all projects must take into account the differences in the situation of women and men (the gender dimension). It may also state that a clause requiring due attention to the gender dimension shall always be included in the agreement relating to these subsidies.

Example 1: mention of the gender dimension in the preamble to a Royal Decree relating to projects on diversity

Taking into account the law of 12 January 2007 aimed at monitoring the application of the resolutions from the world conference on women held in Beijing in September 1995 and at integrating the gender perspective into the whole of the federal policies, article 3, °3.

Example 2: article on the gender dimension in royal decrees relating to projects on diversity

The subsidy will be allocated provided the project in question takes into account possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension) within the project target group.

Example 3: mention of the gender dimension in an article on the agreement in a royal decree relating to projects on diversity

An agreement will be concluded between the subsidising body and the beneficiary. It will state, among other things, that the project must take into account possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension) and lay down the modalities and the manner in which the use of the subsidy shall be justified.
It should be clearly specified in the final agreements, conventions or contracts that in view of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’, the subsidising body expects the recipients to analyse the situation of women and men and take potential differences into account in the framework of their activities.

‘The citizen’ does not exist. This concept comprises a multitude of persons with specific characteristics. Almost every citizen is either male or female and their situation and role in the society is greatly influenced by this characteristic. It is advisable that subsidised research projects aimed at formulating policy proposals to improve the situation of the citizen within various domains, should also take into account the possible differences in the situation of women and men (the gender dimension). Health and work for example clearly have a well-defined gender dimension, but it may also be useful to request the conduct of a gender analysis during a research on the organisation of institutions (for example, are the institutions adequately adjusted to the needs and daily routines of women as well as men?) and on the ageing of the migrant population (for example, does the specific role distribution between women and men in the migrant population have a similar or different impact on ageing, in comparison to the role distribution within the indigenous population?). This may be included in model agreements and possible technical specifications that are laid down before the projects are commenced.

Example 1: mention of the gender dimension in a model agreement for sociological research projects

In application of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007, attention to the differences between women and men (the gender dimension) is integrated into the entirety of the project. It should be analysed whether there are differences between women and men within the subject domain of the research project, and how such differences may best be taken into account.
**Example 2: mention of the gender dimension in technical specifications for socio-logical research projects**

Throughout the project, attention should be paid to the possible differences in the situation of women and men (the gender dimension). The methodology and the reports in particular must cover this subject systematically. All figures collected at the individual level shall be disaggregated by sex and for each data set, it shall be stated whether the differences between women and men are statistically significant.

### 2.5.2. Declaration on oath

For some agreements, there is a requirement to sign a declaration on oath. The objective of this is to obtain a clear commitment or agreement concerning certain points of the recipients of the subsidy. Such declarations may include a clause to the effect that the recipient organisation is aware of the obligation to take due account of the possible different situation of women and men. In the absence of a requirement for declaration on oath, such a declaration may be prepared specifically to integrate the gender dimension. For organisations that have already received subsidies for their operating costs for several years, such a declaration on oath would be a clear signal that expectations regarding the gender dimension shall apply from that point onwards.

An example of a declaration on oath, specifically aimed at the integration of the gender dimension can be found in ‘Annex 1: Declaration on oath for the integration of the gender dimension in an organisation/project’.

**Older female employees** do not necessarily have the same needs and interests as older male employees. In order to continue to keep the motivation of these employees as high as possible, it is best to take these differences into account in projects relating to the improvement of working conditions (for example, through changes in job responsibilities and training courses). Declarations on oath wherein the recipient of the subsidy explicitly states his/her commitment to specific actions may also include a provision that the project in question must take into account the differences between women and men (the gender dimension).
Example: mention of the gender dimension in a declaration on oath for projects relating to working conditions of 45-plus employees

The organisation applying for the subsidy declares:

- to notify all significant changes in the action to the administration;
- that the actions shall only commence after submitting the application for subsidy;
- to take into account possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension) in the development and execution of the projects, and to accordingly make adjustments to the projects;
- …

2.5.3. Information about the agreement

When informing the recipient about the definite allocation of the subsidy, extra emphasis may be laid on the obligation to integrate the gender dimension. Thus, a reference to this obligation may be included in the letter informing about the allocation of the subsidy or proposing a meeting. It may possibly be the same sentence that has been used in the agreement.

This may be useful in case of recurrent structural subsidies for the operating costs of organisations, particularly if a clause concerning the different situation of women and men (the gender dimension) is included, which was not present in agreements for previous years.

In the context of operating subsidies for organisations involved in diversity, multiculturalism and equal opportunities, funds may be allocated to organisations specifically focussing on the promotion of equality between women and men. This however does not mean that organisations working on other aspects such as origin, handicap, sexual orientation, etc. may totally ignore this aspect. Lesbians do not face exactly the same problems as homosexuals. Disabled women may be confronted with different situations than disabled men. The differences in the position of women and men are often more sharply defined in immigrant communities.
If attention to this aspect is included in the agreement, reference to this may also be made in a standard letter notifying the allocation of subsidy.

Example: mention of the gender dimension in a letter about the agreement with organisations working on diversity, multiculturalism and equal opportunities

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that in conformity with section 3.3 of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007, the subsidising body has included provisions in the agreement to the effect that your organisation shall have to take into account the possible differences between women and men (the gender dimension). When the execution of the contract is monitored, you will be asked to demonstrate how this was done.

2.6. Evaluation of the subsidised project/organisation

If evaluations are made of how the subsidy was used, it should also be checked whether due account has been taken of the differences between women and men (the gender dimension). The main method used during such assessments is to analyse the **end result** and to examine whether differences between women and men were mentioned in the subsidised conference or publication, whether the subsidised communication campaign was conducted in a gender-sensitive manner, whether the structurally subsidised organisation took into account the gender dimension in all its activities, etc.

If in the context of the subsidy, **statistics** are provided relating to individuals, it is important that these are disaggregated by sex.

On completion of the subsidised project, the receiver often has to provide an explicit and precise account of what been done with the funds received. Apart from a financial report, in most cases, a **report on the content** will also have to be provided. In most cases, organisations that receive structural subsidies to cover their operating costs must draw up an **annual report** about their activities during the past year. This is a good opportunity to ask how attention was paid to the integration of the gender dimension in the use of the subsidy. Since such reports may affect the decision of the subsidising body to disburse or to not disburse funds, the recipients of the subsidy will focus very closely on this aspect.
If models or templates of reports are provided, a specific question or a separate component relating to the gender dimension can be included.

Although the gender gap in ICT literacy is decreasing, the use of computer and the internet by women is still lower than that of men. It is mostly women who are less familiar with the use of computers and the Internet, especially amongst older people, who are often a special target group for projects aimed at promoting IT usage. Even as regards safe surfing and especially protection of privacy, there are still many differences. For example, young girls are more likely than young boys to share sexually explicit pictures of themselves. It is advisable that actions concerning this subject should keep this in mind. One of the best means to ensure that this is done in subsidised projects is by including a specific query about this in the standard final report that must be submitted at the conclusion of each project. If figures have to be provided about persons, a request may also be made that they should always be sex-disaggregated.

Example 1: questions about the gender dimension in a model of a final report for projects about IT literacy and safe surfing on the Internet
1. Information about the results:
   Briefly describe the expected results as included in the application form.
   Are the expected results achieved for women as well as men?
   Are results other than the expected results achieved?
2. Impact of the project:
   What was the impact of the project on the target group?
   What was the impact of the project on the organisation?
   What was the impact of the project on the environment?
   What was the impact of the project on the situation of women and men?

Example 2: mention of the gender dimension in instructions for the preparation of a final report for projects on IT literacy and safe surfing on the Internet
Wherever possible, provide concrete figures about the number of people involved in the project or on whom the project has had an impact. Also disaggregate this data by sex and explain possible differences in the numbers as between women and men.
### 2.7. Payment of the subsidy

The payment of the subsidy is ultimately the main focus. As highlighted several times in this publication, **coherence** is very important. The fact that the payment of the subsidy will depend on whether and in which degree the gender dimension was taken into account, should ideally be mentioned throughout the different stages of the subsidy procedure.

Since **government funds** are involved, this money should also be spent in a manner that is in line with the values and objectives of the federal government. Reducing or preventing inequalities by taking into account the possible differences between women and men is one of the objectives provided in the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007.

It should be clarified throughout the subsidy allocation process that firstly the approval of the funding application, and secondly, the effective disbursement of the subsidy depends on the degree to which account is taken of the gender dimension. This is an effective way to motivate even applicants for subsidies, to strive for greater equality between women and men within the context of their own projects or in the working of their organisations.
ANNEX: Declaration on oath for the integration of the gender dimension in an organisation/project
What is the purpose of this obligatory form?

Section 3.3 of the ‘law on gender mainstreaming’ of 12 January 2007 provides for the integration of the gender dimension and for ensuring the equality of women and men in the allocation of subsidies. Organisations that carry out projects that have a negative impact on the equality between women and men and/or do not take due account of the gender dimension, shall not be eligible for subsidies from the federal government. If this commitment is not respected during the execution of the project, the subsidy shall be revoked and all the amounts paid shall be demanded back.

The undersigned (name)

who legally validly represents the following organisation: (name and address)

• hereby declares on oath that he/she shall take into account the specific situation of women and men in the society during the execution of the project/in the operation of the organisation, and thereby ensure the integration of the gender dimension in the project/organisation.

• hereby declares that his organisation has not been convicted for discrimination on the grounds of sex in the last five years, and has not been the subject of an investigation for alleged unlawful discrimination on the grounds of sex.

First and last name: 

Designation: 

Organisation: 

Place: 

Date: 

Signature:

6 If this form is missing or is not filled in completely, the subsidy application shall automatically be considered inadmissible.
COLOPHON

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