

2. Políticas, instituições e cidadania

OC - (23193) - GENDER EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN PORTUGAL: ADVANCES, BARRIERS AND SPECIFICITIES IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

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This presentation explores some of the results of a research on gender equality in higher education institutions (HEI) in Portugal, funded by the EEA Grants. This project involves different partners and aims at developing knowledge, tools, and methodologies to mainstream gender equality in Portuguese HEI. To accomplish this, the research comprises a secondary analysis of national and international statistics, in-depth interviews with male and female Higher Education Institution's leaders and four case studies. Here we will present results from the first two research stages.

Secondary data analysis shows that despite advances in gender equality in academia, there are persistent patterns of inequality that are also observed in other countries - namely, the underrepresentation of women in academic decision-making and leadership positions (Gomez et al 2016); the effects of cultural tradition on selection and evaluation procedures combined with a majority of men in decision-making positions (Ross and Gattab, 2009); the discrepancies between academic paths (with greater access, completion and success of female students) and career paths (with greater number of men, with increases in top positions) revealing discriminatory barriers (Bozal, 2015, 2016); the problematic relation between meritocracy and inequality (Deem, 2007); and the fact that women do not have the same effective opportunities (Ramiro, 2017).

Finally, this paper will present some of the results of the analysis of the interviews with women who reached decision-making positions. Their testimonies illustrate the ways in which barriers to women's career result in the vertical segregation shown by secondary data analysis. They tend to feel removed from power and refer to a bias in favor of men that increases throughout the academic career. This bias equates the idea of being a woman, married and with children, to an obstacle to a career. For them, positive discrimination measures can play an important role in advancing gender equality.

Palavras-chave : Gender, higher education institutions, leadership