RESET

Redesigning Equality and Scientific Excellence Together

Report on the RESET network's structural engagement against sexual harassment through the work of new or enhanced units

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Redesigning
Equality and
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Together

Abbreviations

AUTh	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ERA	European Research Area
GEB	Gender Equality Board
GEC	Gender Equality Committee
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HR	Human Resources
RUB	Ruhr University of Bochum, Germany
ScPo	Sciences Po Paris, France
SH	Sexual Harassment
UBx	University of Bordeaux, France
UL	University of Lodz, Poland
UOULU	University of Oulu, Finland
U.Porto	University of Porto, Portugal
VR	Vice-Rector

Executive summary

This document aims to report on the structural commitment of RESET partners against sexual harassment. It consists in the collection and analysis of information on HEIs systems tackling sexual harassment and the elaboration of recommendations for the creation or upscaling of RESET procedures.

This report contains a literature review on the institutionalisation of the cause of sexual harassment in HEIs and describes efforts made by local GEBs towards a joint quality standard, as well as it maps actions of the local GEPs dedicated to fighting against sexual harassment within four RESET universities. In this way, it assesses current state of the systems. This deliverable entails conclusions on the project as a sustainable network for good practice and joint actions.

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1. Introduction

Sexual harassment, gender-based violence and discrimination are structuring issues for the RESET project (see definitions in section 1.2). Their eradication is one of the objectives of the declaration of top management of RESET universities towards gender equality, diversity and inclusive scientific excellence, made public in June 2022: "*Combating all forms of discrimination or gender-based violence within our institutions. We engage ourselves to draw awareness to the issue and to address and sanction any cases of discrimination or violence that could occur at our universities. Our position includes promotion of safety and equality in our living, working and virtual spaces.*" (RESET, 2022).

This willingness is reflected in one of the axes of the Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) adopted by four partners: University of Bordeaux, University of Lodz, University of Porto and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki benefiting from the experience of the two mentor universities - Ruhr University Bochum, University of Oulu, and the partner responsible for monitoring and evaluation - Sciences Po Paris. The zero tolerance policy towards all forms of sexual violence and discrimination is an important issue for RESET, as a strong element to produce sustainable cultural change. This is also embedded in other RESET actions: through the creation of dedicated training modules for administrative, teaching staff and students; but also by defining and operationalising objectives of inclusive excellence policies; and via the implementation of communication strategies.

This report contains five parts, where part one presents its objectives, definition of main terms and issues, and reviews literature on the subject of institutionalisation of the cause of sexual harassment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In part two, we set details on the local context and measures of GEPs in accordance with the European framework. They are completed by the joint vision of good practices (part three) and recommendations (part four) in relation to the common issues and difficulties.

1.1 Objectives and methodology

Since the launch of the RESET project in January 2021, partners have made considerable efforts to foster and increase each other's knowledge on the context of HEIs and common and particular issues related to the setting-up of units in charge of preventing and sanctioning gender-based violence, sexual harassment and discrimination. Four partner institutions have also progressed in creating or upgrading dedicated units and procedures against sexual harassment and discrimination in the framework of GEP development and implementation. This report has been written 28 months after the launch of RESET and 10 months after the validation of GEPs. All four GEPs designed within the framework of RESET contain an area focused on discrimination including gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual harassment. This report seeks to demonstrate how different Gender Equality Boards (GEBs) and other

stakeholders have been mobilised around the policy tackling issues of sexual harassment and discrimination.

Thus, under the responsibility of the University of Bordeaux, this report aims to report on the efforts made by the RESET project as a network mobilised against issues of sexual harassment in academia. It strives to identify crucial contemporary challenges related to this topic and share good practices for the implementation of institutional mechanisms tackling sexual harassment.

In the preparation of this report, RESET relied on the experience and results of the GEAR tool (EIGE) and the UniSAFE project[1] - another EU-funded project that aims to produce better knowledge on gender-based violence and sexual harassment in research performing organisations and to translate this knowledge into operational tools for higher education, research organisations and policy makers. To date, one of the main outcomes of the UniSAFE is a wide-ranging survey on sexual violence at universities (including intersectional perspective) and analysis of state policies (Humbert, et al., 2022). Other analyses and RESET outputs such as training modules are being produced, with a major challenge to build students' confidence into the procedures and to raise stakeholders' capacity to design, implement and monitor effective policies.

Sexual harassment and GBV are part of the GEP recommended areas of action under the Horizon Europe and are covered by EU-wide instruments, such as the GEAR tool[2] developed for and operated by EIGE. The declaration adopted in 2021 in Ljubljana by the Member States during the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of Europe is a milestone, since it recognises GBV, including sexual harassment, as a reality within the ERA and calls on stakeholders to act[3].

This document is also based on data directly produced within the consortium. These include two series of face-to-face interviews, conducted between June 2021 and October 2022, which focused on the assessment of risks and strengths of institutional systems dealing with sexual violence. These inquiry approach was complemented by bilateral interviews with the heads of the legal services of the partner universities (U.Porto, RUB); people involved in the development of the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Mobbing Procedure at UL or representatives of the legal department and the Gender Equality Committee of AUTh.

RESET builds its experience on the results and knowledge shared by other projects and institutions. Within this approach, the work conducted on institutional systems tackling sexual harassment, sexist violence, homophobia and other discriminations included the following events:

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in 2021, RESET organised an online webinar "Crossed views on Sex and Gender-Based Violence".

In 2022, Marion Paoletti (UBx) participated in the panel "Learning from research on gender-based violence in higher education and research environments in different contexts" (European Conference on Gender and Politics, Ljubljana, 6 July 2022) with a project of article – "*The impact of #MeToo on the institutionalisation of the cause of academic sexual violence. The French case with regard to three other European universities involved in RESET*".

A capacity building and a co-design session "Institutional Systems Dealing with Gender-Based Violence: Data and Ethics related aspects" (February 2023) was organised.

All of the abovementioned approaches resulted in the definition of the RESET joint quality standard based on four pillars:

1. Measuring the prevalence of incidents
2. Acting on attitudes, preventing cases
3. Implementing a reporting system allowing the sanctioning of presumed perpetrators and the support of presumed victims
4. Developing training programs for the whole academic community.

Along with the requirements of Horizon Europe, the adoption of the GEPs was a decisive moment to anchor this policy within a set of objectives and actions officially endorsed by the universities.

This report presents a set of identified actions and recommendations for RESET institutions and other interested HEIs to tackle issues of sexual harassment.

1.2   Definitions

Along with the definitions, this part seeks to clarify the aim of the report. This document targets the academic institutionalisation of the policy against sexual harassment in the academic environment. Should this policy and the reporting mechanism cover only sexual violence or all forms of discrimination? This debate has been running in RESET and reflects national conceptions shaped by the history of countries.

1.2.1 *Sexual harassment, gender-based violence, discrimination*

European law integrates a concept of "sexual harassment" into the broader definition of discrimination.

Sexual harassment

The European Directive 2002/73/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, training, promotion

and working conditions, is the first legislative act to consider harassment (including sexual harassment) as a form of discrimination. The 2006 update of the EU Directive (2006/54/EC) confirms it:

> *Harassment and sexual harassment are contrary to the principle of equal treatment between men and women and constitute discrimination on grounds of sex for the purposes of this Directive. These forms of discrimination occur not only in the workplace, but also in the context of access to employment, vocational training and promotion. They should therefore be prohibited and should be subject to effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties[4].*

Sexual harassment is defined as any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment (Directive 2002/73/EC).

Sexual harassment is being addressed through the broader prism of discrimination by the European Union. In line with the process of Europeanisation of policies, the implementation of EU principles in Member States depend on a series of factors among which national conceptions (Forest, 2021).

Gender-based violence

Sexual harassment is one of the types of a broader concept "Gender-Based Violence". The term GBV includes: physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, economic violence, sexual harassment, harassment on the grounds of gender and environmental harassment (UniSAFE, n.d.).

GBV is also defined in the Istanbul Convention (2011)[5]:

> *Gender-based violence refers to any type of harm that is perpetrated against a person or group of people because of their factual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity.*

Thus, in this document, we will use the concept Gender-Based Violence referring both to the sexual violence and to sexual harassment.

The United Nations defines "violence against women" as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (United Nations, 1993). The gender aspect of these acts does not only refer to inequalities built on a binary vision of sex and gender, but sanctions more generally a hierarchical order between sexes and

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[4] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:204:0023:0036:en:PDF
[5]

genders. Despite the fact that prevalence of sexual harassment by men towards women is well documented, men can also be victims of this type of actions.

Discrimination

The principle of non-discrimination is enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, in its Article 14 entitled "Prohibition of discrimination":

> *The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in [the] Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status* (European Court of Human Rights, 1950).

It is also enshrined in Article 21 of the European Union's Charter for Fundamental Rights, entitled "non-discrimination" (European Convention, 2000):

> *Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.*

The definition of discrimination refers to the fact that individuals or groups of individuals in comparable situations should not be treated less favourably because of a particular characteristic – stated above - in accessing a good or service. Sexual harassment is then a type of gender-based violence that constitutes discrimination.

1.2.2 From sexual harassment to discrimination: intersectional perspective of RESET

At the beginning of the project, RESET partners ran a debate concerning mechanisms of an institutional policy against sexual harassment in academia. Should we primarily seek to act on gender-based and sexual violence or broaden and encompass it within the wider field fighting against discrimination? The development of the RESET approach is outlined in the next paragraphs.

Towards a common conception: sexual harassment as discrimination

Among four GEP-implementing partners, the situation on France differs from the rest. Due to the long-standing feminist mobilisations in universities, sexual harassment is now considered a public issue, justifying intervention of public authorities. Owing to the implementation of European projects at HEIs, several French universities have been experimenting with the implementation of monitoring units on sexual harassment since 2000. A unit dedicated to sexual and homophobic violence and sexual harassment has been functioning at the University of Bordeaux since 2015 (CEVHS[6]). Before the change

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[6] CEVHS - Cellule de veille contre le harcèlement sexuel, les violences sexistes et homophobes (Monitoring unit against sexual harassment, gender-based and homophobic violence)

in the French law (2012), yet driven by a very late transposition of the EU Directive, sexual harassment was considered as a type of violence, but did not enter into the definition of discrimination. With this law update, France aligned its legislation on the matter of discrimination with the European framework. This alignment has been reinforced in 2019 via a new law on the transformation of the civil service stating that all public institutions, including universities must implement a dedicated unit aiming to prevent and deal with cases of discrimination, acts of violence, moral or sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Although the Europeanisation of gender equality policies does not necessarily mean convergence with the European norm (Forest & Lombardo, 2012), this seems to be the case with the integration of sexual harassment in policies tackling discrimination.

The general risk of considering sexual harassment as part of the broader issue of discrimination may lie in the fact that it may dilute the issue and make it disappear before it is even brought to the fore (Deruelle, 2020). Therefore, there is a need in explicit and targeted communication on sexual harassment being part of the larger anti-discrimination policy.

Thus, RESET partners, in accordance with incentives of the European policy, but also in line with the promotion of intersectional approach, have systematically associated sexual violence with all other forms of discrimination. Specific efforts are made to adopt intersectional policies on tackling of issues of sexual harassment, GBV and discrimination. Depending on the cultural and political context, some partners made the strategic choice not to include the words "sexual harassment" in the title of their mechanism, opting for a broader scope of "discrimination". Additionally, the concept of "sexual harassment" is seen as too restrictive for the implementation of a dedicated mechanism.

Sexual harassment within the EU Anti-Discrimination Policy

Equality between women and men is one of the founding values of the EU. The Europeanisation of equality policies can be done with either "hard" (employment policies) or "soft" measures (a sexual violence) (Forest & Lombardo, 2012), with a general tendency to harden over time.

Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome guarantees: "the application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work" (European Economic Community, 1957). Although this article was introduced for economic purposes, it has become a pillar in the construction of other European laws symbolizing fight against discrimination (Bennett & Booth, 2002). In 1971, the European Court of Justice referred to it to affirm that the elimination of discrimination based on the criterion of sex is part of the general principles of Community law. In 1976, Directive 76/207 extended the scope of equal pay to all recruitment, training and working conditions.

On the basis of this Directive, sexual harassment started to be considered as a problem arising from unequal working conditions between women and men (Zippel, 2009a).

Although European Community law already established occupational equality in the early 1980's, the measures were poorly implemented by the member states and few legal remedies existed to denounce gender discrimination and sexual harassment (Zippel, 2009a). According to MacKinnon (1979), cited in Mour (2019), European activists were influenced by the measures against sexual harassment developed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of the United-States in 1980. They borrowed the notion of "sexual harassment", and defined it as "gender discrimination" - a product of relations of domination according to the American feminists. However, demands from feminist activists have been gradually diluted throughout the political process (Mour, 2019). On the one hand, some Member States refuse to consider sexual harassment as an issue of discrimination. On the other hand, there is no consensus on the implementation of binding measures (Zippel, 2009b). Thus, owing to the long-term lobbying work of feminists (Mour, 2019), "soft law" measures were adopted in the early 1990's concerning the protection of the dignity of women and men at work.

The Directive on Harassment adopted by the European Parliament[7] (2002) takes more into account demands of feminists (Zippel, 2009a). By dedicating a directive to this topic, the EU provides a binding framework for national legislative reforms fighting against sexual harassment. Nowadays, sexual harassment at work is understood as a type of discrimination on the grounds of sex, for which employers are responsible (Mour, 2019). The Directive on Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Occupation (2006) considers sexual harassment as an indirect discrimination.

Until 2000, the EU Non-Discrimination law was limited to this provision prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sex in the field of employment. With the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999, the EU made some steps forward to combat various forms of discrimination (Liddell & Flaherty, 2018). The European Union is now provided with an extensive body of anti-discrimination legislation. The corresponding Treaty (Article 2) makes the principle of non-discrimination as one of the fundamental values of the Union, which allows combating of discrimination on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Furthermore, we would like to highlight two main directives adopted by the EU for the implementation of anti-discrimination policies:

- **Employment Equality Directive** (2000/78/EC), which prohibits discrimination in employment on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion or belief, age or disability.

- **Racial Equality Directive** (2000/43/EC) introduced a ban on discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin in the field of employment, but also in

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[7] Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions.

access to social protection, including social security, as well as to goods and services.

These two directives were a crucial step in extending the scope of the Non-Discrimination Law in the EU, by disseminating it nationally with a new (though uneven) focus on racial discrimination at universities.

Thus, the intersectional perspective of RESET implies integration of sexual harassment in the scope of the concept of "discrimination".

Intersectional perspective of RESET

The notion of intersectionality has been initially used to give a name to the strategic and identity dilemmas encountered in the US political space by certain categories of people experiencing combined forms of domination (Crenshaw, 1989). Since then, this concept has undergone numerous adaptations over the past 30 years (Krizsan et al., 2012). Scientifically, "intersectionality theories" have gained ground explaining how each person's specificities and experience owes to the fact that they are situated at the intersection of several relations of domination: mainly of gender, (social) class and race, the accumulation of which produces specific situations.

The link between sexual violence and discrimination grounded in the RESET intersectional framework is twofold. It includes the over-representation of groups with cumulative minority traits among victims of sexual violence in HEIs and a specific attention paid to the crosscutting factors of discrimination including gender inequalities (UniSAFE, 2021a).

In this report, the notion of intersectionality is central to understand how accumulation of specific factors of discrimination may make certain individuals more vulnerable to sexual harassment. The UniSAFE project reports "Laws and policies in the EU relatively infrequently address intersectionality; when they do, gender identity and sexual orientation along with race are the axes that are addressed most often. Other grounds of inequality are addressed less frequently - religion, age, health and disability, class, and im/migration".

Studies on prevalence and consequences of gender-based violence reveal that groups with certain characteristics are significantly more exposed (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2020; UniSAFE, 2021a). This corresponds to the position held in the institution - some doctoral students, early-career teachers and/or researchers were identified as particularly vulnerable in terms of gender-based violence (UniSAFE, 2022). Gender identity and sexual orientation can also be factors that reinforce cases of sexual harassment: respondents identifying as non-binary or trans people are most at risk of facing sexual harassment. All forms of gender-based violence are more prevalent for people with a disability or chronic illness. Being an international staff/student is associated with higher risk of economic violence and sexual violence. Increasing age is associated with lower prevalence of most forms of gender-based violence (UniSAFE, 2022).

Within the context of this report, we will mostly refer to both terms: gender-based violence and sexual harassment. However, this does not imply that RESET partners dissociate themselves from a broader engagement to tackle issues of discriminations.

1.3   State of the art - sexual harassment at HEIs

Research on sexual harassment at HEIs is recent and unevenly developed in different countries, either by researchers, public bodies or associations (UniSAFE, 2021a).

These studies have a threefold objective: to assess the prevalence of sexist and sexual violence in higher education (1); to issue recommendations for the institutionalisation of dedicated units (2); and to characterise local contexts and the intersection of institutional, national and European policies that encourage the establishment of such units (3).

1.3.1   Measuring the prevalence of sexual harassment in universities

The lack of statistical data and scientific knowledge on sexual harassment in universities has been a hindrance to the implementation of specific institutional procedures. Statistics are one of the first levers for legitimising the problem of gender violence and is a necessary tool for the development of public and institutional policies (Mour, 2019). Unlike the United States, where surveys are proliferating, few European countries produced scientific research on sexual violence until the 2010's - apart from Northern Europe - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2020). With regard to sexual harassment at work, there was no large-scale national statistical survey until the early 2000's. However, the Rubenstein report published in 1987[8] provided a synthesis of the results of surveys on sexual harassment in various European countries and was very useful for feminist activists in drafting legislation at the national level (Zippel, 2009b). Under the influence of the recommendations of the Beijing Platform (under the aegis of the United Nations) in 1995, states began to investigate facts of violence against women. This was the case with the National Survey on Violence against Women in France (ENVEFF, 2000). This survey was led by the National Institute for Demographic Studies and helped to legitimise subsequent political and institutional responses. Nevertheless, it did not include any section on the situation at universities, unlike the surveys carried out in the Northern Europe.

The European situation in terms of institutionalisation contrasts with the US context, where institutional and legislative responses were implemented from the 1970's and had been propelled by students' mobilisation on university campuses and research on sexual violence at universities. Among them, the seminal Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972)[9], which prohibited discrimination based on sex in state-supported education programs and added sexual harassment in 1992. In the wave of statistical

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[8] https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1468-2338.1989.tb00069.x
[9] https://www.justice.gov/crt/title-ix

research on crime in the US, the Clery Act (1990)[10] made it mandatory for universities to publish statistical data on sex crimes on college campuses and was accompanied by the establishment of resources and services to address and prevent violence (Hibberd, 2017).

Silence on sexual violence in the European academic context was broken at the end of the 2010's. Some countries of the RESET consortium, such as Poland, have been able to develop specific surveys in the framework of European projects (Ciaputa, 2021). Portugal and France, unlike Greece and Poland, have national surveys that contribute to the recognition of sexual harassment as a public issue. The second national statistical survey on violence and gender relations in France in 2016 (VIRAGE), includes a dedicated part on the academic context. In Portugal, a research project developed since 2017 has measured GBV in HEIs (Neves, 2021).

The UniSAFE project significantly increases knowledge on gender-based violence in the EU. Between January and June 2022, UniSAFE coordinated a survey among 46 universities in 15 European countries. With over 42,000 responses from staff and students, this survey is the largest conducted so far in the European Research Area. The prevalence of incidents among respondents is very high: results show that 62% of the survey respondents have experienced at least one form of gender-based violence since they started working or studying at their institution. Only two of the six forms of GBV defined by UniSAFE (Figure 1) are related to sexual violence: 31% of respondents reported cases of sexual harassment and 3% reported sexual violence.

Figure 1: Prevalence of any form of gender-based violence and by form of gender-based violence
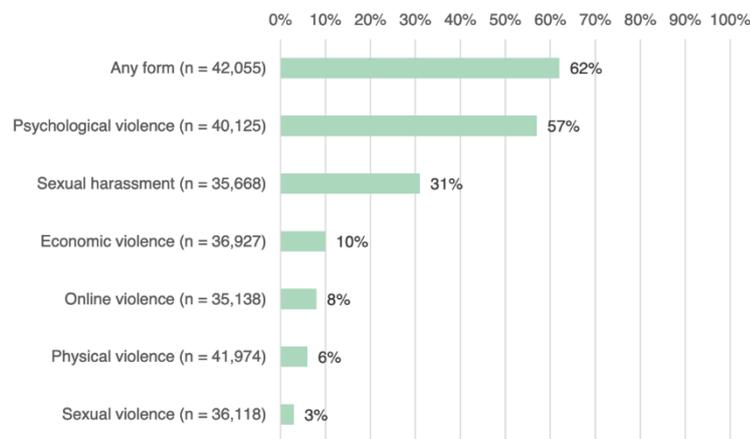
Figure 1 - Prevalence of gender-based violence in HEIs, UniSAFE, 2022

Moreover, respondents identifying as LGBTQIA+ (68%), with disability or chronic illness (72%) and those belonging to an ethnic minority group (69%) were more likely to have

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[10] https://www.clerycenter.org/the-clery-act

experienced at least one incident of gender-based violence, compared to those who do not identify with these characteristics (Humbert, et al., 2022).

From all available data, it appears that victims of sexual harassment at university do not ask for help at institutions or at the special units, when they exist.

> *Among respondents who had experienced gender-based violence, only 13% reported it. Almost half of the victims (47%) explained that they felt uncertain whether the behaviour was serious enough to be disclosed. Another frequent reason indicated by 31% of the victims is that at the time of the incident they did not identify the behaviour as an act of violence* (Humbert, et al., 2022)

The data from the reporting units at UBx and ScPo[11].also show that students constitute the majority of referrals for acts of sexual violence between students.

A recent study (2022) was conducted by the IPSOS[12] – "Sexual harassment and sexism within the scientific community". 5184 researchers were interviewed in 117 countries. Results of this qualitative survey underline the persistence of GBV in HEIs: 1 of 2 female scientists report having experienced sexual harassment in their workplace. 2 out of 3 victims of sexual harassment report a negative impact on their career: 50% of victims report feeling uncomfortable at work, 30% feel vulnerable and 21% even report a loss of confidence (IPSOS, 2023). According to this study, 2 out of 3 scientists regret the insufficiency or ineffectiveness of actions towards GBV. The L'Oréal Foundation - that ordered this study - recommends implementing a zero tolerance policy, massive awareness-raising activities and allocation of financial resources to tackle sexual harassment at work.

The available data also point out the major consequences of sexual harassment, particularly on health at work and studies In addition to quantitative surveys, qualitative approaches highlight the experiences of misconduct in higher education and their effects, especially for victims combining several factors for discrimination (Pritchard & Edwards, 2023).

1.3.2 Institutional responses: a critical perspective

Since the late 2010's, European research on sexual violence in the academic context has adopted a new angle of analysis: institutional policies. From an often-critical perspective, the shortcomings of dedicated units are pointed out, as well as the failure to apply the law, in case such unit exists.

Through specific case studies in the French context, Master's and doctoral students report on the weaknesses of the monitoring units and procedures that have been progressively put in place at universities and schools since the mid-2000's, under the

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[11] In 2019-2020, at Science Po, there were 44 referrals to the unit, among which 43 from students. At the University of Bordeaux, between September 2015 and January 2022, nearly 57% of referrals were made by students.

[12] https://www.ipsos.com/fr-fr/a-propos

requirements of the Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Innovation, in conjunction with national feminist associations (Benaïssa, 2019; Gaide & Kam, 2019; Mour, 2019; Deruelle, 2020). However, the Ministry's incentive policy is a 'soft' law and says nothing about the concrete operationalisation of the unit. The long-term implementation of these procedures depends largely on a coalition of stakeholders from the activist, academic, administrative and political spheres within the universities. No financial means are offered to universities for the functioning of these units. Although the Ministry and university governance support them politically, the monitoring units rarely have dedicated experts and often rely on teacher-researchers who are not trained to monitor the situation.

The UniSAFE project concludes the comparative study on public action in Europe by stating that operational aspects are marginally addressed. Procedural aspects in all examined types of frameworks tend to be described in a generic and vague manner.

1.3.3 Conditions for successful institutionalisation

Institutionalisation can be defined as the integration of the cause of sexual violence into discourses and practices of academic institutions (Blanchard et al., 2018). A number of studies on sexual harassment in universities attempt to identify the conditions for the successful institutionalisation of the cause of sexual violence in higher education (Ranea-Triviño et al., 2022). It depends on the alignment between the EU incentives, national framework and the local mobilisation of different actors: administrative, political, but also feminists (among professors and students). European gender equality policy is one of the strongest fields of European social policy, was described in the 1970's and 1980's through the functioning of the "velvet triangle", whose three points represent (Woodward, 2004):

1. Femocrats and female politicians who have procedural knowledge
2. Representatives of women's organisations who have insider knowledge
3. Academics who have scientific knowledge.

This configuration of relationships between resource persons within institutions and activist mobilisation among staff or the student community also appears necessary for the local functioning of these units over time (Graham & Walker, 2019).

A recent work of Lombardo and Bustelo (2022) shows that even when the configuration is favourable to the implementation of a protocol for dealing with sexual violence at universities (as in Spain), new institutional mechanisms are threatened by the blindness of the university community. There exist prejudices that tend to consider harassing behaviour normal. On the other side, the non-prioritization of issues of sexual violence by universities is identified as the most certain factor of resistance to effective institutionalisation (Tildesey et al., 2022).

The results of the recent researches have shown that sexual harassment is widespread in European universities for both students and staff. Institutional responses to prevent

and punish it face a number of obstacles, including low trust in procedures. These results helped RESET partners to define actions on sexual harassment in their GEP in June 2022 and provide useful evidence for their implementation of GEP2.0 at M46.

2.   Local settings and content of GEPs

The Horizon Europe set a new standard for combating sexual harassment through the establishment of effective reporting and monitoring mechanisms. The last generation of GEP projects under Horizon Europe was encouraged to cover this issue through internal data collection, capacity building and reinforcing of monitoring and reporting procedures and bodies.

In this part, the new European framework for dealing with sexual harassment in academia will be explained, followed by the measures undertaken by each partner's GEP. The RESET GEPs (1.0) were adopted between May and July 2022.

2.1   Sexual harassment and gender-based violence as pillars of Gender Equality Plans

In the university context, where the legitimacy given to addressing sexual violence issues is sometimes weak, the European level is proving to be a more favourable and encouraging. Horizon Europe framework contains three main levels that address gender equality through:

1. Having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place is now an eligibility criterion for certain categories of legal entities.
2. Integration of a gender dimension into research and innovation content is a requirement by default and evaluated under the excellence criterion, unless the topic description explicitly specifies.
3. Increasing gender balance: a target of 50% women in Horizon Europe related boards, expert groups and evaluation committees; gender balance in research teams is a ranking criterion for proposals with the same score.

Horizon Europe provides a structural and methodological framework for the development of GEPs, where five areas of action should be covered (Figure 2):
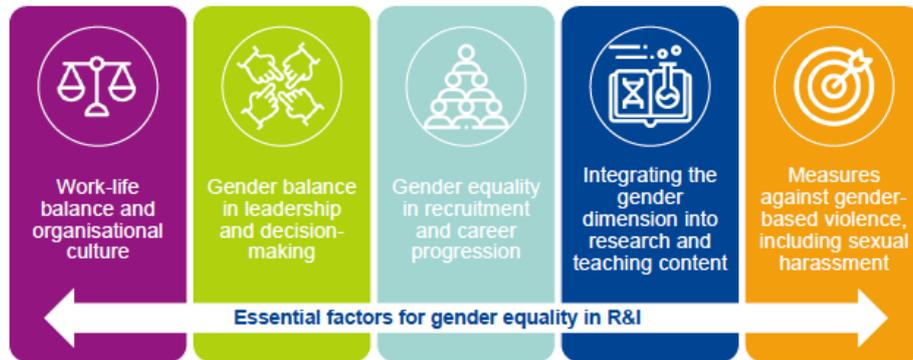
Figure 2 - Recommended areas of action for GEPs (European Commission, 2021)

With regard to the area "Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment", a Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) drawn up by the European Commission (2021) specifies the following expectations:

> *A GEP may consider what measures the organisation takes to combat gender-based violence and sexual harassment, including behaviour that violates any individual's dignity or that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Through a GEP, organisations may wish to consider examining the prevalence of sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence and take further steps to ensure that they have clear organisational policies and measures on sexual harassment.*

In the implementation of policies addressing GBV, several aspects are particularly relevant to focus on (European Commission, 2021):

- **Behaviours**: establishing and codifying the expected behaviours of employees and students including actions that are considered as sexual harassment.
- **Reporting**: a policy may outline how all members of the organisation can report cases of sexual harassment, including when they are victims or witnesses.
- **Investigation**: a policy can set out visible and simple information about the investigatory and decision-making process, including associated time limits
- **Support for victims**: a policy may consider how advice and information on its mechanisms are provided to victims or witnesses after a report has been made.
- **Disciplinary measures and prosecution**: a policy should also cover disciplinary procedures for perpetrators. It may also include guidance and support for reporting to the police and legal proceedings.

In the framework of the GEAR action toolbox, the European Gender Equality Institute develops recommendations against gender-based violence including sexual harassment (EIGE, n.d.):

- Implementing a **reporting** policy

- Adopting an **investigation** policy that sets out visible and easy-to-understand information for all staff and students
- **Providing measures to support victims**
- Organising **disciplinary measures for the prosecution** of perpetrators
- Promoting **educational programs** about sexual and gender-based harassment.

These tools have been mobilised in the context of the definition and adoption of RESET's GEPs (2022) and can be complemented by the first results of the UniSAFE project, based on "an ambitious and holistic analytical 7P model (figure 3) (Strid, Humbert, Hearn, Bondestam, & Husu, 2021):

Figure 3 - The 7P model, UniSAFE, D3.1, p 16

Two dimensions seem particularly innovative in this model:

- **Provision of services** refers to the support offered to victims, families and perpetrators of gender-based violence.

- **Partnership** relates to the involvement of relevant actors at the international, national, regional, local and institutional levels, including governmental agencies, civil society organisations, trade unions, staff and student associations, working in collaboration on concerted actions to combat gender-based violence.

2.2 Organisational contexts

Institutional frameworks towards sexual harassment and GBV vary from one partner to another and are influenced by national and regional regulations. However, the European framework presents a basis, on which partners can build their own policies and procedures.

The following analysis of the local contexts is based on several inputs: a synthesis of the contexts provided by the evaluator of the RESET project as part of the mid-term report (February 2023); results of an extensive survey carried out before the design og

GEPs1.0, under the responsibility of U.Porto; two series of interviews conducted with each of the partners, including the evaluator's institution.

The interviews carried out between the beginning of the project and spring 2022 focused mainly on the existing monitoring units (UBx, Science Po, RUB, UOULU) or the evaluation of the objectives, opportunities or obstacles for the partners, who have not yet implemented any specific procedures at that moment (UL, U.Porto, AUTh). All partners were asked about their assessment of the state of feminist mobilisation on gender issues within their university. The #MeToo movement, which emerged in 2017, launched a wave of the global feminist movement, unfolding in the digital space, and focused on the sexual appropriation of women's bodies. The literature on the institutionalisation of feminist issues points out a necessity of existence of local feminist mobilisations for the emergence and subsequent functioning of units. The few available surveys show that #MeToo has partly transformed female students: they are more aware of feminist issues, report facts more systematically, express solidarity with victims and have an important role as witnesses (Albenga & Dagorn, 2019).

Consecutively, we made an assessment of each partner in terms of local mobilisation[13]. In addition to that, we included information from the local reports produced by the UniSAFE project (D3.2 Report on the European Policy Baseline, 2021a). National experts prepared these reports, covering 33 countries. They comprise mapping of policies and legal frameworks.

At the level of GEP implementing universities, the situations before the adoption of GEPs in 2022 were diverse. UBx has had a unit for monitoring of sexual harassment before the GEP adoption in 2022. UL, U.Porto and AUTh did not dispose of any structure of this type (though they had student welfare services). None of the four countries has a national law specifically dealing with sexual violence at universities (only 8 of the 33 countries mapped by the UniSAFE report do so). According to the UniSAFE project, 10 out of the 33 countries have policies that explicitly refer to GBV in the context of universities and research organisations, including France and Portugal (UniSAFE, 2021a).

2.2.1 Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

The local report prepared by Nelli Kambouri for the UniSAFE project notes that in Greece, an issue of "gender-based violence at work has remained at the margins of public debates about research and higher education, and is addressed only in the context of specific EU funded projects and initiatives" (Kambouri, 2021). Dependence on the EU-funded projects to address the issue is high, especially for producing data on sexual harassment. In the same way, the member of the AUTh RESET team, in an interview conducted in June 2021, stated: "Until 2020, everyone was very silent about sexual harassment. It was a huge taboo". The #MeToo mobilisations in Greece came late, lagging almost three years behind the launch of the initial hashtag. Since then the

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[13] Results were presented at the European conference on gender and politics in Ljubljana, in summer 2022

testimonies have been massive and picked up by the mainstream media. The detonator was the testimony made in January 21 by an Olympic sailing champion - Sofia Bekatorou, a victim of rape by her coach. Sexual violence, which had been invisible in Greece until then, was revealed through the hashtags #MeToo, #MeTooGR and #eimasteoloimazi ("we are all together") (Rouquette, 2021). The reports have mainly concerned the fields of sport and culture and more marginally the universities, including the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki[14].

The local team points out that at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki this recent change has been producing an effect.

Legislation on sexual harassment in Greece progressed significantly in 2019 (Kambouri, 2021). A Law 4604/2019 "Promoting substantive equality between the sexes and combating gender-based violence" encouraged universities and research centres to integrate gender in both teaching and research activities. Law 4589/20195 took things a step further by providing under Article 33 establishment of Gender Equality Committees (GECs) in all Greek Universities. This law stipulates that the committees are composed of unpaid members of staff and act as consultative bodies to the University senate, schools and departments. The GECs are responsible for the development of GEPs, measures to promote gender equality and fight against sexism, enhancement of academic communities' awareness and training regarding gender and gender equality and promotion of gender studies teaching and research. The GECs are expected to play an important role in addressing GBV in Greek universities. Greek HEIs may establish Gender Equality Offices to support Gender Equality Committees in their role and tasks. Despite existence of positive impulses, the system is not very clear about who is responsible for dealing with GBV.

The new law 4957/2022 indicates that the organisation may establish a specific Unit to support GEC in their role, work and GEP implementation. The National Act 4808/2021 on Internal Policies for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence and Harassment and Management of Complaints excluded public entities. In 2023, a Ministerial Decision was adopted to integrate them – "Prevention and Elimination of Violence and Harassment Phenomena in Public Entities" (European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination, 2023)

As it stands, there are neither formal procedures for dealing with GBV in Greek universities, nor collection of data on this issue at the national scale. However, the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI) is funding a research project: "Affects capes of Care: Gender-Based Violence and Resilience during the COVID-19 Pandemic" (EIGE, n.d.) that aims to enrich existing data.

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[14] Three former students of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki revealed in an article and a closed Facebook forum of alumni that they had been sexually assaulted by a now-retired professor at AUTh. According to the media, the Rector formally requested the intervention of justice for the investigation of the case and the punishment of the perpetrators (Kambouri, 2021).

In Greece, there were some surveys on GBV targeting adult population. A survey by DIANEOSIS project included students: it showed that 40% of women and 11, 3% of men had experienced some form of sexual harassment in their lifetime (DIANEOSIS, 2018).

In its GEP, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki included some ambitious measures to monitor and address sexual harassment and has already developed several communication actions to highlight this issue and give it legitimacy. AUTh has no mechanism to record incidents of violence, bullying and harassment, nor any relevant service/office, where victims can seek help and support. There is an urgent need to establish policies and a mechanism that will prevent and address the phenomenon of sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence at AUTh. According to the GEP and as suggested in the RESET Interim Monitoring Report (2023), it is expected that the establishment of a Gender Equality Office along with a protocol for GBV incidents will support addressing these challenges at the institutional level.

2.2.2 University of Bordeaux

Since 2015, the University of Bordeaux has had a policy on combating sexual violence. It consists of a unit responsible for assisting alleged victims and linking them with the administration for the possible prosecution of alleged perpetrators. The unit is also in charge of prevention and awareness-raising activities and internal surveys. The existence of this structure at the University of Bordeaux can be partly explained by the national context: since 2015, the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation has been actively involved in encouraging universities to take charge of sexual harassment in universities. This involvement was impulsed by a long-term feminist mobilisation in French universities (since the 2000's), which has contributed to recognition of sexual violence in academia as a public issue.

The cause of sexual harassment in the specific sector of higher education arose in 2001, with the creation of the CLASCHES collective[15] (CLASCHES, 2014). It is a group of doctoral students, mainly in the humanities and social sciences, who brought the first complaint of sexual harassment against a university professor in 2002. Associations of female researchers in gender studies, in particular the National Association of Feminist Studies (ANEF), also played an important role in supporting the implementation of the first anti-harassment units (in the framework of EU-funded projects in the 2000's). The unit of the University of Lille, which was created in 2006 within this framework is still active, was also a model for the elaboration of the UBx's unit in 2015.

The 22 of July 2013 law on higher education and research includes twenty articles relating to gender equality and makes it compulsory for universities to set up gender equality offices. The same year, the Ministry for Higher Education and Research, along with the Ministry for Women's Rights elaborated a Charter in Favour of Equality between Women and Men in HEIs. This document includes recommendations on the implementation of units to address sexual violence (French Ministry of Higher

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[15] Collectif de lutte contre le harcèlement sexuel dans l'enseignement supérieur - Collective against sexual harassment in higher education.

Education and Research, Ministry for Women's Rights, 2013). In 2015, the Higher Education and Research Ministry Bulletin formally includes actions to tackle sexual violence in the prerogatives of HEIs equality offices (French Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, 2015). In the same year, the associations ANEF, Clasches and the CPED[16] worked together, with the support of the Ministry, on a *vademecum* on GBV in HEIs. This document aimed at encouraging HEIs to "combat the inertia of universities and encourage them to take action" (ANEF, CLASCHES, CPED, 2015). The dialogue initiated between the Ministry and feminist associations materialised in a major conference "GBV in HEIs: from recognition to consideration" in 2017, a few days after starting the #MeToo movement.

In 2019, according to the Ministry's online mapping, nearly 65 projects to fight GBV were more or less completed at 74 French universities. In a press release in 2020, the Minister indicated that nearly 95% of universities had units dedicated to GBV, whereas the students' trade union UNEF considered that only 39 of these units were actually operational (UNEF, 2020). The 2019 Law on the Transformation of the Civil Service interpreted the European standards on the need to take into account the plurality of discriminations. Its application decree (Decree no. 2020-256 of 13 March 2020) obliges all public institutions to create units to deal with "sexist violence, discrimination, sexual, moral harassment and violence".

The impact of #MeToo has been significant in France, with specific developments in the HEIs sector. The growing referrals had very concrete consequences: several teachers were dismissed temporarily or permanently and specific hashtags dedicated to the higher education flourished online (#PayeTaFac, #PayeTaRecherche, #PayeTonLabo, #MeTooSup, #SciencesPorcs). Articles by female academics have been published in the national press and inspections carried out by the Ministry in certain schools have noted dysfunctions and pointed out that victims rarely use the dedicated mechanisms and prefer to trust in friends and family.

Although there is no specific law on sexual harassment in universities, public action on GBV in academia has been affirmed for some years. However, the units are subject to criticism, namely because of the lack of expertise of their members. For this reason, the Ministry's efforts in 2022/2023 will focus on the training of unit members.

The University of Bordeaux's monitoring and reporting unit on sexual harassment has been evolving in line with the French legislative framework presented above. It started with a creation of a Gender Equality Office in 2014, whose main achievement was the elaboration and adoption in 2015 of a dedicated unit against sexual harassment, gender-based and homophobic violence. The unit was managed by the Gender Equality Officer, and worked through an email address and a phone number, by which potential victims and witnesses could contact the Officer. Afterwards, an interview was set with the Gender Equality Officer and the alleged victim or witness. If a case concerned

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[16] Conference Permanente des Chargés de Mission Egalité et Diversité – an association which brings together all officers for equality and diversity at the national level.

students, a nurse was present in the interview. If it was a case with a member of personnel, it was with the social worker.

Between 2015 and 2022, the unit counted 65 referrals from 88 people (several people claiming to be victims of the same perpetrator). Among them, 65 students and 23 members of the personnel. The number of referrals may seem low comparing to the 54 000 students and 6000 personnel of the UBx. Despite a large number of awareness-raising and prevention actions (presentation of the unit during dedicated meetings with students and personnel, creation of posters and exhibitions, organisation of debates), members of the unit explain this low number of referrals by a lack of knowledge and/or confidence into the unit. Indeed, the use of a phone number or email address was seen as lacking of anonymity for sensitive cases.

The Law in 2019, which has been gradually implemented, had engaged the University of Bordeaux in the revision of its procedure to extend it to discrimination. Such a broadening was firstly foreseen in the GEP of RESET (2022). Then a new procedure separating students and staff was elaborated and adopted by the authorities (13th October 2022). Anticipating an increase in requests, particularly from students, the University decided to experiment with the outsourcing of services, for cases implying students (from December 2022). For the referrals from personnel, a psychologist and a social worker from the UBx are mobilised to run appointments with victims and provide support.

There is an online reporting form, as well as two email addresses for reporting (one for students and one for personnel). The link to the form, the email addresses and the existence of the unit have been well disseminated through several communication tools ("Alertomètre", a communication tool that is further described in part 4, a series of cartoons on gender-based violence at university[17], a selection of books on the topic in the University's libraries, and a dedicated webpage[18]). These elements have been largely disseminated in all the campuses of the UBx and presented to more than 2000 students during dedicated meetings. Some workshops were organised with students, services and laboratories – where the psychologist and social worker could answer to questions and raise awareness on gender-based violence at university.

Since 2015, the unit of UBx has been dealing with cases involving both staff and students - victims and perpetrators.

During the interview elaborated in 2021, the members of the previous composition of the unit identified the following difficulties related to the treatment of particular cases:

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[17] https://www.u-bordeaux.fr/actualites/une-expo-pour-sensibiliser-aux-violences-sexistes-et-sexuelles

[18]   https://www.u-bordeaux.fr/campus/citoyennete-et-vivre-ensemble/harcelement-violences-discriminations

- It is hard to know where the role of the University stops (e.g., when there is a case between two students out of the university). Also, when the victim does not want to do the referral but some witnesses present the fact.
- There may be very few proofs of the case; different versions stated by the victim, the witnesses and the author.
- The victims sometimes fear the consequences, especially when it is a case between a student and a teacher (or a PhD supervisor): by fear of consequences for their future, they prefer not to go further with the referral.
- There was a case of name shaming that had an important impact in the university's general climate and reputation. It is also important to protect the anonymity of the authors and to make sure there will be no defamation.

More generally, the unit's members deplored a lack of confidence in the institution from the victims and the insufficiency of financial and human resources to implement an efficient procedure. Since the implementation of the enhanced unit, the situation seems to have improved, thanks to the increase in communication and prevention, and the externalisation of service for students.

2.2.3 University of Lodz

In Poland, few universities have a special policy on discrimination. Ewelina Ciaputa, from the UniSAFE project, considers that "the issue of GBV is still functioning rather as a taboo than a problem that needs implementation of an adequate measure" (Ciaputa, 2021). Even if some Polish universities have codes of conduct that include rules on GBV, political and public support is weak. Only 15% of Poles consider GBV a problem (Ciaputa, 2021). Apart from UL, the only Polish university with an identified policy against sexual harassment is the university of Warsaw: "University of Warsaw is the only one in Poland that has a special procedure on sexual harassment: a Plenipotentiary works on this issue and is responsible for it." (Ciaputa, 2021). Although Poland adopted in 2018 the Act on Higher Education and Science, concerning good conduct, it does not mention sexual harassment. The UniSAFE report notes that:

> *Concerning the RFOs, the issue of GBV in universities and RPOs is a rather new phenomenon in Poland with the stigmatisation of victims and no political #MeToo movement following the revealed cases of sexual or gender harassment* (Ciaputa, 2021).

However, non-governmental organisations are active in the field of GBV in Poland, as well as universities conduct some surveys as part of research projects. The particular dependence of Polish universities on European funding for research and mainstreaming of gender equality should be noted.

At UL, feminist concerns of students are centred on reproductive rights and rights of transgender and non-binary persons. There were many protests (on streets and online) during the pandemic, in which teenagers and young people took part. However, the current catholic-conservative government contests women's and LGBTQA+ minority

rights (e.g., tightening of the Anti-Abortion Law). They declared the war on "gender ideology" from 2013 onwards, presented as direct threat to the very existence of the Polish nation and family (Ostolski & Graff, 2020). This declaration of war stimulates the feminist movement, which appears powerful and mobilised in Poland. Since the Black Monday of October 3, 2016:

> *Most of the networks that emerged during protests remained active after October 2016* (Korolczuk, 2016). *They have been especially reinforced in October 2020, after the tribunal court removed two of the last grounds for legally performing an abortion.*

As Agnieszka Graff, a renowned Polish feminist, underlines: "an important cultural shift is taking place: feminism in Poland is moving from being a marginal, academic and elitist movement to becoming a popular and, according to some researchers, even populist phenomenon" (Graff, 2019).

The genesis of a procedure dedicated to discrimination (including sexual harassment) at UL dates back to 2019, when the Rector established the working group on these issues. For a long time, the UL has had anti-mobbing regulations and a dedicated committee. The procedure was working in the following way:

1. After a complaint to the Rector of the University, the Rector decides on whether the case needs to be pursued or not.

2. If yes, the case is investigated by special lawyers from the University of Lodz. If it is pursued, it goes to the step 3.

3. The case is discussed by the Disciplinary Committee composed of multidisciplinary stakeholders, who decide whether the author will be sanctioned (e.g., removed from Office for a time, note on their file, etc.).

For several years, the University wanted to promote a unit dedicated to discrimination within its organisation and the RESET project accelerated and facilitated this process. In 2017, the University of Lodz started to focus on diversity with a big campaign "University Diversity"[19]. The UL was awarded a HR label of Research Excellence – HRS4R. Since 2018 representatives of the UL have participated in the creation of the Anti-Discrimination Programme with the Municipality of Lodz. The Rector established a working group to prepare the Anti-Discrimination Procedure. In order to back up the procedure, two surveys were launched: in 2018 and 2020[20]. It helped to identify what are the dominant processes of discrimination and what kind of measures are needed to prevent them. There was a break due to pandemic and some institutional changes (elections). However, RESET was launched in 2021 and the UL team began working on

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[19] https://www.uni.lodz.pl/en/social-committment/university-diversity
[20] The former by the Plenipotentiary for Social Responsibility of the University, the latter within an EU-funded project GEINCEE: Community of Practice for Gender Equality in Central and Eastern Europe.

the procedure again. In their work, they relied on the results from focus groups and the survey conducted.

In June 2022, the GEP was signed. It includes a major action of the implementation of the anti-discrimination procedure. In January 2023, the procedure was ready to be signed, after the work of a task force consisting of various stakeholders and representatives of different units. It was officially adopted at the end of March 2023. The anti-discrimination procedure that has been introduced at the University of Lodz offers various paths of intervention aimed at mitigating the effects of identified discrimination and mobbing cases and introduces a mechanism for reporting cases of discrimination/mobbing at the university. The institutional website contains a webpage dedicated to the university's anti-discrimination policy[21]. There is a provision of information and description for both procedures: one for students[22] and the other for employees[23]. The GEP foresees a testing phase and the further implementation in the GEP 2.0. The management of the University of Lodz is currently preparing communication actions to promote the monitoring unit. This is a ground breaking achievement for UL, as few Polish universities have a special mechanism dedicated to discrimination.

2.2.4 University of Porto

According to the report on Portugal by Catarina Sales Oliveira for the UniSAFE project, "GBV is still not an issue inside universities and research organisations in Portugal [...] Universities and research organisations are not seen as risk places" (Sales Oliveira, 2021).

As an echo, the U. Porto team considered in an interview on 14 June 2021 that "sexual harassment is something that is not talked about much". No cases were reported since there was no system implemented, thus, not encouraging the University to act upon it. Since the victims did not bring up the subject, the University assumed that there were no cases of harassment. However, recent publications highlight existence of serious cases happening in Portuguese institutions (Pritchard & Edwards, 2023).

This silence may have been disturbed recently. For the first time, on 7 April 2022, more than 200 female students demonstrated in front of the Law Faculty of the University of Lisbon to denounce the impunity of many perpetrators of sexual and moral harassment (Tavares, 2022). Collection of reports by the University of Lisbon (70 reports, involving 31 professors, i.e. 10% of the teaching staff) did not prevent it from being accused of inaction, while the *Jornal de Notícias* newspaper mentioned reports in progress at other universities (Barata, 2022).

There were also some important changes that took place at the national level, creating a favourable context for U.Porto to implement a complaint portal. In 2016, the

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[21] https://www.uni.lodz.pl/en/unilodz-discrimination-free-zone
[22] https://www.uni.lodz.pl/en/student-zone/support/how-to-report-discrimination
[23] https://www.uni.lodz.pl/en/employee-zone/support/how-to-report-discrimination-or-mobbing

Parliament voted a Law on Sexual Harassment. Since 2017, there has been a research project focused on GBV violence for couples in HEIs: "Dating Violence in Higher Education". It collects and disseminates data annually (Neves, 2021). On the national level, the long-term strategy on gender equality (2018-2030) is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In Portuguese HEIs, three measures were developed addressing GBV (Sales Oliveira, 2021):

- introduction of prevention and intervention measures related to GBV in the HEIs GEPs
- development of training
- GBV being included in the curricula of HEI disciplines.

In May 2022, the Portuguese Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, addressed a Letter[24] to University Presidents, recommending to:

1. Adopt a code of good conduct and practices for the prevention of and fight against moral and sexual harassment in the academic context, whether between doctoral students, staff and students or between peers.
2. Facilitate reporting channels, with impartial management mechanisms that allow situations to be handled correctly.
3. Take disciplinary measures when cases of harassment are proven and adapted to each situation.
4. Promote awareness-raising activities among doctoral students, researchers and staff (students are not mentioned here).

In the context of U.Porto, this incentive, together with the work undertaken in RESET, creates a booster effect. In autumn 2022, the U.Porto implemented an online reporting system for students and staff and made public a Code of Good Conduct (January 2023), focused on sexual harassment at work (open to students as well). Article 1 describes the Code of Conduct as a self-regulatory instrument that promotes an active policy to prevent, identify, eliminate and punish harassing behaviour at work (Universidade do Porto, 2022).

Portuguese society has been a stage of a profound change of mentality about GBV according to the report drawn within the framework of UniSAFE. Slowly, gender stereotypes are being deconstructed. In terms of social perceptions, GBV is no longer considered acceptable and is already recognised as a major social problem in the country. However, beneath this general perception there is an environment of dominant androcentric culture that creates obstacles to victims' claims.

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24 https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc23/comunicacao/noticia?i=recomendacoes-as-instituicoes-academicas-para-evitar-situacoes-de-assedio-moral-e-sexual-

At the crossroads of a recently voluntarist national policy on sexual harassment (not binding for the universities) and the commitment of RESET, U.Porto is now engaged in the processing of cases of sexual harassment and discrimination.

2.2.5 Other RESET institutions

The situation in **Finland** represents a legacy of long-standing and repeated government action against GBV, sexual harassment and discrimination. National action started in 1986 with a Gender Equality Act that was completed with a Non-Discrimination Act in 2015 (Niemistö, 2021). Finnish legislation is strong on sexual harassment at work and students' rights for a safe study environment.

After the #MeToo (though with the little impact in this country), the Helsinki Association of Women Researchers conducted a survey to map sexual harassment in Finnish academia. Despite this policy, there are many reports on violence and intimate partner violence in Finland.

In January 2020, the Finnish Ministry of Justice appointed an inter-sectoral working group to prepare an Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women (2021-2023). The governmental framework is strong to prevent GBV and sexual harassment, as are the initiatives of the University of Oulu.

In UOULU's Equality and Diversity Plan, sexual harassment is considered as one form of sexual violence. The concept refers to one-sided, unwanted and undesirable conduct during which the abuser uses sexuality and/or sexual orientation as a means to question, put in a secondary position and/or marginalise people, or abuse them sexually.

The University of Oulu has a procedure of submitting a report after experience of bullying/harassment with a request for processing. The important information is gathered in a dedicated document[25] and the portal for reporting cases of discrimination or harassment is available online[26]. There is also training for students and staff and contact persons. Despite UOULU's experience in this area, difficulties remain as the team member points out: "it is difficult to know where the line should be drawn. To know if a case should be dealt by the University or not, until what point can the University help the victim or the author. There is a need of communicating more about the procedure and about sexual harassment and discrimination in general (e.g: on the website)."

In the case of **Germany**, at the national level there is the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (ADS). A Report[27] (issued by the ADS) includes guidelines and recommendations for universities when it comes to prevention (Meier-Arendt, 2021).

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[25] https://www.oulu.fi/external/hyvinvointi/Prevention_of_bullying_and_harassment_UniOulu_ENG.pdf

[26] https://link.webropolsurveys.com/Participation/Public/5e70b94b-c02b-4e38-887a-31a30fecaa53?displayId=Fin1581735&surveyLocale=en

[27] https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/EN/homepage/_documents/download_jahresbericht_2020.html

The document critically notes that German Law does not yet have any clear regulations to protect students against sexual harassment by lecturers (staff) or other students. The "General Equal Treatment Act" (2006)[28] is meant to be an important legal instrument for preventing GBV by requiring employers to react for the safety of their employees. The jurisdiction on higher education however lies with the individual states, not the federal government. As the universities are autonomous within the *Länders*, much depends on the policy of universities.

Within RUB, according to its legal department, referrals are mainly made through a request by the HR department. Most of the time, from the perspective of the legal department, "it is a matter of classifying what is legal about the case in question. Then, actions are taken accordingly. If a case does not fall within the legal framework of the AGG, then the legal department is entrusted with the case. If a case is relevant under the criminal law, it goes to the public prosecutor's office."

RUB's experience indicates that case handling procedures need to be kept constantly adjusted. As the local member points out, "in the past, there were various regulations and guidelines that are currently being revised so that the processes and procedures are uniformly recorded and better interlocked."

Like other universities, RUB has difficulties in identifying its role in cases of sexual harassment between students that do not occur in the university area. RUB is engaged in an ongoing dialogue with other German universities to improve practices, including the Annual Report on Referrals about Sexual Harassment (under preparation) and raising awareness at the top management level.

Science Po has a unit on sexual harassment open to the university community (most of the referrals are made by students). It was created in 2015 in the context of the EU sister project EGERA (2013-2017) and the newly established Gender Equality Officer. In 2017, with the end of EGERA, Sciences Po remained mobilised for this cause and obtained labels of HSR4R and AFNOR (the first French Higher Education Institution to get this label for equality). Despite significant and sustained training and internal communication efforts, flaws in long-term implementation of the unit arose. Combination of #MeToo in French academia and public denunciation of intra-family sexual violence involving an academic extorting a supervisory role over the institution led to public outrage, and Sciences Po to establish a working group chaired by an external academic, to assess and recast internal GBV and SH policies, which was done following the issue of the report.

A brief comparison between RESET institutions reveals some salient features:

- France and Portugal benefit from a national strategy adjusted to organisational policies, though academic sexual harassment is more considered to belong to

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the sphere of public policy in France than in Portugal. Despite the fact that Greece benefits from a recent transformation of the national framework, AUTh lacks resources and faced institutional challenges which hopefully will be overcome with the establishment of a Gender Equality Office and the set-up of a mechanism and processes for addressing GBV. In Poland, the majority of public opinion is in favour of women's rights and addressing of GBV issues.

- With varying degrees of consistency between the state and local levels, changes in society and legislation, there are favourable shifts concerning the treatment of GBV cases by universities. In particular, despite different timeframes, the #MeToo impact on female students is noticeable at all universities.

- Polish and Greek universities are more dependent on the European funding of research. It facilitates carrying out of GBV surveys and taking gender and equality issues into account.

- The situation of the University of Bordeaux is in line with the recent law on the civil service. Previously specialised in treatment of cases of sexual violence, the scope of its unit has been extended to cover all forms of discrimination.

- Benefiting from alignment of the local, project's, national and European contexts facilitate the implementation of actions. Not all institutions benefit from the same alignment.

2.3 Measures in Gender Equality Plans: defining a common policy framework

The four RESET GEP implementing partners have adopted their plans in 2022, following the guidelines developed by U.Porto (project's scale) and the EC (Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), 2021).

The following part is devoted to the review of measures adopted in the 4 GEPs concerning axe 5 recommended by the Horizon Europe framework "Measures against GBV including Sexual Harassment". Each of the four GEPs includes a part dedicated to the sexual harassment and discrimination: Part D for UBx, UL and U.Porto entitled "Gender Biases and Stereotypes, Sexism and Sexual Harassment", Part E for AUTh - "Gender Based Violence and Harassment".

The objectives and actions developed in these GEPs are decisive for the RESET partners. After adoption of GEPs by the university authorities, members of the RESET teams have a clear mandate to mobilise institutional stakeholders in the implementation of dedicated actions. The Gender Equality Boards (GEB) were created in February 2021, as part of the contractual obligations of the RESET project. Since then, several GEB meetings have been devoted to the issue of GBV and discrimination, namely at UBx, UL and U.Porto.

As governance support is a condition for the successful institutionalisation of the GBV cause in HEIs, implementing partners have been keen to mobilise their Gender Equality Boards, both for the definition of actions and their implementation. This was the case for the GEB meeting at UBx on 12 October 2022.

There are seven actions dedicated to sexual harassment and discrimination in GEPs of AUTh and UL and eight for UBx and U.Porto. The target audience of this policy comprises the entire community (students and staff) for all partners.

The following parts are based on the four pillars of the RESET joint quality standard (part 1.1).

2.3.1 Measuring the prevalence of facts

Measuring prevalence of sexual harassment and GBV is the only item that is unevenly covered by partners. AUTh and UL have planned qualitative and quantitative monitoring of cases in their GEPs, which is not the case for UBx and U.Porto. This difference can be explained by the fact that in France and Portugal, data on GBV in HEIs is collected at the national level even if it is occasional and far from having established a proper monitoring system (see part 2.2 - Local contexts). Thus, unlike in Greece and Poland (more dependent on European projects or local initiatives), the phenomenon is measured and made public.

This is the subject of Action 1 of UL's GEP part D: "Implementation of cyclical surveys aimed at monitoring gender inequalities within the academic community, which also recognises the importance of other categories that intersect with gender and affect these inequalities" (University of Lodz, 2022).

Objective 1 of part E of AUTh's GEP concerning the measurement of the prevalence of incidents is interpreted in two actions:

> *1. Conduct quantitative research (using questionnaires) on a representative sample of staff and students, to investigate the occurrence of violence and harassment.*
>
> *2. Conduct qualitative research (using individual interviews) in select groups of students and staff members to investigate the occurrence of violence and harassment (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2022).*

2.3.2 Acting upon attitudes and preventing cases

All partners are aware of the need to promote the fight against sexism and sexual violence, particularly when it is integrated into the broader scope of discrimination. It implies implementation of awareness-raising campaigns in order not to take the risk of euphemizing sexual violence or even obscuring it (Deruelle, 2020).

This is what partners are trying to do through a series of actions at the consortium level, including the project-scale webinar "Crossed views on sex and gender-based

violence" in November 2021. This event aimed at sharing ideas in a multidisciplinary and international perspective on the topic of sex and gender-based violence while highlighting the work of young researchers. PhD candidates from University of Bordeaux, University of Porto and University of Geneva presented their work and research findings on the topic of GBV. Then key speakers from the project UniSAFE, the Ruhr-University of Bochum and the University of the Basque Country discussed corresponding policies and protocols in their institutions.

Figure 4 - RESET Webinar "Crossed views on sex and gender-based violence" poster, 25/11/2021

The toolbox for gender neutral, diversity oriented institutional communication, (RESET, 2021) represents another output of the RESET project that enables awareness raising and reduction of gender stereotypes in the institutional communication. This tool can be a support for stakeholders in the implementation of a more inclusive and safe working and studying environment.

At the level of each partner university, GEPs include specific measures to communicate and raise awareness on issues of sexist behaviour and prevention of GBV:

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Objective 3 action 3.1.1 and 3.1.2

> *Actions about informing/raising awareness and developing skills, so as to identify and report gender-based discrimination, gender-based violence and sexual harassment incidents (e.g., leaflets, seminars, podcasts).*

> *Create and approve a guide to ethical behaviour, by the Senate; adopt respective sanctions for gender-based violence and sexual harassment incidents*

University of Bordeaux

Thematic area 4, Action no. 1: Creating and disseminating communication tools ("alertomètre", comic posters and pamphlets) on this subject within university libraries, faculties and administrative buildings

Thematic area 4, Action no. 2: Continuing collaborations and expanding network of local partners (within the greater Bordeaux area) in order to combat sexist and sexual violence and discrimination (public-sector institutions, associations, other institutions of higher education etc.)

Thematic area 4, Action no. 3: Systematically organizing an event or official statement to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November)

University of Lodz

Objective 2, action 3: Promoting issues related to gender equality and diversity by introducing this information in employees' orientation pack

University of Porto

D3.1: Disseminate guiding documents on gender equality, diversity and non-discrimination among the academic community

D3.2: Update the code of conduct regarding the prevention and fight against discrimination, harassment and gender violence and/or other forms of violence

D3.5: Raise awareness of the academic community about the importance of U.Porto's zero tolerance policies on discrimination, moral and sexual harassment

2.3.3 Implementing a reporting system to punish alleged perpetrators and support alleged victims

Establishment of a reporting policy and its functioning is the cornerstone of the institutionalisation of a policy tackling sexual harassment within RESET universities. All partners have included it in their GEPs.

Institutional strategies may differ according to the local and national context. For instance, the University of Lodz made the strategic choice not to talk explicitly about sexual harassment, but to include it in the larger category of discrimination.

University of Lodz

Measure 2: The creation of a trial version of an anti-discrimination procedure; the adjustment and implementation of anti-discrimination mechanisms to improve inclusivity at the University of Lodz. Sexual harassment is named as

one of the discriminatory behaviour in the procedure implemented in March 2023.

The University of Porto, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the University of Bordeaux explicitly name sexual harassment and GBV in some of their actions:

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Objective 2.1: Establish a procedure and mechanism to record and address reports and complaints concerning gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual harassment incidents.

Its implementation involves three types of actions:

E.2.1.1: Establish an agency and develop a mechanism for the collection and recording of signed and anonymous complaints (within the framework of the GEC's operation) as per the applicable legislation

E.2.1.2: Establish a management and action protocol following reports/complaints of gender-based violence and sexual harassment incidents, in order to properly address the incidents and support victims.

E.2.1.3: Inform/raise awareness in the university community regarding the establishment and operation of the recording mechanism of signed and anonymous complaints regarding gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual harassment incidents

University of Bordeaux

Thematic area 4, Action no. 5: Launching and promoting awareness of a secure reporting system for cases of sexist and sexual violence or discriminations and handling the reports submitted online

Thematic area 4, Action no. 6: Publishing an annual report on the university website detailing the work of this unit (reports, punishments, affected groups), including data on staff and the student community

Thematic area 4, Action no. 7: Continuing to present the monitoring cell's annual report to the university's governing bodies

Thematic area 4, Action no. 8: Showing a video explaining the work of the monitoring unit at the start-of-year meetings held in lecture theaters.

University of Porto

D3.3: Create a secure reporting mechanism and a follow-up structure for situations of discrimination, harassment and gender-based violence and/or other forms of violence

D3.4: Monitor the reporting of situation of discrimination, harassment, gender violence and/or forms of violence

D3.7: Create an instrument for the self-monitoring of anti-discrimination behaviours and make it accessible to the entire U.Porto's community through U.Porto's website

D3.8: Make available contacts/support resources, for situations of discrimination, harassment and gender violence on the University's website and social networks.

2.3.4 Developing training programs for academic community

In order to develop a zero-tolerance culture for GBV and discrimination within organisations, the RESET project is strongly committed to the preparation of training actions.

RESET has developed training actions, in order to train communities towards equality and to settle new standards thanks to tailor-made training for GEP-implementing partners and particular target groups at each institution (Master students, PhD candidates, teachers/researchers, HR, administrative staff, middle management, top management). The *Comprehensive gender equality and gender mainstreaming training toolbox useful for different trainee groups or national contexts* was elaborated by the RESET and submitted in December 2022. It contains eight training modules, which have been developed in collaboration with RESET partners:
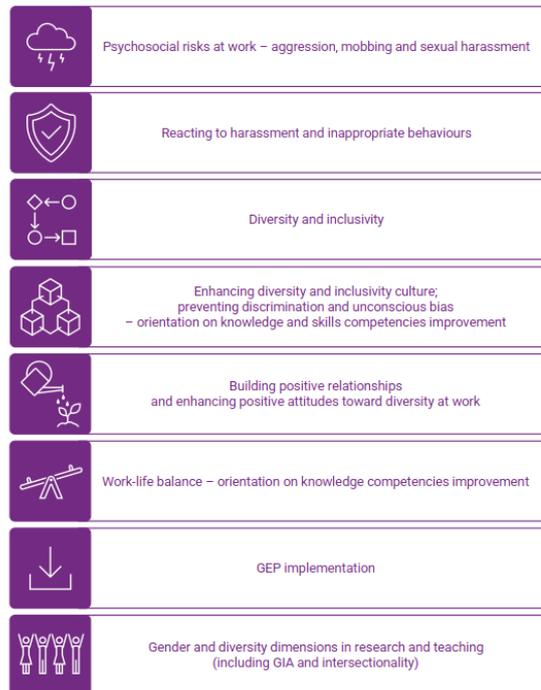
Figure 5 - List of RESET training modules presented in D4.2 (2022)

Modules 1 and 2 are particularly useful for preventing sexual harassment and informing community members of the existence of internal resources. Modules 3, 4 and 5 are also valuable sources for promotion of culture of respect within organisations. They have been further developed in 2023, together with a strategy of training the trainers before a large-scale local dissemination. All modules are available on RESET website[29]. For this reason, all implementing partners have integrated training activities on GBV and sexual harassment into their GEPs. Due to the training programme, RESET validated another element of its anti-harassment strategy. The definition of policy and political support are two decisive steps made so far in RESET. However, the implementation phase must be further thought out.

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

E.2.1.3: Inform/raise awareness in the university community regarding the establishment and operation of the recording mechanism of signed and anonymous complaints regarding gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual harassment incidents

University of Bordeaux

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[29] https://toolkit.wereset.eu/#/training-toolbox/overview

*Action no. 4: Continuing with efforts to raise awareness and educate BIATSS
and teaching and research staff about the fight against sexist and sexual
violence and all forms of discrimination*

University of Lodz

The UL's GEP foresees three types of actions related to training:

1. *Designing a training scheme for all employees which focuses on
   different aspects of gender equality and diversity*

2. *A regular training session for representatives of the University of Lodz
   community*

3. *Combating gender stereotypes and enhancing diversity by launching
   promotional campaigns and training on issues related to gender and
   diversity at the University of Lodz*

At UL there is also a Master programme "Master's Degree in Women's and Gender
Studies" that addresses the issues of GBV and women's rights violations worldwide.

University of Porto

D3.6: Provide teachers, researchers and service workers with skills to identify
and report situations of discrimination and harassment

Thus, GEP implementing partners followed the RESET standard (4 pillars) and designed
strong and efficient actions to implement progressively anti-discrimination and anti-
harassment procedures.

3.   Common challenges and good practices. Specific procedures
to tackle gender-based violence and discrimination

The definition of an anti-sexual harassment policy through the RESET project is
expected to constitute a decisive change for three of the four GEP implementing
partners – AUTh, UL, U.Porto. At the UBx, despite the existence of the unit since 2015,
the year 2022 was marked by an enhancement of the monitoring and processing
procedure, both in the framework of the RESET and due to the update of the national
law. Even if numerous efforts and progress were made, all partners are confronted with
common challenges. With the support of mentors and the evaluator and with examples
of other projects (UniSAFE) or universities (European University Alliances), partners are
working together on solutions.

At most of the RESET institutions, the procedures are still at the very beginning of their
launch (U.Porto, UL) or not launched yet (AUTh). Hence, the content of this deliverable
is not based on the emblematic case studies, but rather on concrete difficulties

encountered by existing monitoring and reporting units or those anticipated by the GEP implementing partners.

The aim of this section is to refine common RESET standard for tackling GBV and identify common issues and difficulties. The results were co-designed within the RESET consortium through regular exchanges between WP leaders and local partners' representatives and, in particular, during a capacity building and co-design session organised in February 2023 and entitled "Institutional Systems Dealing with Gender-Based Violence: Data and Ethics related aspects". The UBx team moderated this event. It brought together 24 multidisciplinary stakeholders. The RESET Ethics Advisor was also present and participated with a presentation. This session highlighted crucial ethical issues that may arise throughout reporting of processes (see figure 6).
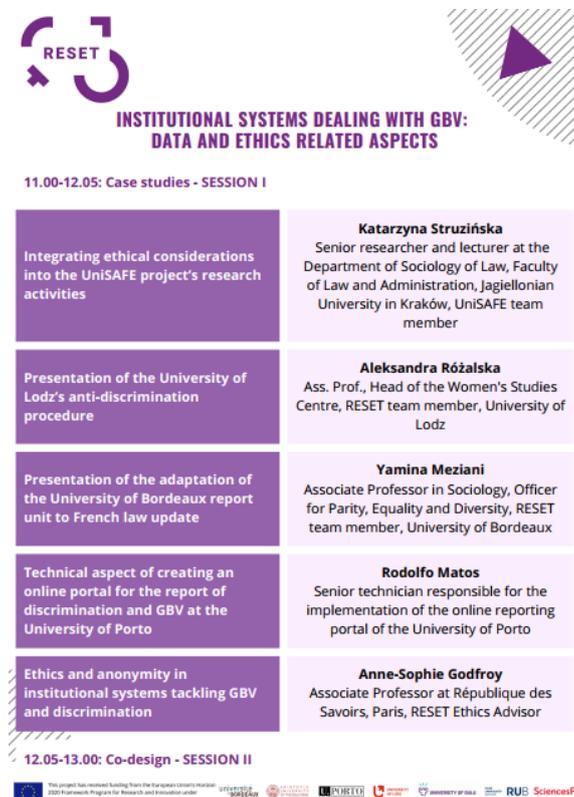

RESET

INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS DEALING WITH GBV: DATA AND ETHICS RELATED ASPECTS

11.00-12.05: Case studies - SESSION I

Integrating ethical considerations into the UniSAFE project's research activities	**Katarzyna Struzińska** Senior researcher and lecturer at the Department of Sociology of Law, Faculty of Law and Administration, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, UniSAFE team member
Presentation of the University of Lodz's anti-discrimination procedure	**Aleksandra Różalska** Ass. Prof., Head of the Women's Studies Centre, RESET team member, University of Lodz
Presentation of the adaptation of the University of Bordeaux report unit to French law update	**Yamina Meziani** Associate Professor in Sociology, Officer for Parity, Equality and Diversity, RESET team member, University of Bordeaux
Technical aspect of creating an online portal for the report of discrimination and GBV at the University of Porto	**Rodolfo Matos** Senior technician responsible for the implementation of the online reporting portal of the University of Porto
Ethics and anonymity in institutional systems tackling GBV and discrimination	**Anne-Sophie Godfroy** Associate Professor at République des Savoirs, Paris, RESET Ethics Advisor

12.05-13.00: Co-design - SESSION II

Figure 6 - Programme of the RESET Capacity-Building and Co-design session (02/02/2023)

After speakers' presentations and a Q&A session, participants were invited to co-design a SWOT matrix[30] identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the

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[30] The SWOT matrix was elaborated following the methodology of the "speed boat", where the "wind" represents strengths and opportunities, a "boat" represents stakeholders, the "sharks" are potential threats, an "anchor" is an illustration for difficulties and the "island" is the ultimate goal.

implementation of such procedures in HEIs. This exercise highlighted common challenges and practices for institutional systems dealing with GBV.

This section was completed by the inputs of researchers, guides elaborated by the European Commission and the experiences of other universities in Europe. It was also nourished by the past or current experience of the RESET institutions in the context of creation of procedures - U.Porto, UL, AUTh - or their upgrading - UBx.

The Part 4 of this report focuses particularly on the pillar 3 of the RESET standard (part 2) "Reporting system to punish alleged perpetrators and support alleged victims". The existence of a reporting system is the cornerstone of the institutionalisation for prevention of GBV issues in organisations.

4. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of local contexts and procedures, we established a list of 12 recommendations for institutions to follow in order to create or upgrade procedures and systems tackling gender-based violence at their institutions. Recommendations are listed in the following table and will be detailed in next pages:

N°	RECOMMENDATION
1	Setting up and running of the reporting system should be collegial and supported by top-management
2	Reporting procedure should be comprehensive for the entire community
3	Role of the reporting unit and the procedure should be clear for those who refer to it
4	Implementation of an online reporting portal should enable fast and secure reporting
5	Question of anonymity should be addressed
6	Conflicts of interest should be anticipated
7	Human resources should be made available
8	Potential users of the unit should be clearly identified
9	Special attention should be put on female doctoral students
10	Institution should invest in transparency and accountability
11	Communication should be targeted
12	Units should remain open to change

Table 1 - List of RESET 12 recommendations to create or upgrade procedures and systems tackling gender-based violence

4.1 Setting up and running of the reporting system should be collegial and supported by top-management

Elaboration of the procedure involves articulation of many administrative, technical, legal and political challenges involving both students and staff. Members of the governance have the knowledge, competence and authority to mobilise relevant stakeholders and specify their tasks.

We strongly recommend the functioning of the unit to be linked to the political missions of a Vice-Rector or other member of the governance (e.g., Gender Equality Officer or Vice-Rector for Institutional Affairs).

When setting up the system, all concerned actors must be mobilised within a working group, as it was done in the case of the University of Lodz or the University of Porto.

Once the installation phase is over, this group should remain engaged and constitute a large unit in charge of dealing with GBV at university (prevention through awareness raising activities, promotion of the existence of the unit, support of alleged victims, sanction of perpetrators). This large group should be articulated with a smaller group of trained stakeholders and/or skilled and independent external contractors.

We strongly recommend constituting a multidisciplinary team and encouraging transversal collaboration for the elaboration and implementation of the procedure. Top-management of the university should implement and promote zero tolerance policy.

Example of good practice: in the framework of RESET, engagement of the GEBs has played a decisive role to mobilise governance. At UBx, a GEB meeting was dedicated to this topic in order to:

- *Inform GEB members on the situation about GBV and discrimination in the EU, in France and at the university level.*
- *Mobilise GEB members and make them to reflect on their practices.*
- *Train GEB members on definitions of GBV and discrimination.*
- *Demonstrate that GBV and discrimination are topics that concern everyone in academia.*
- *Co-design and collect some specific suggestions for D5.2 - Report on the RESET network's structural engagement against sexual harassment through the work of new or enhanced units in order to adopt common standards and share good practices.*

After a presentation on the evolution of systems tackling gender-based violence in France (evolution of laws, public opinion, impact of #MeToo, students mobilisation) and the situation at UBx, the GE Officer of UBx presented the updated procedure for referral. Representatives of the legal office of the university explained legal aspects of the procedure. Afterwards, participants were invited to join two workshops:

1. *A game on discriminations (developed by the GE officer of UBx) - a tool that enables learning of definitions, contexts and cases for different types of discrimination*

2. *Co-design of a SWOT matrix on the implementation of a procedure against GBV at UBx.*

UBx prepared guidelines and tools to support project partners in the implementation of the meeting of this type at partner institutions.

4.2 Reporting procedure should be comprehensive for the entire community

The implementation of an online reporting system should be embedded in the larger internal procedure for handling sexual harassment. It involves mobilisation of dedicated staff and the creation of a specific unit. The place of this unit within the university's organisation should be well determined. One can make a distinction

between an operational unit dealing with the incoming referrals and a broader unit that has an extended role, such as prevention and communication on GBV and discrimination.

Tackling GBV at HEIs is eminently crosscutting: it concerns universities' health and social services – both for students and staff, HR services, students' services (if open to referrals from students), legal and IT services. Issues related to sexual harassment concern the whole university community and violence can involve several levels of relations including academic and non-academic staff as well as students.

All scientific fields are concerned with the topic and many of them can be useful in the analysis of risks and creation of a unit dedicated to tackle sexual harassment. The U.Porto involved a multidisciplinary group of actors (e.g. psychologists, lawyers, IT technicians) in the procedure of implementation of its online reporting portal, which enabled a more comprehensive vision of the issue.

In order to clarify the scope of the unit, as well as the role of each of stakeholders, we strongly recommend to:

- Define the role of each party in the procedure and the relationship between the actors involved.
- Representatives of the university community: students, staff, trade unions and governance should discuss, adapt and agree upon the process before its official endorsement by the Rector / President / Director.

Example of a good practice: *steps of reporting for cases of discrimination of mobbing are presented for both students and employees on dedicated pages on the UL website[31]. Below is the example of the steps presented for UL students:*

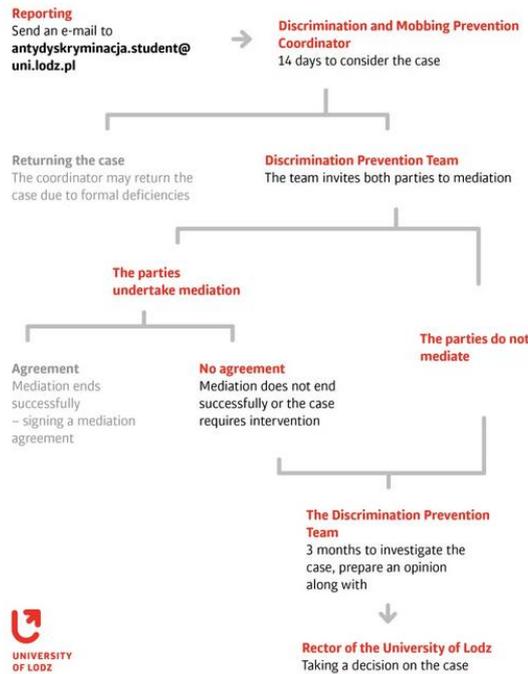**Discrimination – action plan
for students/doctoral students**

Reporting
Send an e-mail to
antydyskryminacja.student@
uni.lodz.pl

→

**Discrimination and Mobbing Prevention
Coordinator**
14 days to consider the case

Returning the case
The coordinator may return the
case due to formal deficiencies

Discrimination Prevention Team
The team invites both parties to mediation

**The parties
undertake mediation**

**The parties do not
mediate**

Agreement
Mediation ends
successfully
– signing a mediation
agreement

No agreement
Mediation does not end
successfully or the case
requires intervention

**The Discrimination Prevention
Team**
3 months to investigate the
case, prepare an opinion
along with

↓

**UNIVERSITY
OF LODZ**

Rector of the University of Lodz
Taking a decision on the case

*Figure 7 - Presentation of the steps of a referral of
discrimination at UL*

4.3 Role of the reporting unit and the procedure should be clear for those who refer to it

The procedure for referral can sometimes be a frustrating experience for alleged victims. As participants of RESET Capacity Building observed during the co-design session, its process can take a long time until a sanction is determined and the response may sometimes seem "weak" when it comes to the disciplinary decisions.

It is important to clarify the role of the unit with users: it is not an administrative or criminal court. Its role is to protect the victims and prevent GBV by:
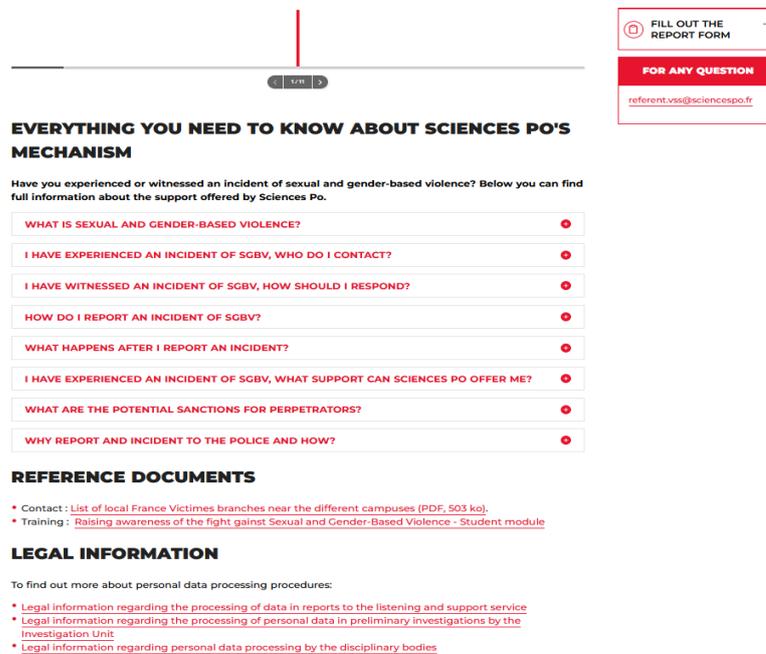
- Collecting alleged victims' testimony
- Make the link between the health protection and/or social services of the university (if necessary, legal, HR or student services)
- Alert or suspend the presumed perpetrator - in the event of an imminent danger
- Deliver awareness-raising activities.

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Victims may feel a lack of feedback from the unit once the referral is done. We recommend including a follow-up meeting (or several) with the alleged victims to the general procedure of the unit, in order to inform them on the updates of the process.

During the co-design session, it was also stated that victims rarely refer to the reporting units because they are not familiar or know little about them. They may be afraid of reprisals.

We recommend developing a clear communication strategy on the various questions that potential victims, witnesses or perpetrators may have about the procedure.

Example of a good practice: *ScPo institutional website contains a page[32] dedicated to the unit, where persons concerned by the cases of GBV can find answers to potential questions* (Figure 9). *Along with frequently asked questions, potential users may find references and laws on GBV, as well as contact information of the person referent for GBV and a link to the reporting portal.*

Figure 8 - Screenshot of the ScPo webpage dedicated to sexual and gender-based violence reporting mechanism

Sharing information ensures good comprehension and improves efficiency of the functioning of the unit.

4.4   Implementation of an online reporting portal should enable fast and secure reporting

Rather than by email or by phone, we recommend that the unit is contacted securely - via an online portal linked to the university website. The online reporting form should be adapted for students and staff. It should include fields for the declaration of status, function and gender and should enable distinction between victims and witnesses. This format enables users either to preserve anonymity or reveal their identity.

To support the referral and monitoring system of the unit, the institution's transversal group should include experts from the IT services.

Implementation of a trustworthy and secure environment for alleged victims and witnesses requires creation of an online reporting portal (UOULU, U.Porto). The information provided in the portal must be clear and confidentiality must be respected. We recommend highlighting related aspects in the communication about the procedure.

Example of a good practice: *In January 2023, the University of U. Porto launched the portal for complaints[33] - an action planned in the local GEP. This portal is a result of collaboration of multidisciplinary stakeholders: translators, lawyers and psychologists, IT staff gathered in order to develop the general vision and test the portal.*

Staff and students can use the U.Porto portal to report any illegal practice (discrimination, harassment, fraud). The welcoming page states: "wherever possible, everyone who submits a report should identify themselves, though it is possible to submit reports anonymously." The portal ensures the anonymity and protection of whistle-blowers and in this way reinforces U.Porto's commitment for transparency, integrity and responsibility.

The U.Porto portal was created with the help of an open source platform (typically used for whistle blowing) - Globaleaks. It represents a closed virtual machine in a very strict environment with double firewalls and a VPN.

4.5   Question of anonymity should be addressed

Among other topics discussed at the Capacity Building session - "Institutional Systems Dealing with Gender-Based Violence: Data and Ethics related aspects", an issue of anonymity was particularly salient.

Anonymity is a condition to help victims to raise their voice. In order to ensure the implementation of concrete actions and tackle cases of GBV, anonymity has to be lifted at some point. If the victim wishes to remain anonymous, the institution cannot act (its role will necessarily be very limited). On the other hand, anonymity *vis-à-vis* an alleged perpetrator may be preserved until a certain stage of the procedure (depending on the context). Moreover, exchanges around referral cases (transferring and saving

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[33] https://www.up.pt/denuncias/index-en.html

of materials: contacts, emails, proves, testimonies) should also follow the regulations in terms of data protection and ethics. Any system that gathers personal and sensitive data must be protected and information should circulate only through the secure channels.

In addition to the large, cross-disciplinary institutional unit, it is recommended to frame and implement an operational unit being limited to few people. Their status may vary depending on the type of victims: students or staff ideally subordinated to the code of professional secrecy[34]. This team would follow the most sensitive part of the referral and centralise the data.

In some cases, victims intend to testify and initiate an internal procedure without aiming at filling an official complaint. The member of staff who is aware of the case and does not have to follow the code of professional secrecy would be obliged to disclose it and impose a judicial investigation against his or her will. For example, in Polish and French cases, this is an obligation, since civil servants are obliged by law to report to the court any known crime.

Example of a good practice: *Members of the unit should sign a confidentiality agreement (unless law or professional code guarantees the confidentiality).*

Should the anonymity of the members of the monitoring unit be preserved or not? The RESET consortium has not developed a unanimous answer yet on this question.

4.6   Conflicts of interest should be anticipated

The reporting unit has to be installed at the university level. Universities are made up of numerous faculties, departments and components, the organisation of which varies from country to country, as well as the degree of decentralisation.

According to the RESET Ethics Advisor, there may be several types of conflicts of interest, namely:

- Conflict between the need to testify and the fear of retaliation for a victim or witness. The solution would be to provide a safe space and to remind on the respect of confidentiality (identity of a victim, witness and perpetrator).

- Institution is legally responsible, but positioned on the side of the victims. There may appear tensions between protecting the institutional image, reputation and sometimes integrity and being responsible for the protection of victims. In some cases, the institution can be charged (it is an institutional responsibility to assume consequences and protect the victims and witnesses).

- Debate around the necessity to use external support for the collection of referrals. For example, UBx made this choice for the referrals from students. On

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[34] Depending on the country, it can be social workers, nurses, doctors.

the one hand, it ensures objectivity. On the other hand, treatment of such cases requires particular knowledge of the context and institutional challenges, which external bodies (e.g., psychologists, associations) usually do not have.

- Personal responsibility of the top management is evoked, as they may be tempted to cover up cases and protect their collaborators, due to gatekeeping and networking.

Example of a good practice: A potential solution would be to adopt a collegial approach and to integrate representatives from other units in the decision-making around sanctions. This approach also ensures transparency and objectivity. In some cases, it should be possible to delegate the entire case for neutral and objective treatment by another institution.

4.7   Human resources should be made available

Activities related to dealing with cases of sexual harassment are mostly tasks or responsibility of the staff of universities: legal services, health, social services, HR, IT services. Unless it is a separate administrative mission, involvement in the creation of a procedure dealing with GBV adds new items and responsibilities to their work, with a probable increase in their workload. The cross-field nature of the cases between HR and student services may disrupt the organisational routine of universities. According to the RESET results, personnel of HR departments is *a priori* more equipped for the running of a procedure than representatives of student services, for which it may be a brand new task.

It is absolutely needed to provide sufficient administrative and financial resources for the implementation of an efficient procedure. Therefore, it is necessary to quantify the amount of time required to process referrals, coordinate departments and services and involve them in the production of the annual report. It implies the composition of a team of trained stakeholders in the Gender Equality Office, dedicated to this issue.

4.8   Potential users of the unit should be clearly identified

In the legal context of the European Union and its member states, sexual harassment at workplace shall be tackled, which implies facilitation of the prosecution and punishment procedures.

Thus, student services of universities may not always feel concerned by this law, though available data confirm that most of the referrals are made by students. Students may be victims, witnesses or perpetrators in relation to their peers or personnel. For example, at the UBx, the disciplinary procedure for users designed to punish cheating in exams also contains provisions for punishment in case of GBV (if it takes place within the institution). However, its scope does not necessarily cover sanctions on GBV concerning students in a private setting (for example, during students' events). In France, female students have been making this type of request to the HEIs since the #MeToo movement.

In any case, the university can offer support in submission of a criminal complaint, as well as give contacts of associations or the health service. Disciplinary law sometimes makes it possible to link elements of a private setting with an internal disciplinary procedure. For example, ScPo and UBx have decided to deal with issues of domestic violence if cases are proven to have an impact on work or studies. In addition, the UBx regulation states that any behaviour detrimental to the reputation or proper functioning of the institution must be punished. Thus, cases of GBV that take place online or in public gathering can be processed by the unit, since they imply impact on the image, reputation and functioning of the university.

We strongly recommend to determine in terms of disciplinary law the extent to which sexual violence in a private setting (student-to-student or student-to-staff or staff-to-staff) can be prosecuted. The procedure must be clearly defined for students. The institution should provide a dedicated page listing the resources available internally and locally (moderation services, associations, psychologists).

Examples of good practices:

UOULU offers training for students - to become a contact person in case of harassment. This contact person is someone, on whom victims can rely and ask for counselling or information when confronted with specific cases of bullying, sexual harassment, physical or mental abuse.

At RUB, victims can talk to their student representatives at the faculty. In the Federal state of the North-Rhein Westphalia, students have the possibility to organize themselves into boards (representative bodies at faculties). These bodies are acknowledged about who was involved in some GBV related cases and the boards can follow up cases when needed.

4.9   Special attention should be put on female doctoral students

Relationship between a thesis supervisor and a doctoral student often implies dependence - a factor that may lead to abuse or GBV. The hybrid status of doctoral students (who can be considered both as students and staff members), as well as professional mobility may result in situations with unwanted or unintended contact. To reduce these risks and encourage victims to testify, we recommend that there are thesis-monitoring committees composed of at least two people. At UBx, the thesis director is asked to exit the room at the end of the thesis monitoring committees and the PhD student can testify in case of harassment or GBV.

The specific communication on the unit should be developed for PhD students, including raising awareness on potential problematic relationships between a student and a PhD director.

Example of good practice: *The LaBRI (Bordeaux Laboratory of Research in IT) implemented a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Charter[35]. In this document based on case studies, a series of recommendations are presented. One of them highlights the importance of not organising professional meetings in hotel rooms during conferences or international mobility, to avoid problematic situations.*

4.10   Institution should invest in transparency and accountability

In order to change behaviours, but also to encourage victims to trust into and apply the institutional procedure in case of GBV, institutional effort towards greater transparency should be increased.

We strongly recommend to publish an annual report including types of referrals (status and gender of perpetrators and victims), which follows-up actions and sanctions taken (if any). This report should be public and presented to the university authorities. It can also be submitted to the Ministries or other national authorities.

Example of a good practice: *In the UBx GEP (2022-2024)*

> *Theme 4. Action no. 6: Publishing an annual report on the university website detailing the work of this unit (reports, punishments, affected groups), including data on staff and the student community.*

4.11   Communication should be targeted

Although it may be part of their mission, communication on GBV related issues and sexual harassment does not necessarily depend solely on the institutional reporting units. Moreover, any type of communication on actions against GBV and sexual harassment should include information on the reporting portal/unit.

In terms of internal communication, it is recommended to disseminate a guide for staff and members of components' structures on how to react and orient victims or witnesses.

Communication actions are essential for prevention: to help potential victims, perpetrators and witnesses to identify cases of GBV and to be aware of the existing support facilities.

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[35] Further presented in D5.1 - RESET academic core charters revised, including engagement for scientific excellence, gender equality and diversity, https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10599677

Example of good practices:

The RUB campaign to inform on the anti-harassment unit.

Figure 9 - Campaign to inform on the anti-harassment unit at RUB

RUB has been running a campaign to inform on actions that should be taken when confronted to verbal or physical assault. The materials indicate an emergency contact number. This type of campaign is an efficient way to raise awareness and promote the existence of a specific procedure to protect victims.

Alertomètre (UBx) – tool for raising awareness on GBV at university

An "Alertomètre" is a tool that has been recently created at UBx (with the help of a local network of other HEIs and associations that work with issues of GBV). It intends to help students and employees to identify situations of GBV (as witnesses or victims) and to disseminate the contact of the unit on GBV and discrimination (e-mail & QR code). It is presented in a format of a small document that can be folded as a bookmark, as well as in the form of posters. The presentation of situations goes from the green colour (describes normal and healthy relationships at university) till red - identifies problematic or dangerous situations (see figure 11). A game was elaborated from the alertomètre in which participants are invited to make an order of the presented situations (what seems normal and what seems dangerous to them). It is a way to raise awareness on the issue. The Alertomètre has been largely disseminated at the UBx, and continues to be an important tool. it is shared when relevant in important events, meetings and workshops.

Figure 10 - Alertomètre (University of Bordeaux, 2022)

4.12   Units should remain open to change

Monitoring units should find their place in the system that combines a flexible network introducing transversality and an institutional structure. They must be designed as reflective and evolving structures.

The first unit at Sciences Po Paris was created as part of the EGERA programme - with an initial GEP that gave a strong incentive to its creation and operation. After 2019, the operation became more centralised, as Sciences Po was subject to denunciations in the context of the #MeToo movement. A working group under the chairmanship of Danièle Hervieu-Léger in May 2021 carried out a useful re-organisation of the unit, its purpose and functioning scope.

The unit for monitoring of sexual harassment at the University of Bordeaux was created in 2015. In the context of extension of grounds for referral (opening to discrimination), the University has anticipated an increase in the number of referrals and has been experimenting with external structure for students' monitoring since September 2022. Externalisation of reporting may offer victims an occasion to express better what happened. Within this procedure, the external structure submits a detailed report of the reported case to the university and the unit of UBx can take the lead. The further process is managed by a project manager and medical and social personnel of the university.

The University of Lodz included the following action in its GEP: "The creation of a trial version of an anti-discrimination procedure". The special working group has developed the procedure that was validated in March 2023 and UL is now tackling the issue of the reporting portal.

The units must evolve according to the legal transformations but also consider critics. Institutions should not be afraid to experiment with the balance between institutional and external structure.

5. Conclusion

This report aims at reporting on the RESET network's structural engagement against sexual harassment through the work of new (AUTh, UL, U.Porto) or enhanced (UBx) processes. Numerous efforts have been made by GEP implementing partners, which have progressively elaborated actions and policies to tackle sexual harassment, gender-based violence and discrimination. Through the adoption of innovative and inclusive Gender Equality Plans and the implementation of awareness raising actions at local and project-scale, RESET partners engaged or pursued their engagement towards culture of zero tolerance of sexual harassment.

This document is focused on the very specific question of sexual harassment. However, as it is stated in the introductory part, this social issue cannot be dissociated from notions of GBV and discrimination. In the EU and most of national legal frameworks, sexual harassment is embedded in larger questions of discrimination and gender equality. The intersectional dimension of the RESET project reinforces the link between these notions.

Sexual harassment is prevalent in all HEIs, but it is not always considered a public issue. While some institutions could count on a decade of public action, the #MeToo movement and feminist mobilisations encouraging national and local-scale incentives to tackle GBV (France – UBx, ScPo), others are still facing difficulties due to the national legal framework and culture (Greece, Poland – AUTh, UL). Even if in Portugal, sexual harassment in HEIs has been for a long time a taboo, publication of some existing cases had a catalyst effect and legal incentives were implemented, enabling the creation of the U.Porto reporting portal. While French universities can count on a strong legal framework – recently reinforced towards enlargement of reporting scope, other institutions are pioneers in the implementation of such procedures (UL, AUTh, U.Porto).

This report relies on both literature review and audit made at RESET-scale. Resources from the EU – legal framework, GEAR tool and recommendations and the comprehensive work of the UniSAFE project enabled to identify common challenges in terms of sexual harassment in European HEIs. Analysis of the EU framework was completed by a project-scale audit, through two series of face-to-face interviews between the partner responsible for this project's area and each of the consortium members. Interviews focused on the assessment of the risks and strengths of dealing with sexual violence within institutions. These interviews were complemented, depending on the issues identified, by bilateral interviews with strategic stakeholders at RESET institutions (heads of legal departments, members of anti-discrimination procedures, members of GEBs or GECs).

From the recommendations of the Horizon Europe and UniSAFE project, and the identification of local needs, we identified a standard with four priority pillars, the basis of which RESET implementing institutions have been implementing policies tackling sexual harassment:

1. Measuring the prevalence of facts – through national surveys (UBx, U.Porto) or GEP actions aiming at monitoring GBV and discrimination in institutions (AUTh, UL).
2. Acting on attitudes, preventing cases – via project-scale and local awareness raising initiatives.
3. Implementing a reporting system to punish alleged perpetrators and support alleged victims. This action was already achieved by U.Porto and UBx. Other institutions implemented a reporting system, but are still planning its adaptation to an online version (UL). AUTh procedure is still in progress and has not been adopted yet.
4. Developing training programs for the entire academic community – mainly through RESET's activities and local sessions with GEB members and the university communities.

This report shows how the national and local contexts can influence the implementation of a policy to tackle gender-based violence, and the difficulties that institutions may face when engaging in such a process. However, the document also presents recommendations that can be useful for institutions at various levels.

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