

# Gender and qualification

Transcending gendered features of key qualifications for improving options for career choice and enhancing human resource potential

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## Support / Duration

### Support program:



European Community

*Commission of the European Community*

[Fifth framework program](#)

### Financing:

European Community

### Duration:

01.02.2000 bis 31.03.2002

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## Abstract

The project will investigate the impact of gender segregation of European labour markets on vocational education and training, with special regard to key (core) competences / qualifications / skills / knowledge. Established gender barriers prove to be inadequate for a modernisation of work processes and, consequently, tend to lose validity because they will impede both individual career options of women and men as well as human resource development. Therefore, vocational education and training (VET) systems should aim at competences corresponding to these challenges and at equal opportunities for both sexes.

## Target group

Teachers, trainers, apprentices, employees, personal managers etc. in the following occupational fields: Electricians, nursery nurses, waiters and waitresses.

## Focus of research / Project objectives

The project will particularly investigate to which extent women and men tend to develop gender specific key qualifications or dispose of different sets of key competences / qualifications on their jobs and in situations of occupational change. This should lead for both sexes to strategies of qualification allowing to overcome inequalities in the labour market on the one hand and to improve employability on the other. The aim envisaged is to reduce gender segregation in the labour market and to prepare for situations of occupational changes. As a conclusion, recommendations for policy makers and practitioners in vocational education and training and continuous vocational training will be defined according to this aim.



## Workplan and timescale

02/2000 bis  
04/2000

### **Development of a common concept, common understanding and set up of cornerstones**

To ensure a common knowledge base in a first step of mutual learning a secondary analysis of national research on the determining reasons for the emergence of a gender labour division and its reflection in the respective VET systems (initial and continuing vocational training, school to work and VET to work transition) will be done with explicit reference to the different historical cultural and economical prerequisites of occupational and VET-traditions. Special regard will be given to the understanding of key competences in the different national VET-systems and gendered clusters of key qualifications.

05/2000 bis  
07/2000

### **Contribution of actual VET practices to ongoing gender segregation by enhancing gendered key competences**

It will be analysed how VET practices generate gender key competences / qualifications in the selected fields of occupations, which are clearly dominated either by women or men: nursery nurses (women-dominated) and electricians (men-dominated). In a second step sets of key qualifications will be determined, which can be specially related to these selected occupational fields.

04/2000 bis  
11/2000

### **Relation of specific key competences to gender and theoretical background of key competences in the European discourse**

In an empirical (a) and more theoretical (b) way it shall be assessed how and to which extent key competences can be related to gender. In empirical respect this question will be analysed from different points of view: from the VET

perspective assessing key competences of importance for skill transfer in situations of occupational change and from the employers and employees perspective.

In theoretical respect the aim will be analysing VET-concepts of key qualifications and their relation to gender-specific vocational education.

11/2000 bis  
02/2001

### **Conditions for the reproduction of gender segregation due to gendered features of key competences**

It shall be assessed how and to which extent key competences related to gender tend to (re)produce gender segregation. This will be evaluated

- from the employers perspective assessing to which extent employment practices of personnel managers and / or occupational requirements tend to (re)produce gender segregation;
- from the employees (individuals) perspective assessing how and to which extent self images contribute to reproduction of key competences related to gender.

03/2001 bis  
07/2001

### **Conditions for the development of key competences beyond gender segregation**

The development of key competences beyond gender segregation will be worked out in the selected occupational fields, the aim consisting in an improved ability to perform in situations of occupational change. The approach will be

- to explore conditions and motivations of career choice in the selected occupational fields,
- to explore to which extent men working in women dominated professions tend to develop other key competences than men working in male dominated professions and vice versa,
- to which extent they make use of these other (additional) key competences,
- to which extent those (additional) key competences influence their work career.

08/2001 bis  
12/2001

### **Gender specific strategies in the approach to situations of occupational change and the impact on the performance on the labour market**

It will be explored whether there are differences in coping with situations of occupational change specially asking if occupational shifts or changes are perceived as a positive chance for further personality development and learning and if so

- whether these differences can be related to gender men or women showing differences in their way of coping with occupational change, and
- whether women or men make different use of key competences in situations of occupational shifts or changes.
- to which extent they show a better performance on the labour market, i. e.

if their employability is considered to be higher.

The focus will be on periods of biographical transitions with special regard to transition from one occupation to another and will be assessed again from both the employers and the employees perspective.

01/2002 bis  
03/2002

### **Recommendations for transcending gender barriers and gender segregation in the European VET systems with regard to key competences**

Recommendations shall be drawn up, addressing VET practitioners and education policy makers and aiming at an improved implementation of the development of key competences in (initial or continuing) vocational education and training transcending gender barriers and gender segregation thus rising the individual employability and provide a broader option for career choice on the one hand and improving the human resource potential for a less gender segregated labour market on the other hand.

A European co-operation transcending the level of mere comparison shall provide an improved understanding, planning and carrying through of VET measures with special regard to equal opportunity of employment. As a consequence, vocational education and training and continuous vocational training measures could be designed to provide both sexes with competences as they are not equipped with so far. Reappraisal could be achieved by grasping the qualification potential of the latter, with regard to specially gendered clusters of key qualifications / competences.