

Advancing Gender Equality in Media Industries (AGEMI) project and platform

Policy recommendations

(September 2019)

In the context of the United Nations Agenda 2030 – where Goal 5 fosters gender equality across all sectors – and in the run-up to Beijing+25 – celebrating 25 years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 - understanding the role that the media play in both perpetuating and challenging gender-based inequalities is crucial if we are to change the picture and make gender equality a reality at national, regional and global levels.

The AGEMI platform constitutes a unique and important resource to educate the next generation of journalists and media professionals who will contribute to transforming the profession, and society as a result of an enhanced understanding of their role in the broader landscape of media and gender in/equalities. At the same time, the AGEMI platform provides a set of globally relevant resources to support the commitment to gender equality by media organizations themselves, as well as by all those societal agents that operate to promote awareness and make change.

The AGEMI platform is the main outcome of the AGEMI project, co-funded by the *Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme* of the European Union and operationalised between 2017 and 2019. The project had two main foci: the curation of existing materials, practices, experiences concerning different aspects of inequality that still characterize media operations and content as well as examples of good practice; and the creation of a set of materials that constitute efforts in translating both academic and professional knowledges into openly available resources. It aimed to foster the dissemination of good practices to promote gender equality in the media and communication sector, while also bridging the educational and working environments, providing students, media educators and media professionals with a range of resources, including:

- ✓ Resources Bank of Good Practices – [GEMPractices](#)
- ✓ Online learning materials - [GEMLearn](#)
- ✓ Interviews with media professionals – [GEMTalks](#)
- ✓ Encounters and collaborative projects - [GEMConnect](#)
- ✓ An App (available for android and iPhone) for monitoring news content – ACT (Assess, Challenge, Transform) - [GEMApp](#)

As a consequence of the work developed during the delivery of the AGEMI project, complemented by several decades of research into the broad topic of gender, media and inequality, we make a number of policy recommendations for a variety of different

stakeholders. We call on institutions and actors at different levels to make use of the transformative potential of the AGEMI platform by incorporating elements into their respective efforts to promote gender equality in and through the media, communication and ICT.

European institutions

- The European Commission and the European Institute for Gender Equality should recognize the European value of the important and unique outputs of the AGEMI project and commit to making the AGEMI platform visible, known and fully acknowledged across all initiatives aimed at fostering gender equality in the fields of democratic development, civic participation and overcoming stereotypes that affect gendered relations across working environments. This would mean including the AGEMI platform in existing databases of good practices¹, archives of educational resources, and – where appropriate – inviting members of the AGEMI consortium to share their experience and the lessons learned from the delivery of the project.
- Adequate resources should be made available by the European Commission to support the maintenance of the AGEMI platform as well as future European plans that may stem from the AGEMI experience such as the creation of a network of European universities committed to develop common educational activities to educate gender-aware media professionals and/or European-wide collaborations across sectors (higher education institutions, media organizations, journalist unions) to foster gender equal media and ICTs.

Governments and public institutions

- A renewed commitment should be made towards the full realization of the gender mainstreaming approach in national media and its governance. This includes a commitment to mainstream gender equality in national media policies and digital strategies, and an explicit acknowledgement of the role and relevance of media and ICTs within broader gender equality strategies. The AGEMI platform provides elements (video-lectures, interviews with media professionals and gender experts, good practices, reports and reading materials) to inform the development of clear national programs to support gender-transformative media policies and digital strategies.
- Nation-wide and sub-national initiatives should be organized to raise awareness and promote public debate on the issue of women's misrepresentation in media content and of their marginalisation within the industry, particularly in relation to decision-making roles and in the sub-fields of ICT and STEM. The AGEMI platform includes examples of good practices in raising gender in/equality awareness while offering specific expert-guided video-lectures on the above-mentioned topics.
- Establishment of a sustained multi-stakeholder dialogue between relevant authorities and agencies including media companies, media professionals, the research and education community, civil society organizations, ICT developers and the broader tech industry. Such dialogues (conferences, seminars) should be organized on a regular basis and be institutionally supported so as to develop the capacity to address the challenges deriving from future digital communication developments. The AGEMI platform offers a variety of relevant materials (lectures, interviews, good practices), in different formats (video, texts, websites) with all moving image resources available with professionally developed subtitles in English, French and Spanish) which can support such dialogues.
- Regular monitoring of the situation of women and men in the media and ICT industries both in terms of content and employment should be carried out, including a focus on career progression and access to managerial and decision-making positions. Such reporting should be integrated in all monitoring and assessment activities carried out as part of nation-

¹ EIGE has now included AGEMI on its website under its 'Gender Mainstreaming' resources

specific commitments to Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The AGEMI platform offers a variety of examples of monitoring regimes (in the Resources Bank of Good Practices) as well as introductions to methodologies and outcomes (in the Learning Units). The AGEMI resources can support the establishment of regular monitoring activities.

Governments and Higher Education Institutions

- Introduction of gender-focused modules, curricula, syllabi and programmes in all higher education degrees, with the aim of educating the next generation of media, ICT and communication professionals, so as to promote awareness and knowledge transfer, and to model a gender-sensitive practice to students. The AGEMI platform constitutes a concrete entry point in the elaboration of such curricula and syllabi.
- Develop initiatives to support the transition from training to employment, for girls and women who want to enter media and IT professions, including leadership training. The AGEMI platform can be used to organize such trainings, as well as providing a set of resources for creating conditions for collaborations between educational institutions and media and ICT companies.

Teaching and Research Community (HEI)

- Teachers and trainers are invited to integrate the AGEMI resources with their ongoing activities, furthering a holistic and multi-dimensional understanding of gender inequalities in and through the media and ICTs, going **beyond** the singular focus on representation and stereotyping. To this end, the AGEMI platform constitutes a core reference because of its multi-thematic educational resources, the richness of its video and textual materials, its global outlook and comparative approach.
- Researchers are called to further contribute to map out and critically investigate the gendered realities of media and ICTs, with a particular attention to: a) relevant policy measures and governing arrangements; b) the impact of digital technologies on working conditions; and c) issues of harassment and violence, both within media and ICT working environments but also in the conduct of professional activities. In relation to all such dimensions of inequality, the AGEMI platform offers a well-thought out and articulated organization of themes and materials which foster an holistic understanding of inequality issues while indicating knowledge gaps and contemporary challenges that should be addressed.

Media Organizations and Professional Unions

- Actions should be taken to encourage both the formal adoption of gender equality policies, self-regulatory frameworks and codes of conduct and, where they already exist, their implementation and monitoring through support mechanisms such as observatories and ad hoc units, gender equality plans and goals, and the use or adaption of existing benchmarks such as UN's Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media. These measures are important for an equality ethos to be firmly embedded in the organization's operations; to favour gender-sensitive transformation in organizational cultures; and to give clear signals that equality issues are taken seriously, thus fostering sustainability of gender-equal transformations over time. The AGEMI platform provides elements (video lectures, good practices, reports and reading materials) to develop clear and focused self-regulatory measures, such as codes of conduct through its collection of good practices and video-lectures explaining the how and why of equality provision.
- A gender mainstreaming commitment should be made by promoting awareness of the different dimensions of gender inequality that characterizes media content, structures and operations. This can be encouraged by promoting gender-awareness training activities, particularly targeted at management teams, aimed at transforming the gendered culture of working environments; and conducting regular monitoring of gender in/equality within

organisations, both in terms of media content and employment. The AGEMI platform offers a variety of examples, good practices and available resources, as well as of the criteria and indicators that can be used.²

Civil Society Organizations

- Civil society and women's professional organizations should continue to promote awareness about the challenges and opportunities of fostering gender equal media and ICTs. Besides monitoring activities and advocacy interventions towards public institutions and private entities, these actors have an important role to play in providing solid and diverse knowledge about the formulation, adoption and implementation of policy measures - at the organizational, national and international levels - that will inform gender-aware media ecosystems and future technological developments. The AGEMI platform provides elements (video-lectures, good practices, reports and reading materials) to develop clear and focused policy interventions – by national institutions as well as media organizations - through its collection of good practices and video-lectures explaining the how and why of equality provisions.
- Efforts should be made to connect the many different realities that promote initiatives to foster gender equality in the media and IT. The sharing of information and good practices, fostering networks and the development of joint activities, are all crucial to harness the potential of bottom-up collaborations to inform and influence the future development of a European knowledge society and its governance. The AGEMI platform could be a central node in these evolving networks, thanks to its authoritative position (EU-funding and joint collaboration between academia and professional associations), the knowledges it has curated and created, and the efforts made to create a resource that could speak to and be meaningful to a variety of audiences, in particular a younger generation of communicators.



² AGEMI is listed as a resource on the European Federation of Journalists' website