



*This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 741128*



## **On the International Women's Day the GEECCO team joined the organization of the conference "Women in Science and Business"**

**An initiative that has been held regularly for eleven years at the Cracow University of Technology.**

The main organizer of the conference is the office of the Center for Technology Transfer PK. During one of the sessions, Sabina Puławska-Obiedowska (PK GEECCO team) presented at first main ongoing and planned, actions of the GEECCO that lead to the creation of a Gender Equality Plan at PK:

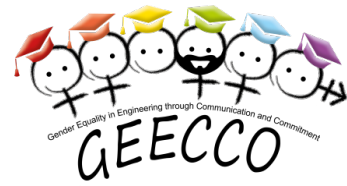
- Data collection by gender (identifying existing status and changes)
- Raising awareness workshops.
- Development suggestions for the new statute.
- Increasing the visibility of women in science and engineering through meetings with successful women - role models, interviews, publications.
- Inclusion of gender aspects into the curricula.
- Actions to create a more friendly workplace - currently: surveys (stereotypes, prejudices and harassment).

In the presentation, Sabina Puławska-Obiedowska presented also current statistics on gender equality at PK. After the presentation, panel discussion under the title "Does the career in science and business have gender?" started. The panel gathered 5 panelist - successful scientists : dr inż. Justyna Topolska from AGH University of Science and Technology and dr inż. Anton Pashkevich representing GEECCO project at PK; and business women: Małgorzata Ciesielska – former manager of big projects and current innovation broker at CTT PK, Beata Toporska, Managing Director of RUIBD Sp.zo.o. and dr Anna Zaroda-Dąbrowska, former researcher, right now managing projects on diversity strategies for companies (Diversity Hub). The discussion and the panelists shared their experiences on barriers and challenges in career development process, and the difficulties if you have to reconcile different social roles. Among the barriers panelists pointed out existence of a glass ceiling at universities - one of the panelists told a personal story that happened during and after her PhD as a reason for leaving the university. As another participant indicated, some stereotypes, eg. whether a woman is suitable for working on a construction site, also still exist in business engineering environments. Panelists pointed out the existence of barriers in own women's heads: what we think about ourselves and how we perceive our own possibilities and talents. They indicated that the problem is not to believe in their own abilities, devaluing their own achievements, lack of courage to take on new challenges, but also remorse caused by felling in not completing all tasks at 100%, especially when the manager and mother's role is to be reconciled. The panelist Anton Pashkevich, who noticed that combining the role of father and scientist, is difficult, especially when one wants to partner in the creation of a family, also mentioned this. Among the solutions, supporting equal opportunities in career development process for men and women panelists indicated:

- men's education
- raising your own qualifications, self-improvement
- counteracting stereotypes concerning women and their participation in the labor market in general, and in particular stereotypes concerning women who want to pursue a career
- popularizing the role of models - for a very popular statement: „women cannot be what they cannot see”
- mentoring programs - they are very helpful in overcoming your own limitations,
- creating a safe work environment, so that everyone has space for themselves and being themselves according to the "It's easy to be bold in safe environment" principle



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- following the idea: “Leave the assumptions at the door” - many assumptions prevent women from making a career, it is unbelievable how many barriers we have in our heads.



Picture 1. Sabina Puławska-Obiedowska and the posters on GEECCO project. Conference Women in Science and Business 8.03.2019



Picture 2. Panel discussion based on GEECCO issues: “Does the career in science and business have gender?” Sabina Puławska-Obiedowska as a moderator