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## The European project GEECCO faces the challenge of promoting and increasing the presence of women working in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The project, framed within the Horizon 2020 European funding Programme and concerning the implementation of actions that eliminate barriers to hiring, maintaining and promoting women researchers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, has now completed the second-year work.

### MEETING in Scilla, 3-4 June 2019

The mid-term reflection of the GEECCO partners on the results achieved until now and the planned activities and actions to be developed and completed in the next two years took place at Castello Ruffo di Calabria (Scilla, Italy), on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019, hosted by the University Mediterranea of Reggio Calabria, partner of the project.

The mid-term meeting has been attended by all the partners of GEECCO coming from seven European countries, which are the Technische Universität Wien (Austria, project coordinator), the Università degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria (Italy, hosting the meeting), the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (Spain), the Politechnika Krakowska (Poland), the Technological Agentura České Republiky (Czech Republic), the institute Wiener Wissenschafts-Forschungs- und Technologiefonds (Austria), and the organisations Yellow Window (Belgium), B-NK GmbH Consultancy for Sustainable Competence (Austria) and GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (Germany).

The team of the University Mediterranea of Reggio Calabria in the GEECCO project is led and coordinated by the vice-rector for Equal Opportunities, Maria Nadia Postorino. GEECCO will serve to start the activities concerning equal opportunities at the University Mediterranea, which operates mainly in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and before the funding of GEECCO had not set Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) intended to be fully operational. Like in the other Research Performing Organisations (RPOs), the activities and actions expected in the planned GEP are addressed to implement gender equality policies in decision-making bodies and processes, to promote research careers particularly in STEM fields as well as teaching and research activities taking into account the end-user perspective.



Picture 2: Opening session: welcome from the Vice-Rector for International Relationships of UNICR and  
Picture 3. Learning loop



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Recent data (2018) concerning the University Mediterranea of Reggio Calabria show that only 20% of full professors are women, and they are still underrepresented in the decision-making bodies. However, as discussed during the mid-term meeting, awareness among the academic staff has been increasing and this represents an important result to start activities and actions specifically addressed to remove barriers and reduce imbalance where possible. On the other hand, the number of girl students and PhD female students in STEM is above the average values for both Italy and Europe – about 30% (reference year 2018), which represents a good starting point for first stage recruitment processes. At the same time, increasing awareness about gender issues may help to start introducing the perspective of the “end-user” in research and teaching activities at the University.

An important topic discussed during the meeting dealt with **monitoring and evaluation issues**, which have been carefully described by [Dr. Anke Lipinsky](#), from [GESIS](#), in order to make RPOs partners aware about how to measure progresses and how to improve actions while implementing their GEP. Another essential part of the meeting was the **learning loops** among partners. The learning loops was led by [Lut Merqaert](#), from [Yellow Window](#). Exchange of experiences, positive and negative aspects of some implemented actions, resistances and other issues have been compared by both RPOs and RFOs in order to learn from each other and discuss possible strategies and improvements.



Picture 1: GEECCO partners

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