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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 implementation of actions that eliminate barriers to hiring, maintaining and promoting women researchers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics is the objective of the European project Gender Equality in Engineering through Communication and Commitment (GEECCO), carried out by nine European partners, including the UPC.

According to the latest data published in the European report [She Figures 2015](#), in 2013 only 20% of full professors in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in the European Union were women. In Spain, the gender gap was even greater: only 12% of full professors were women.

On 16 and 17 October the [Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya \(UPC\)](#) hosted the meeting in Barcelona of the nine partners of the **GEECCO** project, framed within the [Horizon 2020](#) European funding programme. The aim of GEECCO is to reduce gender inequality in the European research institutions that work in the aforementioned areas. The participants in the project—four universities, a technology institute and four consulting companies—will be the first to design and implement the measures adopted.

The partners from seven European countries are, in addition to the UPC, the [Technische Universität Wien](#) (Austria, the project coordinator), the [Università degli Studi Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria](#) (Italy), the [Politechnika Krakowska](#) (Poland), the [Technologická 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 the [GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences](#) (Germany).

According to the figures provided by the UPC's [Planning, Assessment and Quality Bureau](#) (GPAQ) and the report [Informe Dones UPC 2015](#), at the UPC only 8% of full professors were women in the 2014-2015 academic year. The figures for the teaching and research staff working at the UPC during the same period also show a considerable gender gap: 608 women (24% of the total) compared to 1,894 men.

The UPC's participation in the GEECCO project is led by the vice-rector for International Relations, [Lourdes Reig](#), and coordinated by the researcher [Amaia Lusa](#) from the Department of Management. **GEECCO** will serve to achieve the objectives set in the [Third UPC Gender Equality Plan](#) for the period 2016-2020 and, in particular, to implement gender equality policies in decision-making processes and to promote research careers and teaching and research activities at the University.

### Applying gender equality measures

The project has a total budget of EUR 2,025,493 to develop measures aimed at applying gender equality policies in European institutions, companies and organisations over a four-year period (2017-2021).

Since the beginning of the project, on 1 May 2017, participants have been diagnosed and have gathered past experiences that have helped overcome the main difficulties in implementing



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gender equality plans in organisations. The next step is to apply the gender dimension and to create a learning space between the institutions and organisations participating in the project, all of them linked to the STEM fields.

One of the actions planned for the short term is the **workshop** that will take place on 23 November on the North Campus in Barcelona, during which the expert on gender equality Maxime Forest, from Yellow Window, will explain the **effective implementation of gender equality** and best practices within public institutions linked to the STEM fields. The workshop will also address how to overcome the main obstacles and resistances to making gender equality a reality.

The long-term objective of GEECCO is to increase the number of organisations and programmes that implement gender equality plans, in accordance with the challenges set by the [European Research Area](#).

Of the 23 proposals submitted in 2016, GEECCO has been one of the two projects financed under the call [SwafS-03-2016-2017](#) for “Support to research organisations to implement gender equality plans”.

To obtain more information or contact the project consortium, please visit us on: <http://www.geecco-project.eu>

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