Integrating Gender in Civil Security for Society Research

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2023

INTRODUCTION

This report on Cluster 3 "Civil Security for Society'' - which is one of the main six research areas of the EU Horizon-Europe Programme - follows a respective dedicated webinar held in December 2022 and face to face workshops delivered in May 2023 (Athens and Thessaloniki, Greece). These activities were implemented in the framework of the project "GENDER-IN: Integrating Gender in interdisciplinary research" and facilitated by the Greek Association of Academic Women (ELGYP) and Kilden genderresearch.no.

The purpose of this report is to present the content, features and objectives of the Cluster 3 in a brief yet comprehensive way, based on the experience gained during the participation in the aforementioned training activities as well as relevant literature. The key issues to be addressed include the main topics addressed by Cluster 3 in Horizon Europe, EU guidelines relating to the integration of the gender dimension in research projects in cluster 3, examples of gender dimension integrated in interdisciplinary research relevant for Cluster 3, means with which researchers can strengthen the integration of gender in the design of research projects in Cluster 3 and, finally, policy recommendations for funding institutions.

Main topics addressed by Cluster 3 "Civil Security for Society" in Horizon Europe

Cluster 3 "Civil Security for Society" aims "to support wider EU responses" to multiple "security challenges" such as terrorism and crime, cyber-attacks, natural or human induced disasters as well as challenges and risks related to irregular migration (European Commission – Directorate General for Research and Innovation, 2021 February:55) "ensuring free movement and protecting the integrity of the Schengen area" (European Commission – Directorate General for Research and Innovation, 2021 February:15). Civil security encompasses a wide range of activities and policies aimed at safeguarding individuals, communities, and the overall functioning of society.

Based on the upon, here are some key aspects that might be included in this cluster:

- Emergency Management:

✓ Planning and response to natural disasters (e.g. earthquakes, floods, etc.).

✓ Coordination of resources and personnel during emergencies.

✓ Evacuation plans and shelter management.

- Public Safety:

✓ Policing and law enforcement to maintain public order.

✓ Crime prevention and community policing.

- Infrastructure Protection:

✓ Securing critical infrastructure such as power grids, transportation systems, and communication networks.

✓ Resilience planning for infrastructure to withstand potential threats.

- Health Security:

✓ Public health measures to prevent and control the spread of diseases.

✓ Preparedness for pandemics and other health emergencies.

- Border Security:

✓ Management of borders to control the movement of people and goods.

✓ Preventing illegal activities, including trafficking and terrorism.

- Disaster Preparedness:

✓ Educating the public on disaster preparedness.

✓ Developing early warning systems for potential threats.

- Crisis Communication:

✓ Establishing effective communication strategies during emergencies.

✓ Disseminating accurate information to the public.

- Community Resilience:

✓ Building community capacity to cope with and recover from disasters.

✓ Promoting social cohesion and community engagement.

- Technological Security:

✓ Protecting against cyber threats and ensuring the security of information systems.

✓ Surveillance technologies for public safety.

- Humanitarian Assistance:

✓ Coordinating and providing aid in times of crises, both domestically and internationally.

✓ Collaborating with civil society actors (e.g. NGOs and international organizations) for disaster relief.

This cluster likely involves collaboration between various government agencies, law enforcement, health organizations, emergency responders, and community groups to create a comprehensive approach to civil security for society. The goal is to create a resilient and secure environment that can effectively respond to and recover from various threats and emergencies. The budget allocated for Partnerships and Missions under Cluster 3 - and for the 2021-2027 period - is €1.596 billion euros (European Commission, 2021 March 19).

EU guidelines relating to the integration of the gender dimension in research projects in Cluster 3

"Gender equality and inclusiveness" is one of the "key specific issues" to "be taken into account in the implementation of Horizon Europe 2021-2024, thus creating a sound foundation for the pursuit of the key strategic orientations" (European Commission – Directorate General for Research and Innovation, 2021 February:25). All activities "will aim at eliminating gender inequality and intersecting socio-economic (…) throughout research and innovation systems, including by addressing unconscious bias and systemic structural barriers" (European Commission – Directorate General for Research and Innovation, 2021 February:25).

Moreover, "the integration of the gender dimension will be a requirement by default in research and innovation content across the whole programme, unless its irrelevance is duly justified" (European Commission – Directorate General for Research and Innovation, 2021 February:25). But what is "gender integration" in research? According to a definition provided by Korsvik & Rustad (2022:2) a "research that includes the sex and/or gender dimension as part of the research design and analyses" refers to "gender perspectives in research content". As they noticed, such perspectives "can provide new insights and more precise and valid research results" (Korsvik & Rustad, 2022:2). More specifically and according to the European Research Executive Agency (2023 March 7) the *gender dimension* "implies analysing and taking into account the possible differences between men and women (biological characteristics as well as the social and cultural features), boys and girls, or males and females, in the R&I content of the project".

The European Union has been actively promoting the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation across various fields, including those related to civil security. This integration "is particularly relevant for global challenges" such as "online-violence" or "climate change mitigation and adaptation – in which sex and/or gender differences play an important role, and hence determine the societal relevance and quality of research and innovation outcomes" (European Commission – Directorate General for Research and Innovation, 2021 February:25).

According to Korsvik & Rustad (2022:3), "there is no definitive answer" how to incorporate the gender dimension in research, "rather there are multiple ways to work with sex/gender in research content". Researchers applying for funding under the Horizon Programme are required to outline how they will address gender-related issues in their projects. This includes considering gender in the research design, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The official Horizon Europe website and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation provide detailed guidance and resources for researchers interested in ensuring that their projects contribute to gender equality and diversity objectives.

Finally, the EU emphasizes the importance of gender equality and the integration of gender perspectives in research and innovation to ensure that the outcomes are relevant and

beneficial for everyone in society. As Mariya Ivanova Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth noticed in an email to Kilden department of the Research Council of Council, "integrating sex and gender-based analysis into R [Research] & I [Innovation], and adopting an inclusive approach which also considers intersecting social categories such as ethnicity, age or disability, is a matter of producing excellent research to the benefit of all European citizens" (Martinčič, 2020 November 25).

Examples of integrating the gender dimension in interdisciplinary research relevant for Cluster 3

Integrating the gender dimension often involves conducting gender-sensitive data collection and analysis, ensuring diverse representation in research teams, and incorporating gender considerations into the design and implementation of interventions and policies while integrating the gender dimension specifically in Cluster 3 context involves considering how gender roles, experiences, and perspectives may influence and be influenced by civil security measures. Some relevant examples could be the following ones:

Korsvik & Rustad (2018:48) suggest some research questions related to research on societal safety:

- "How do cultural and social norms of gender and sexuality govern behaviour related to societal challenges, such as migration and border control, accident prevention, road traffic safety and crisis management? What are the implications of gender relations in the armed forces?

- By what means can humanitarian aid be better organized so that the needs of both men and women, boys and girls, are met? How can sexual abuse and rape in conflict and disaster-affected areas be prevented?

- In which ways are extremism and terrorism related to gender? Is there a connection between masculinity and violence? Why are women joining extreme right-wing and Islamist terrorist groups that promote misogynist ideologies? How can gender analysis help us to understand how violent extremism can be prevented?".

The same authors (Korsvik & Rustad, 2018:48-49) provide specific and recent examples: for example, when studying armed conflicts - such as studies exploring armed conflicts in former Yugoslavia or Africa show - it is essential to "see beyond gender stereotypes and oversimplified perceptions of gender roles in war", thus not focusing only to women as rape victims during times of war but also to men both as perpetrators and victims of such "strategic weapon in war". Another example, is research conducted in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Oslo (July 2011) focusing on the impact the attack had on people who were affected by the attack: the study concluded that "a significantly greater proportion of women than men get PTSD, even when they have experienced the same life-threatening event" and the explanation of such "gender differences'' can be found in biological and social factors (Korsvik & Rustad, 2018:50). A third example of research, focuses on the connection

between gender and extreme right and white supremacist groups: while such groups are usually dominated by men and express sexist and misogyny attitudes, others give women "important roles related to organizing and recruitment" and even advocate LGBTQI+ and women's rights in order to promote an Islamophobic agenda against the sexist, homophobic and intolerant" Muslims (Korsvik & Rustad, 2018:51). Thus, incorporating the gender dimension in research activities targeting these groups, helps reveal the diversity and complexity of the relationship between gender and right-wing extremism and white supremacism, away from stereotypical – and, as such, limiting - perceptions and views of this relationship.

Some other concrete examples from research projects include the currently implemented "Building clarity and preventing bias in digital forensic examination, interorganisational communication and interaction – CLARUS" project consisting of academic research organisations as well as forensic and police agencies: the project aims to understand "how communication, taken-for-granted ways of doing things, organisational cultures, disciplinary backgrounds or even gender and specific languages can contribute significantly to a context for biased judgements and erroneous decisions at an organisational level in digital evidence examination and investigation" (European Commission – CORDIS, n.d.a). Clarus project's ultimate vision is to "improve objectivity, neutrality and fairness in the pursuit of safer justice outcomes in terrorism and serious crime exploiting digital technologies" by "detecting the organisational context for bias and errors in methods of informal and formal inter-agency communication, as well as the implementation of a common lexicon and bias checking tool" (European Commission – CORDIS, n.d.a).

Another example is the - also currently implemented - "Improving Access to Services for Victims of Domestic Violence by Accelerating Change in Frontline Responder Organisations - IMPROVE" is another relevant example, aiming

> "to increase reporting and detection of domestic violence by empowering the victims to understand their rights for services and justice, and by supporting Police Authorities, Civil Society Organizations and other frontline responder organisations to enhance their competencies to utilize innovative solutions that enable and accelerate policy implementation" (European Commission – CORDIS, n.d.b).

Taking into consideration that "violence against women and domestic violence affect one in three women across the EU" while "most cases remain under-reported and under-detected", project partners will develop new tools such as a "Conversational (multilingual) AI Chatbot (AINO)" for domestic violence survivors and tailor-made training material for frontline responders "based on applied research that constructs a pioneering conceptual approach that is able to address diverse identities of the victims, the under-served, vulnerable and marginalized individuals and multiple forms and situations of domestic violence" (European Commission – CORDIS, n.d.b).

"Innovative Solutions to Eliminate Domestic Abuse - ISEDA" project is another example of a currently implemented project, aiming "to combat and eliminate DV [domestic violence] by employing an enriched European approach, utilizing modern technological tools and practices and improved multi-sectoral expertise in its activities"

(European Commission – CORDIS, n.d.c). Activities of the project include – among others – the development of a "chatbox" that "will employ empathetic language and inform victims on ways to get help and assistance, as well as refer them to hotline numbers, police or other first responders to de-escalate violent situations" as well as "education programs" that "will focus on sensitizing and engaging students, fostering know-how on deconstructing toxic gender stereotypes and GBV [gender-based violence] and promoting healthy relationships and zero tolerance to violence" (European Commission – CORDIS, n.d.c).

How researchers could strengthen the integration of gender in the design of research projects in Cluster 3

Strengthening the integration of gender in the design of research projects within Cluster 3 "Civil Security for Society" involves adopting a comprehensive and intentional approach that considers the diverse ways in which gender influences and is influenced by civil security issues. The H2020 Expert Group - which authored the EU report *Gendered Innovations 2* - has developed "Cluster-specific recommendations" and "targeted impact-oriented recommendations for future R & I actions" related to Cluster 3 "Civil security for society", taken from the Gendered Innovations 2 Expert Group case studies 'Facial recognition', 'Virtual assistants and chatbots', 'Quality urban spaces' and 'Agriculture' (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:42,44-45). For example, and in order to enhance resilience of societies towards disasters and as "farmers can help prevent natural disasters", it is essential to "include gender differences in farmers' perspectives on risk management, prevention and actions" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:44). When it comes to "protection of public space, security and resilience of infrastructure and vital societal functions, and fighting crime and terrorism", the expert group points out that "digital safety and security are important in terms of how digital assistants and chatbots handle data in relation to current laws (e.g. the General Data Protection Regulation)" thus, while "data that virtual assistants may have recorded in the home in times of crisis (e.g. domestic violence) may prove useful for law enforcement and provide vulnerable people with added security (…) major ethical issues with extracting such data" should be considered (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:44).

Moreover, while artificial intelligence "may be recruited to better protect citizens from violent attacks in public spaces", measures should be taken in order to "implement proper design and ethical considerations so that facial recognition technology does not exacerbate existing gender and social inequalities" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:44). Furthermore, "public urban space and transportation, digital worlds and cyberspaces, and disaster and risk management should ensure the safety of women, men and gender-diverse individuals, of various ages and ethnicities" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:44). Finally, the Expert Group added that "violence constitutes a particular risk for rural women and gender-diverse individuals, as remote housing

prevents effective formal or social control, and specialised social services are absent", thus such "specific risks" should be "investigated and included" together with "prevention and resilience options" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:45).

Some other key strategies that I would suggest - based on my experience from "GENDER-IN" project education and training activities in which I've participated and the respective interaction I had with other participants - to researchers willing to enhance the integration of the gender dimension in the design of their research projects:

- Conduct a Gender Analysis: Begin with a thorough gender analysis to understand how gender dynamics operate in the specific context of civil security. Identify potential gender disparities, vulnerabilities, and opportunities for gender-sensitive interventions.

- Establish a Gender-Responsive Research Team: Form a research team that is diverse in terms of gender representation and expertise. Ensure that team members are familiar with gender-sensitive research methodologies and bring a range of perspectives to the project.

- Include Gender Experts: Collaborate with gender experts or consultants who can provide guidance on incorporating gender considerations into the research design. Their input can enhance the quality and relevance of the research.

- Set Clear Objectives for Gender Integration: Clearly articulate how gender will be integrated into the research project. Establish specific objectives related to gender analysis, data collection, and the development of gender-sensitive recommendations.

- Use Gender-Sensitive Data Collection Methods: Design data collection methods that capture gender-specific information (e.g. disaggregating data by gender, considering diverse gender identities, and exploring the intersectionality of gender with other factors such as age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status).

- Consider Gender in Research Questions: Ensure that research questions explicitly address gender-related aspects of civil security (e.g. investigating how security measures impact different genders, understanding gender-based vulnerabilities, and identifying gender-specific needs during emergencies).

- Promote Gender-Responsive Policies: Identify opportunities to contribute to the development of gender-responsive policies within the civil security domain. Provide recommendations based on the research findings that address gender inequalities and promote inclusivity.

- Foster Gender Equality in Stakeholder Engagement: Engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, including women's organizations, LGBTQI+ groups, and other gender-related entities. Ensure that the voices of different genders are heard and considered in the research process.

- Training and Capacity Building: Provide training for researchers on gender-sensitive approaches and methodologies. This helps ensure that all team members are equipped to integrate gender considerations effectively.

- Regularly Evaluate and Adjust: Throughout the research project, regularly evaluate the integration of gender and be prepared to adjust methodologies or approaches based on the emerging findings and feedback from stakeholders.

- Disseminate Gender-Sensitive Findings: Ensure that research findings are disseminated in a way that highlights gender-specific insights. This contributes to the visibility of gender issues within the civil security context.

By adopting these strategies, researchers can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of civil security issues and develop interventions that are sensitive to the diverse needs and experiences of different genders within society.

Policy recommendations for funding institutions

The H2020 Expert Group has developed a set of recommendations to the European Commission - included in the EU report *Gendered Innovations 2* - with the ultimate purpose to "foster the effective integration of the gender dimension into R [Research] & I [Innovation] content throughout the next framework programme" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:36). More specifically and as Commissioner Gabriel, noticed to Kilden department of the Research Council of Norway "the experts who have prepared this report also highlight, efficient integration into the content of funded projects still remains low" (Martinčič, 2020 November 25). The Commisioner explained that "this is precisely why the European Commission launched this new Expert Group on Gendered Innovations – to update and expand upon the work developed previously, and help better implement the integration of the gender dimension in R & I under Horizon Europe" (Martinčič, 2020 November 25).

The recommendations elaborated by the H2020 Expert Group "assume an overall ambitious policy approach to foster and support gender equality in all aspects of R & I in the European Union" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:36). This approach "addresses other gender equality objectives through general rules and targeted measures" in order to insure "increased participation of women in the programme, and gender balance in funded project teams", "gender balance in decision-making structures" as well as "the realisation of institutional change in R & I organisations through gender equality plans", thus "integrating the gender dimension into R & I and teaching content in higher education institutions, and entails providing comprehensive policy support to Member States, research-performing and research-funding organisations, businesses and innovation companies" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:36-37). According to the Expert Group, the aforementioned objectives "should be embedded in Horizon Europe and also integrated into the framework of the future European Research Area (ERA) by mobilising Member States and Associated Countries to foster gender equality in R & I actions at the national level" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:37).

Regarding work programmes, the Expert Group suggests "integrating the gender dimension into Horizon Europe work programmes as the norm" by requiring "sex- and gender-based analysis" in "all Horizon Europe topics, by default", "installing a 'negative' gender-flagging, by which only topics not requiring the gender dimension would be flagged, thus reversing the burden of proof", requiring details in all proposals "about how sex and/or gender analysis will be integrated into the R & I content and specify how the work will contribute to achieving the topic's target outcomes", specifying "at the level of the call (which covers a set of topics, under a particular intervention area), the relevance of sex and/or gender analysis" and how it is related "to the call's targeted impacts", encouraging applicants "for bottom-up work programme parts, such as the European Research Council's calls and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions calls under Pillar I of Horizon Europe as well as European Innovation Council calls under Pillar III" to "integrate the gender dimension into their proposals, wherever relevant" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:37). The Expert Group also suggested the introduction of "dedicated call topics for advancing gender knowledge" by including "call topics specifically dedicated to developing knowledge of gender equality issues", developing "gender knowledge related to all SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals]" and "intersectional knowledge" through investigation of "the multidimensional interactions between gender norms, gender relations, gender identity and sexual orientation (LGBTI+ issues), ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, language, geographical location, religion, etc.", making funding available "to support policy work with national research-funding organisations to foster policies and programmes aimed at ensuring that R & I integrates sex, gender and/or intersectional approaches" (European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 2020:37-38).

According to Commissioner Gabriel, several of the recommendations included in the report are helpful and will affect the Horizon Programme in the future (Martinčič, 2020 November 25).

Some more key policy recommendations for funding institutions in the context of Cluster 3 "Civil Security for Society" that I would suggest to be designed to support research and initiatives that enhance the effectiveness, inclusivity, and responsiveness of civil security measures may include:

● Promote Interdisciplinary Research: Encourage and fund interdisciplinary research projects that bring together experts from various fields (emergency management, law enforcement, public health, cybersecurity, and social sciences) - interdisciplinary collaboration is essential for addressing complex (civil security) challenges.

● Require Gender Mainstreaming: Make it a requirement for research projects to integrate the gender dimension, encourage researchers to analyze and address gender-specific aspects of civil security, ensuring that policies and interventions are inclusive and consider diverse gender perspectives.

● Support Community Engagement: Prioritize projects that actively involve and engage communities in the design and implementation of civil security measures, support initiatives that build community resilience, enhance communication, and involve citizens in decision-making processes related to security.

- Foster Innovation and Technology Integration: Support research that explores innovative technologies and methodologies to enhance civil security, such as investments in cutting-edge solutions for disaster management, cybersecurity, and other areas critical to civil security.

- Facilitate International Collaboration: Encourage collaboration between research institutions, governments, and organizations across borders, thus facilitating the exchange of best practices, enhancing information-sharing, and improving global responses to civil security challenges.

- Prioritize Mental Health and Psychosocial Support: Recognize the importance of mental health and psychosocial support in the aftermath of crises, support research that explores the psychological impacts of emergencies and develops strategies for effective support and intervention.

- Ensure Inclusivity for Vulnerable Populations: Emphasize inclusivity in civil security measures by addressing the specific needs of vulnerable populations, including but not limited to children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and marginalized communities. Research projects should consider the diverse needs of these groups.

- Promote Data Privacy and Ethical Considerations: Require adherence to ethical standards and data privacy regulations in research projects involving cybersecurity and technology, encourage projects that prioritize the responsible and ethical use of data in the context of civil security.

- Facilitate Knowledge Transfer and Implementation: Support initiatives that focus not only on research but also on knowledge transfer and practical implementation of findings, encourage projects that demonstrate a clear pathway for translating research outcomes into actionable policies and practices

- Encourage Public-Private Partnerships: Facilitate collaboration between the public and private sectors to leverage resources, expertise, and technology for civil security, encourage projects that involve partnerships with industry stakeholders to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of security measures.

- Monitor and Evaluate Impact: Establish mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of funded projects, track the impact of research initiatives on improving civil security outcomes and use this information to inform future funding decisions.

By incorporating these policy recommendations, funding institutions can contribute to the development of a resilient, inclusive, and adaptive civil security framework that addresses the evolving challenges faced by societies.

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