GEDIS - Gender Diversity in Information Science: Challenges in Higher Education
Project Reference: 2024-1-ES01-KA220-HED-000246558
https://ub.edu/GEDIS

Co-funded by the European Union

Advancing Gender Inclusivity in Teaching Plans: Findings and Recommendations from Eight European Universities — White Paper

This white paper was prepared within the framework of the Erasmus+ project GEDIS (Gender Diversity in Information Science: Challenges in Higher Education).

It reflects the collaborative effort of the participating universities to assess and improve gender-related practices in teaching Information Science.

The document is intended for institutional leaders, faculty, policy-makers, and all stakeholders committed to fostering more inclusive and equitable academic environments.

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Gender Diversity in Information Science:

Challenges in Higher Education

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Note on Decimal Formatting

This report uses the European decimal system, where decimal points are written as commas (e.g., 54,3%). However, in some figures generated with software tools, the

decimal point appears as a dot (e.g., 54.3%). Both notations refer to the same numerical value.

Note on Dataset Availability

The current analysis is based on a descriptive review of 490 teaching plans across eight institutions. The full dataset, including detailed course-level information, is still under methodological development and will be made publicly available once the analysis framework is consolidated and peer-reviewed. In the meantime, the rubric used for data collection is openly accessible as an OER at:

Boté-Vericad, Juan-José, Stefan Dreisiebner, Džejla Khattab, Kornelija Petr Balog, Thomas Mandl, Michaela Dombrovská, Drahomira Cupar. 2025. *Curriculum Analysis Rubric: Gender Perspectives in Teaching Plans*. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.16785974.

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Executive summary

This study reviewed 490 teaching plans from 8 Undergraduate Programmes and 14 Masters' Degree Programmes of the Library and Information Science area of eight European universities. Using an *ad hoc* rubric it assessed how gender diversity appear in four main areas: course identification data, faculty, gender-related mentions, and references. In this white paper, we examine gender diversity as diversity among females and males.

This white paper is intended for academic leadership, curriculum developers, university teaching staff, librarians, gender equality officers, and policymakers committed to advancing inclusive practices in higher education, particularly within the field of Library and Information Science.

As for results, female teachers are moderately overrepresented among teaching staff with 54,2 percent. However, women remain underrepresented in citations, about one-third of all cited authors overall are female. Gender mentions in objectives, policies, and methods are extremely rare. Inclusive language is more common but missing in half of the teaching plans. Institutional disparities are evident across staffing, citations, and inclusivity scores. One quarter of the courses cite only male authors in references. Nearly all teaching plans lacked inclusive practices such as gender-sensitive objectives, evaluation strategies, or diverse references. This highlights systemic gaps in equitable and inclusive academic practices.

Eight key recommendations are proposed to close these persistent gaps. These include systematic reviews of teaching plans and faculty training. Clear institutional guidelines and inclusive citation practices are also necessary. Monitoring progress and engaging students should complement institutional policies. Together, these

measures guide universities toward equity in teaching. They support inclusive environments reflecting diversity in Library and Information Science education.

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1. Introduction

This white paper presents the results of a comprehensive analysis of 490 teaching plans collected from eight European universities participating in a collaborative research initiative on Information Science education under an Erasmus+ project. The institutions are the University of Barcelona (Spain), Carinthia University of Applied Sciences (Austria), University of Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), University of Osijek and University of Zadar (Croatia), University of Hildesheim, Technology Arts Sciences TH Köln (Germany) and Silesian University in Opava (Czech Republic).

The aim of this analysis is to assess how gender-related considerations are integrated into both the structural and bibliographic components of the curricula. Teaching plans were systematically reviewed to evaluate the presence of inclusive policies, learning objectives, teaching methodologies, and evaluation criteria, as well as the gender balance in the composition of faculty teams and cited references. The analysis of the teaching plans was conducted over a five-month period, from March to July 2025, within the academic year 2024–2025.

The participating institutions represent diverse orientations within the field, including programmes focused on Library and Information Science, Information Management, Business and Technology, or Communication Studies. These disciplinary variations may influence gender representation and curricular emphasis.

The findings aim to raise awareness among partners and, more broadly, within higher education, about current practices and disparities regarding gender inclusion and diversity in higher education. The results also aim to inform future curricular development and policy recommendations to foster more equitable and inclusive teaching environments. Given that not all readers are expected to be familiar with

statistical analyses, the results are explained using accessible visualisations and straightforward narrative interpretation.

Throughout this white paper, universities are referred to using abbreviated or geographic identifiers for the sake of clarity and consistency across text, tables, and figures. Table 1 outlines the full names of the participating institutions and the shortened forms used throughout the document.

Table 1. Institutional naming conventions used in the report.

Full institutional name	Abbreviated form used
Universitat de Barcelona	Barcelona
FH Kärnten – Carinthia University of Applied Sciences (CUAS)	Villach
University of Sarajevo	Sarajevo
University of Osijek	Osijek
University of Zadar	Zadar
University of Hildesheim	Hildesheim
Silesian University in Opava	Opava
Technische Hochschule (TH) Köln – University of Applied Sciences	TH Köln

Terminological note: Throughout this report, the term “gender diversity” refers to binary sex-based representation (women and men), inferred from names. Due to data limitations, other gender identities could not be captured. Mentions of diversity in teaching plans were only considered gender-related when explicitly referring to women, men, or gender issues.

2. Methodology

A rubric was designed to guide data collection and analysis. It was transformed into an online form for efficiency. The rubric included items covering gender-related dimensions. Data collection covered teaching plans from seven consortium universities from the GEDIS project and the TH Köln.

The rubric was structured into four main sections: (1) course identification data, including programme and university; (2) faculty details, capturing names and inferred genders of up to seven instructors per course; (3) mentions of gender and diversity within course objectives and content; and (4) bibliographic references, documenting up to thirty sources per course, along with author names and genders. This structure ensured the systematic and comparable collection of data across institutions.

Each section contained structured and specific questions, addressing distinct dimensions of the teaching plan. For example, the course identification section included items such as programme name and URL. The faculty section recorded the names and genders of up to seven instructors. The gender-related section captured mentions of these topics in course objectives, learning outcomes, or thematic content. The references section documented up to thirty citations, including the authors’ genders. These examples highlight the systematic structure of the data collection

instrument. The complete rubric, including all questions, is provided as supplementary material to ensure transparency and enable readers to review the full instrument. The material can be accessed at (Boté-Vericad et al., 2025).

While some institutions list only essential readings, others include extensive recommended and optional bibliographies. The rubric was designed to accommodate this variation by allowing space for up to thirty entries. Whenever possible, each reference was annotated with information on the author's gender, enabling the analysis of citation practices across different institutional contexts. This flexible approach ensured comparability despite heterogeneity in syllabus documentation and respected the specific practices of each institution. As such, the design facilitated fair and comprehensive cross-institutional data collection.

Faculty and author genders were inferred based on the common gender associations of published names. Names were classified as female or male according to typical usage, with particular care taken in the case of ambiguous, uncommon, or culturally unfamiliar names. This included names from diverse linguistic and cultural traditions, as well as names that could be used by individuals of any gender. In such cases, additional verification steps were taken to ensure accuracy (e.g. consulting Google Scholar profiles or university homepages). No assumptions were made beyond reasonable linguistic or cultural conventions. This cautious approach minimized the risk of misclassification and supported the reliability of gender data. All classifications were based exclusively on publicly available information, ensuring transparency, consistency, and respect for institutional and international diversity in naming practices.

Data collection was conducted in full accordance with institutional policies and applicable legal privacy frameworks and relied exclusively on publicly available sources. URLs were recorded for each entry to ensure transparency and facilitate

traceability. All information was obtained from institutional websites and publicly accessible syllabi; no personal or confidential data were included in the analysis. URLs were systematically recorded to enable verification of each data point, thereby enhancing transparency and supporting the reproducibility of findings. Care was taken to avoid subjective interpretation during data entry; all data were documented in their original published formats. Despite variations in institutional practices, consistency was maintained during the analysis phase. Ethical considerations guided the entire data collection process, ensuring that the methodology remained neutral, verifiable, and ethically robust throughout.

This approach ensured full compliance with ethical and privacy standards. The rubric supported a systematic and consistent data collection process across all partner universities.

3. Descriptive Analysis

This section presents a descriptive analysis of the teaching plans, focusing mainly on two key dimensions: the gender distribution of teaching staff and the gender balance among cited authors. Then, it also offers other indicators of gender awareness in teaching plans. The results aim to provide an overview of current practices in both instructional teams and the academic references recommended in the curricula.

3.1. Descriptive analysis of Professors' Distribution

This subsection examines the composition of teaching teams in terms of size and gender distribution among females and males. It describes the number of instructors assigned to each course, the prevalence of single versus multiple-instructor arrangements, and the proportion of female and male professors per course. These

findings offer insight into the gender representation of teaching staff and potential institutional patterns in assigning teaching responsibilities.

Table 2 shows faculty gender distribution across participating institutions. All instructors per course are counted, from one to seven. Institutions vary greatly in gender composition and teaching team size. Table 2 presents absolute counts of female and male faculty members. Each institution has different total numbers of faculty assigned. The table also includes percentages for clearer gender comparison. Readers can identify exact numbers and proportions at each site. This detail is important for transparency and precise reporting. It helps assess gender balance in teaching assignments institutionally. Some institutions exhibit female predominance in their courses. Others present more balanced or male-dominated teaching teams. Table 2 also allows for highlighting institutional disparities and overall gender trends across the sample.

Sarajevo (82,1%) and TH Köln (80,3 %) show the highest proportions of women faculty overall. Osijek (71,0 %) and Zadar (67,4 %) also display clear female predominance in faculty. Opava shows a slight female advantage at just over half (55,3% versus 44,7%). Barcelona (56,7%) and Hildesheim (55,6%) remain slightly male-dominated in their teams. Villach (79,7%) exhibits the strongest male predominance among all institutions. These totals complement earlier descriptive course-level statistics effectively.

These institutional differences in gender distribution may reflect broader disciplinary orientations. For example, universities with programmes more closely related to Library and Information Science, archives, or cultural heritage — such as Osijek, Sarajevo or Zadar — tend to show a female predominance among teaching staff. In contrast, institutions with a stronger focus on Information Technology, engineering, or business — such as Villach and Hildesheim — present a higher proportion of male

professors. These patterns suggest that gender balance may also be influenced by disciplinary cultures and labour market trends, which is important to consider when interpreting faculty compositions.

Table 2. Summary of faculty gender distribution by institution, based on teaching plans.

Institution	Female (N)	Male (N)	Total	Female (%)	Male (%)
Barcelona	45	59	104	43,3%	56,7%
Hildesheim	20	25	45	44,4%	55,6%
Opava	63	51	114	55,3%	44,7%
Osijek	98	40	138	71,0%	29,0%
Sarajevo	23	5	28	82,1%	17,9%
TH Köln	49	12	61	80,3%	19,7%
Villach	27	106	133	20,3%	79,7%
Zadar	64	31	95	67,4%	32,6%
Total	389	329	718	54,2%	45,8%

Figure 1 visualizes faculty gender percentages for each institution. It also shows the key institutional trends. The stacked bars make proportional differences more immediately apparent. TH Köln and Sarajevo stand out for very high female shares. Zadar and Osijek also show notable female majorities in teaching. Opava presents a

modest trend of more female faculty than male faculty. Barcelona and Hildesheim lean slightly towards male-dominated teaching staff. Villach shows the most extreme male predominance in the sample. This visualization complements Table 2 by illustrating clear disparities. It helps readers quickly identify gender patterns across institutions.

Figure 1. Percentage of female and male faculty by Institution.

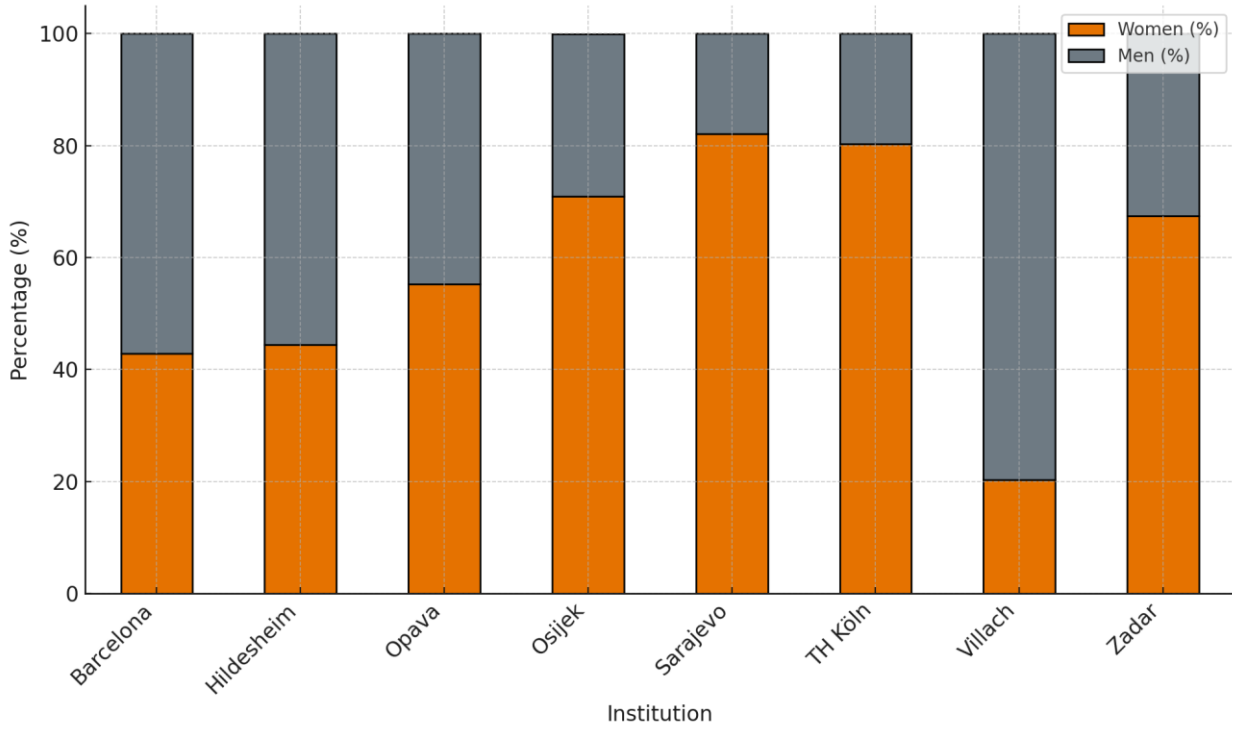


Table 3 shows the main descriptive statistics of the faculty per course, considering that up to 7 instructors were counted in the data collection.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics: faculty per course.

Number of professors per course:	Proportion of female professors per course:
Mean: 1,47 Median: 1,00 Maximum: 7 75% of courses have between 1 and 2 instructors.	Mean: 53,6% Median: 50,0% Range: 0% – 100%

The faculty composition analysis shows that most courses have one instructor. The average number of instructors per course is $\bar{x}$=1,47 professors. Some courses include up to seven instructors in total. The proportion of women averages 53,6% across all teams. The median female proportion is 50%, showing a gender balance when analysing the whole sample. These results, of course, contrast with those of Figure 1, which shows high gender variation between all institutions. They reflect institutional differences within teaching team compositions clearly.

Figure 2 complements the information in Table 3 by showing the distribution of professors assigned per course. Most teaching plans are delivered by a single instructor, followed by a smaller number of courses with two instructors. Teams of three or more professors are rare. A few courses include up to seven professors in total, typically reflecting modular, interdisciplinary, or large-format teaching structures delivered in smaller groups by different instructors. Overall, teaching responsibilities remain predominantly individual. Collaborative arrangements appear

mainly in more complex teaching plans. The figure illustrates this pattern clearly and concisely.

Figure 2. Histogram of the number of professors per course.

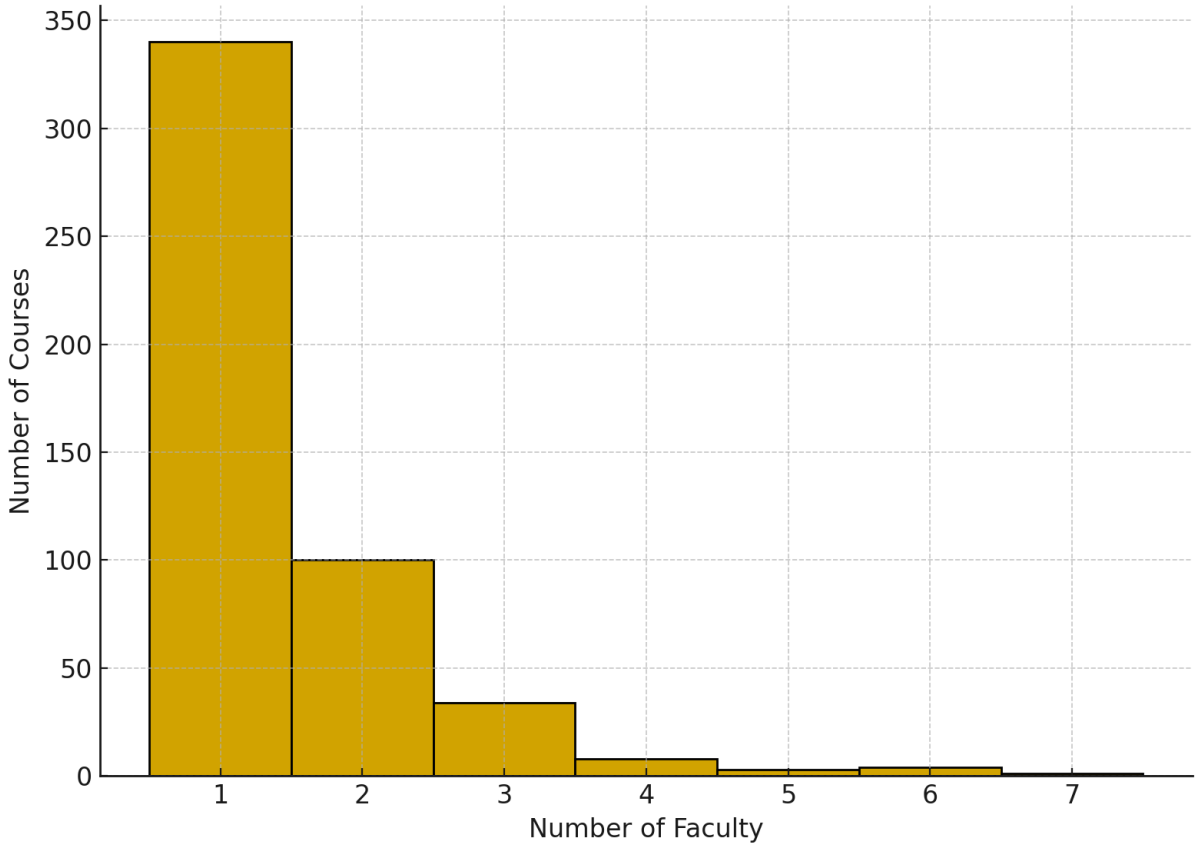


Figure 3 shows gender composition of teaching teams by course. Most courses are taught exclusively by women instructors. A similar number are taught exclusively by men instructors. A smaller proportion involve mixed-gender teaching teams. This pattern highlights strong gender segregation in course assignments. Collaborative

mixed teams appear much less frequently than expected. The chart clearly illustrates these three distinct categories and complements previous tables and descriptive statistics.

Figure 3. Gender composition of teaching teams by course.

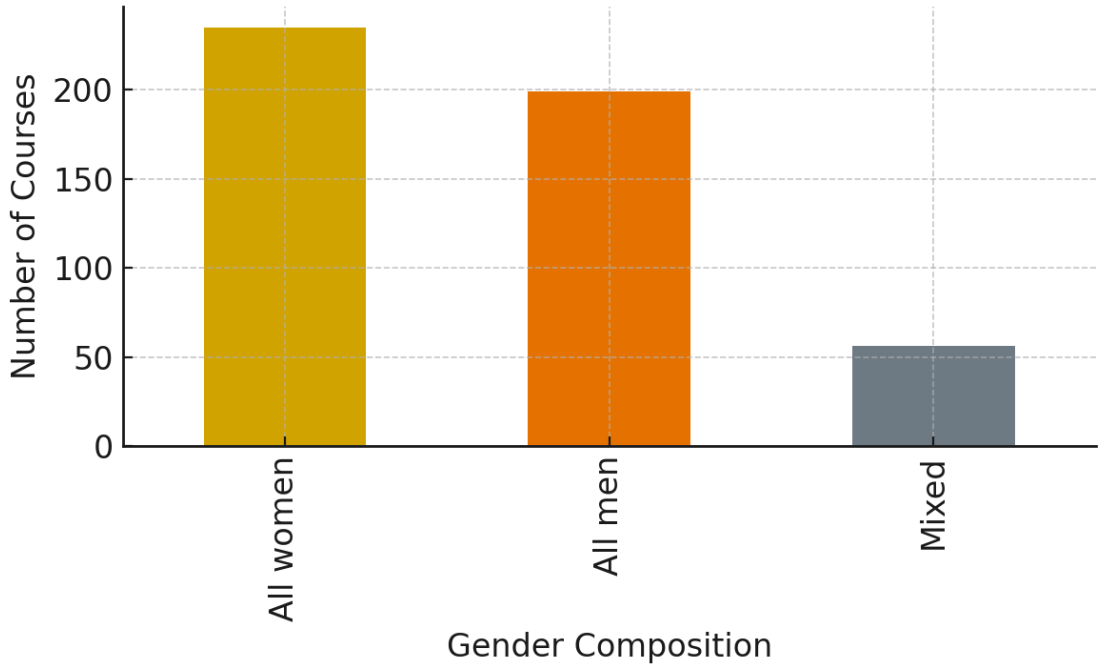
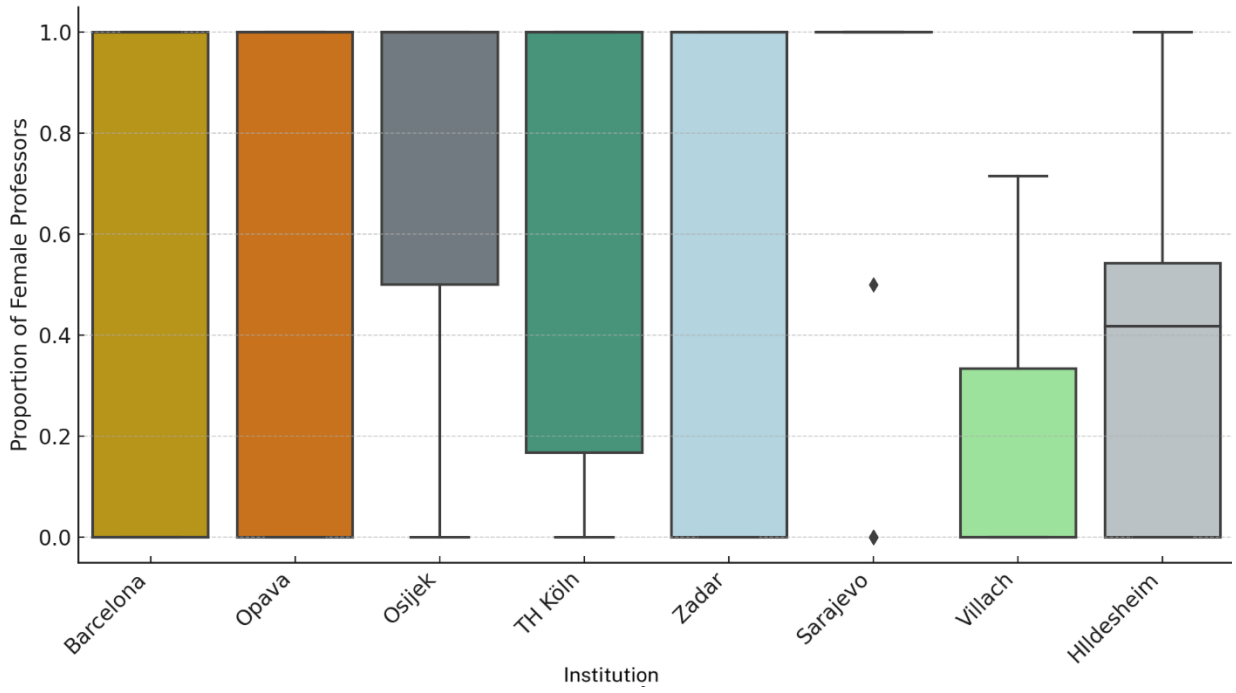


Figure 4 compares the proportion of female professors per course across eight universities. In this boxplot, each dot represents one course. The box shows the interquartile range (middle 50 % of courses), and the horizontal line inside the box indicates the median proportion of female professors. A value of 1,0 means all instructors in that course are women, 0,5 indicates a balanced team, and 0,0 means all instructors are men.

The figure highlights institutional differences in the gender balance of teaching staff. Barcelona, Zadar, Sarajevo, and TH Köln show strong female predominance, with

median course values reaching or approaching 1,0. In contrast, Villach and Hildesheim show much lower median values, reflecting male-dominated teaching staff. The boxplot shows course-level data, not institution-wide averages. The horizontal line inside each box represents the median proportion of female professors across all courses at each university. Sarajevo shows a median of 1,0 but global proportion equals approximately 79%. This happens because mixed courses include more men in total. Wide interquartile ranges indicate variability between courses in some institutions.

Figure 4. Proportion of female professors per course by university.



It is interesting to compare Figure 4 and Table 2, since they measure different but complementary aspects here. Table 1 counts all professors by university and gender.

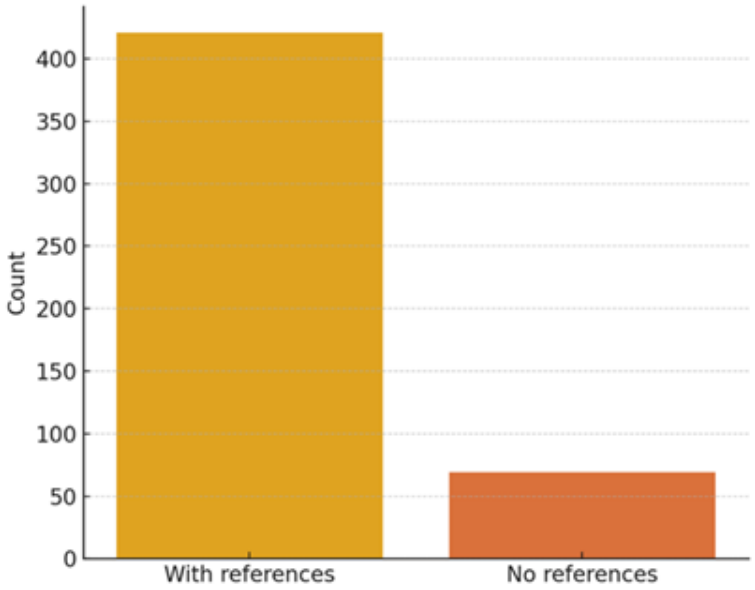
It aggregates individuals regardless of their course-level assignment. Figure 4 shows the proportion of women per individual course. As explained before, a course with only women is scored as 1,0 here, while a mixed course with equal genders scores as 0,5 accordingly. Sarajevo's median 1,0 reflects many single-gender female courses overall. However, Table 2 includes men teaching mixed courses as well. Both measures together provide a complete picture of gender balance.

3.2. Gender Balance in References

This section analyses the gender composition of authors cited. It examines proportions of women and men among cited authors, reporting how many plans include at least one female author in the references. It highlights citation practices reflecting or neglecting the representation of women and men. The goal is to identify prevailing citation patterns and determine whether they reflect or neglect gender equity in academic representation.

Among the 490 courses analysed, 427 included references while 63 did not. Only those courses with references were considered in the analysis in this section. Figure 5 shows the distribution of courses with and without bibliographic references. Most teaching plans 87,2% (N=427) provide at least some bibliographic references, while a smaller subset 12,8% (N=63) contains no references at all. This finding suggests a

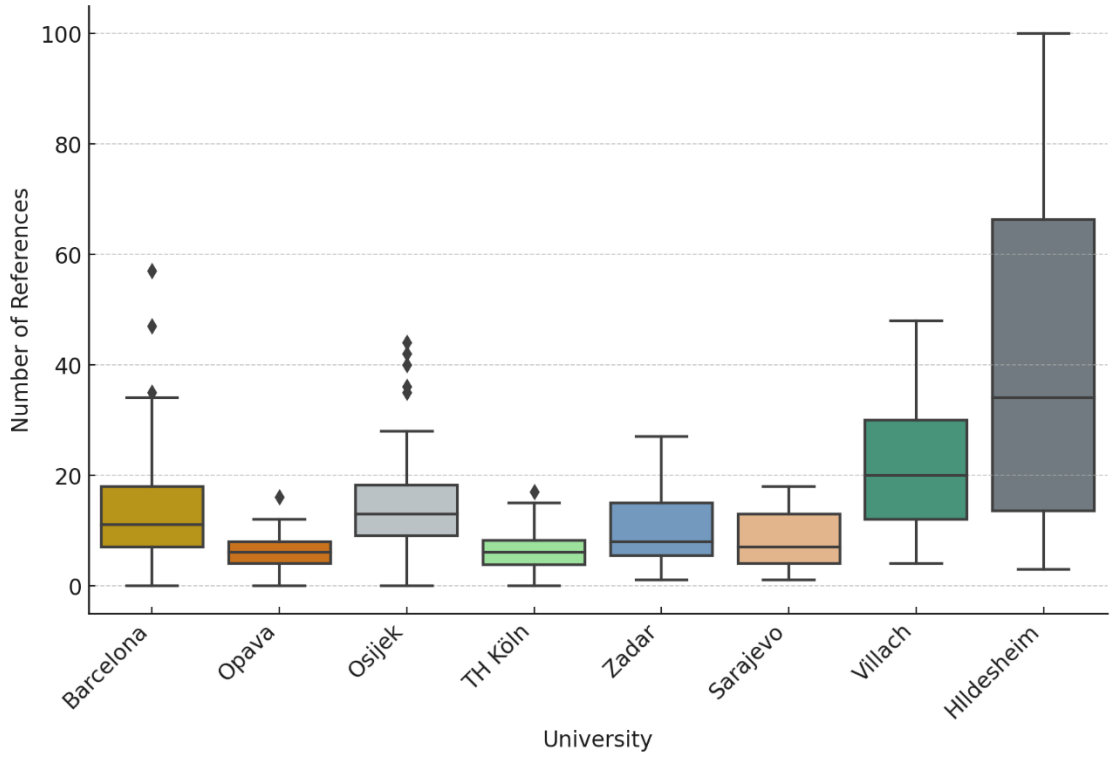
Figure 5. Barplot with and without references.



generally positive trend towards incorporating supporting literature in curricula. However, the absence of references in some courses may reflect both inconsistencies and the nature of certain subjects where references are not typically required. This initial distinction sets the foundation for understanding how references are distributed across institutions and teaching formats.

Figure 6 presents the number of references per course across institutions. The box shows the interquartile range, and the horizontal line inside the box indicates the median number of references per institution. Outliers are displayed as separate dots.

Figure 6. Boxplot showing total references per course by university.



Hildesheim shows the widest range and highest median reference count, suggesting a strong emphasis on bibliographic depth. Villach and Barcelona also show high medians with noticeable variability. In contrast, Opava and TH Köln show lower medians and tighter ranges, suggesting more standardised but modest referencing practices. The presence of outliers across universities further indicates individual instructors diverge from institutional norms.

Following the institutional overview in Figure 6, Figure 7 shifts attention to individual course-level variability in citation volume. Figure 7 displays the overall distribution of references per course. Only teaching plans that included references were analysed. Most courses cite relatively few references, typically around 5 to 10 sources. Some list between 20 and 40 references, while a few outliers cite up to 100. This skewed distribution highlights considerable variability in citation volume across teaching plans. This variability should not be interpreted solely as inconsistency or lack of depth. Instead, it often reflects different pedagogical approaches and institutional norms. For instance, theoretical or research-based courses usually rely more heavily on scholarly literature, while practice-oriented or experiential courses may prioritise applied learning and thus include fewer references. Additionally, master's programmes tend to require more extensive academic work than undergraduate degrees, contributing to variation in bibliographic depth.

Moreover, institutional guidelines regarding references vary: in some institutions, listed readings are mandatory for students, while in others, they are merely consultative. These distinctions shape both the number and the intended function of references within teaching plans. Instructor autonomy and academic freedom also influence these decisions: educators may opt for extensive reading lists to promote critical thinking, or prioritise a more focused set of materials aligned with practical or professional goals. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

further contributes to this diversity. Courses with fewer ECTS credits often involve less reading and assessment time, which may explain lower bibliographic expectations in some cases. These differences are also observable between universities, not only courses, as shown in Figure 6. Beyond reference volume, exploring the gender composition of cited authors provides deeper insight into academic representation.

Figure 7. Histogram showing total references per course (with references).

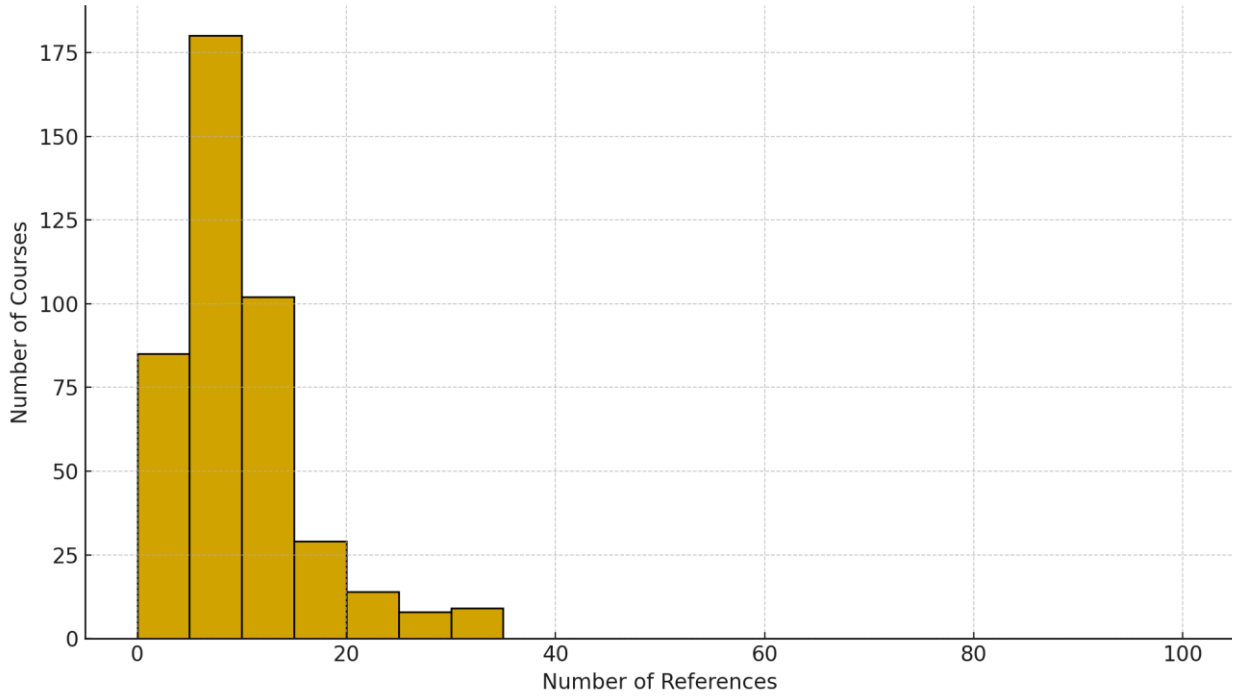
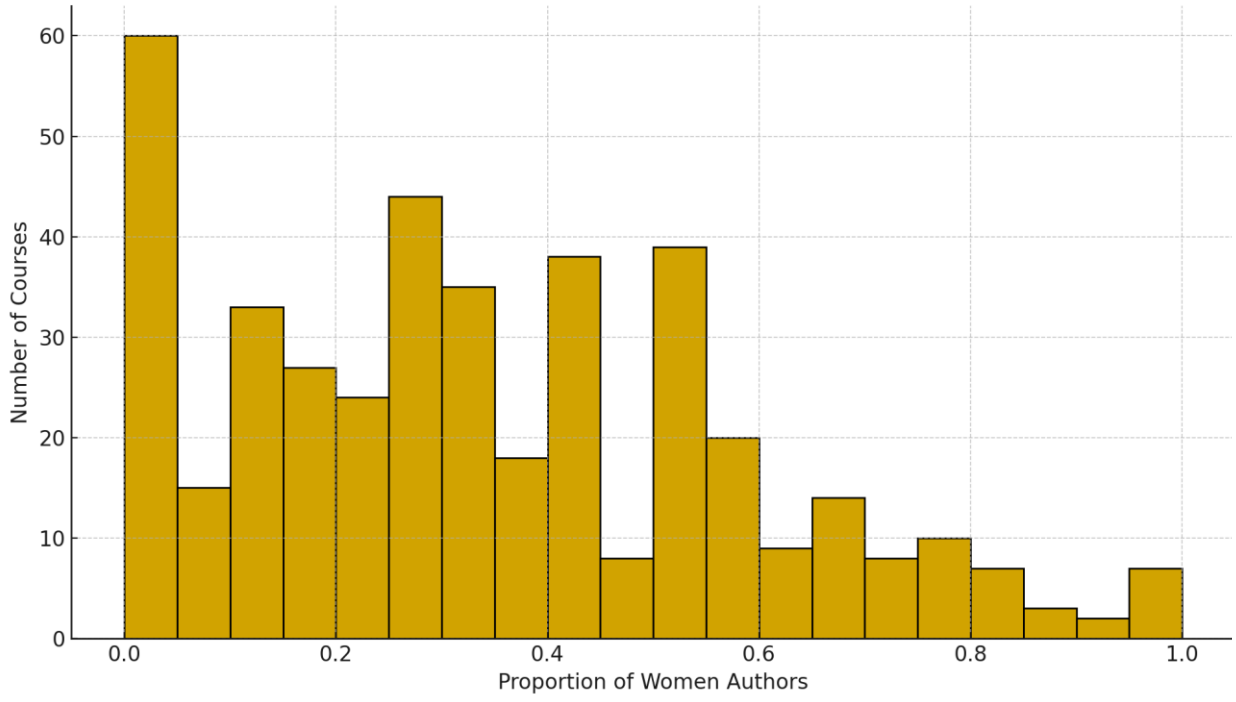


Figure 8 illustrates the distribution of women authors in references. About 12% (N=51) of the 427 courses using references cite no women authors at all. This reflects a clear gender imbalance in bibliographic practices. The distribution is right-skewed with

many courses lying below 0,4 proportion. Even if some courses approach parity or full representation of women authors, these results highlight underrepresentation of women in recommended academic literature overall. This gap opens an opportunity to improve equity in citation practices institutionally. More diverse references can better reflect gendered academic contributions today. Building on the previous analysis of reference volume, the following figure shifts focus to gender representation among cited authors.

Figure 8. Histogram showing the proportion of women in references.



To calculate the proportion of women authors, the number of female-authored references in each course was divided by the total number of references in that course. Figure 8 displays the distribution of these proportions across all 427 teaching

plans that included references. Each bar represents the number of courses that fall within a specific range of women's representation.

To deepen this analysis, Figure 9 compares the mean and median proportions of women and men authors cited across all teaching plans that included references. These measures help summarise overall trends in gender representation within bibliographies. These values are calculated as the average and middle proportion of women (and men) out of the total number of authors cited in each course. Women represent approximately one-third of cited authors (mean 33%, median 32%), while men account for nearly two-thirds (mean 67%, median 68%). The consistency between mean and median suggests a systemic pattern. This underlines the need for more gender-balanced citation practices in teaching plans.

Figure 9. Stacked bar chart of cited authors by gender.

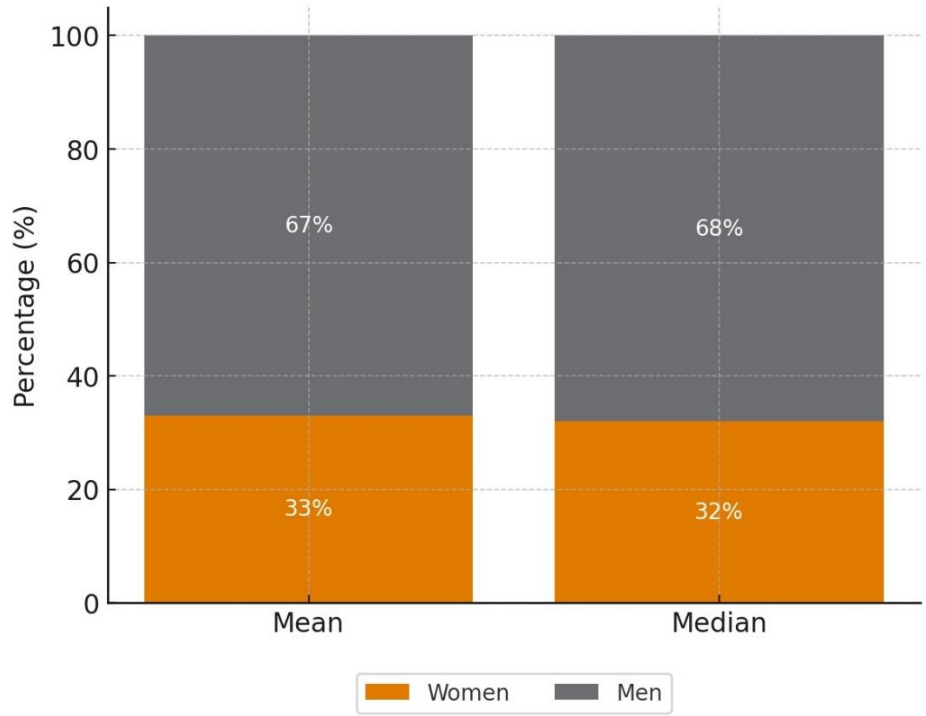
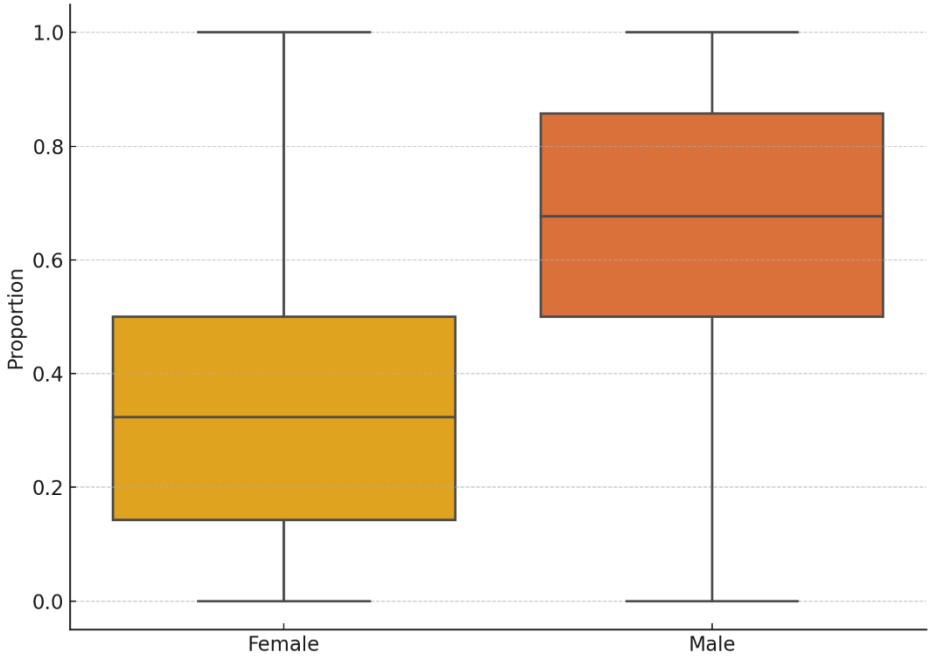


Figure 10 complements these central tendencies by revealing how citation patterns vary across individual courses. To explore how these patterns manifest at the institutional level, Figure 11 breaks down the proportion of women authors cited by university. Figure 10 illustrates citation gender patterns across teaching plans. To interpret this figure, recall that the proportion is calculated by dividing the number of women (or men) authors by the total number of cited authors in each course. A value of 1,0 means that all cited authors are of that gender, while a value below 1,0 indicates partial representation. The figure shows distributions of women and men authors cited per course. Women's proportions exhibit higher variability compared to men's proportions: some courses cite no women at all, while others approach parity. The upper quartile for women rarely exceeds 50 %, suggesting that most courses remain below gender parity. In contrast, men's proportions remain consistently high, with a narrow and stable interquartile range across nearly all teaching plans.

This pattern suggests systemic underrepresentation of women in recommended references. Citation practices vary widely but seldom reach gender-balanced levels. Figure 10 complements the means and medians shown in Figure 9 by revealing distributional nuances more clearly.

However, it is important to acknowledge that some disciplines have historically male-dominated authorship, where teachers may have limited options for including female-authored textbooks. In such cases, bibliographies reflect existing structural imbalances in academic publishing. This context does not invalidate the need for improvement, but it highlights the importance of considering disciplinary constraints. It is particularly relevant to emphasise those cases where gender-balanced or women-led resources do exist but are not included in course materials, suggesting a missed opportunity to foster more inclusive bibliographies.

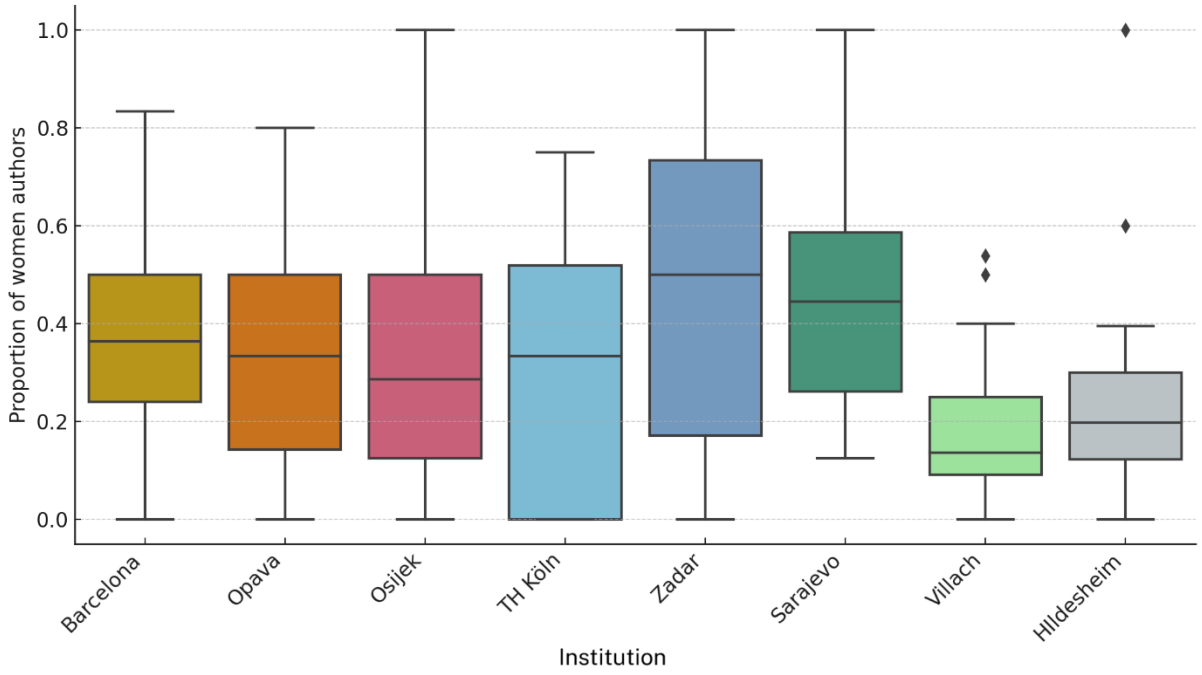
Figure 10. Boxplot of gender distribution in course references.



Citation practices vary widely but seldom reach gender-balanced levels. Figure 10 complement means and medians (Figure 9) by revealing distributional nuances clearly. To further contextualise these disparities, Figure 11 explores institutional-level differences in the proportion of women authors cited across universities. Figure 11 illustrates the distribution of women authors cited by university. The results reveal notable disparities between the participating institutions. Zadar and Sarajevo show the highest medians (around 0,50 and 0,45, respectively) and widest ranges. These indicate stronger inclusion of women in course citation practices. Several courses in these universities approach or exceed parity levels. In contrast, Villach and Hildesheim display the lowest medians (0,20 or lower), suggesting a more marked underrepresentation of women in recommended readings Barcelona, Opava, Osijek

and TH Köln exhibit intermediate medians (around 0,30–0,35) with wide variability. These patterns reflect inconsistent but moderately inclusive citation practices overall.

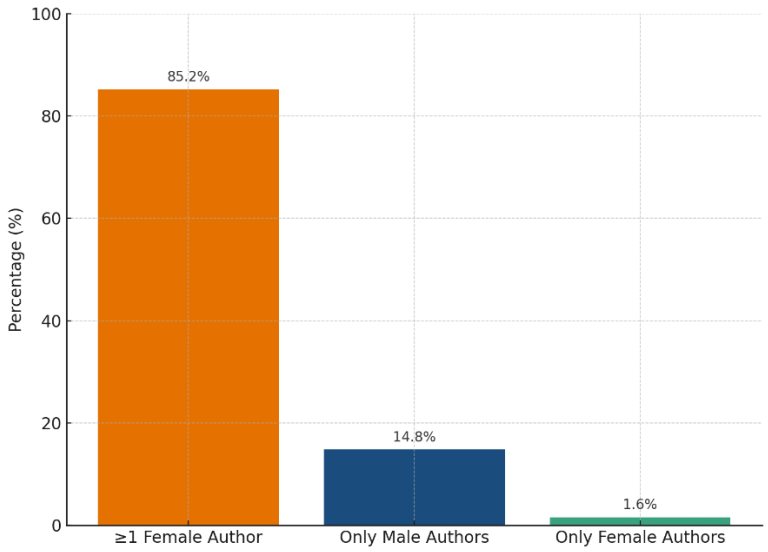
Figure 11. Boxplot showing the proportion of women cited by university.



In addition to institutional differences, course-level citation practices reveal further imbalances. Approximately 74,3 % of courses cite at least one female author, while 25,7 % cite exclusively male authors. Only 1,6 % cite only women authors. These figures highlight the persistence of male-only citation patterns and the relative scarcity of inclusive bibliographies. Although some progress is evident, examples of balanced or women-led references remain rare. Greater efforts are needed to ensure more equitable and gender-sensitive citation practices across curricula.

Finally, a synthetic overview of these trends is presented below: Figure 12 offers a visual summary of these citation patterns across all teaching plans.

Figure 12. Teaching plans by gender of cited authors.

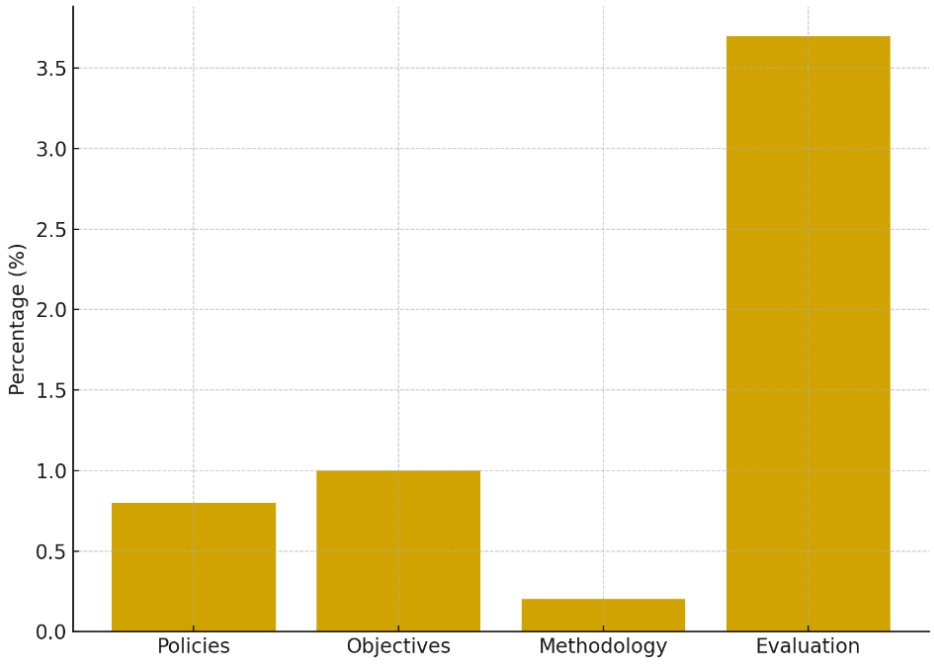


3.3. Other indicators of gender awareness in teaching plans

This section examines additional indicators of gender awareness beyond faculty composition and citation patterns. It analyses how teaching plans address gender-related aspects and diversity in structural sections, inclusive language, and the presence of at least one woman author in the references.

Structural mentions of gender-related aspects remain extremely rare. Out of 427 teaching plans analysed, only 0,8 % (N=3) of teaching plans mention gender or diversity in course policies, 1,0 % (N=5) in learning objectives, 0,2 % (N=1) in teaching methodology, and 3,7 % (N=15) in evaluation criteria. Figure 13 reflects the limited integration of gender-sensitive principles into the formal curricular design.

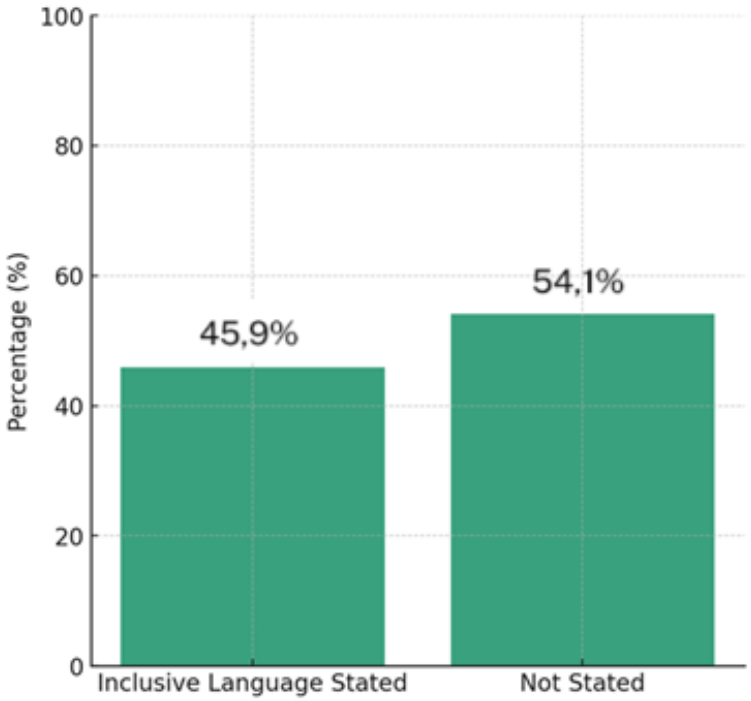
Figure 13. Teaching plans mentioning gender/diversity in key sections.



This figure shows the percentage of teaching plans explicitly referencing gender or diversity in four key curricular sections: policies, objectives, methodology, and evaluation. None of the sections exceed 4% of the analyzed plans, highlighting a generally low integration of these dimensions into structural elements of curricula.

Use of inclusive language is more common but still inconsistent. Approximately 45,9% (N=195) of teaching plans explicitly state the use of inclusive, non-sexist, or gender-neutral language in their content. This makes inclusive language the most widely adopted gender-related practice observed, although absent in more than half of the plans, this may reflect structural or pedagogical factors beyond instructors' control (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Use of inclusive language in teaching plans.



This figure shows the percentage of teaching plans that explicitly mention the use of inclusive, non-sexist, or gender-neutral language. While 45,9% of the plans include such a statement, 54,1% omit it entirely, underscoring the need for broader adoption across institutions.

3.4. Discussion: Institutional Gender Practises in Teaching and Gender References

The descriptive analysis of teaching plans across eight European universities reveals a complex and uneven landscape of gender-related practices in higher education curricula. While some results are reveals some evident gender-related practices in higher education — such as the moderate predominance of female staff and the

relatively frequent adoption of inclusive language in nearly half of the plans — significant shortcomings and inconsistencies persist, particularly in the integration of gender-related considerations into course objectives, documentation, and citation practices.

Regarding the gender composition of teaching staff, the data suggest that women are moderately overrepresented in instructional roles, with an average of 54,2%, and medians even higher in universities such as Sarajevo, TH Köln, and Osijek. These results align with institutional trends shown in Table *2*. This pattern may reflect the feminisation of certain academic fields, such as those related to information and social sciences and especially to Library and Information Science, yet the high variability across institutions indicates that gender balance is not uniformly achieved. Universities like Barcelona and Zadar exhibit strong female dominance in teaching teams, while others, such as Villach and Hildesheim, maintain a more male-dominated or uneven profile in faculty composition. However, these patterns do not always align with other dimensions of inclusivity, such as citation practices or course design. These institutional disparities merit closer examination, as they may stem from differences in recruitment policies, disciplinary specialisations, or cultural contexts. For instance, Villach's focus on business and technology and Hildesheim's emphasis on information science may contribute to their gender distribution patterns.

In contrast, the analysis of recommended references exposes a persistent gender imbalance in academic content. Women authors represent only about one-third of cited authors, and more than one-quarter of teaching plans cite exclusively male-authored works. This pattern suggests that despite growing awareness of gender equity in academia, curricular materials continue to perpetuate traditional male-dominated knowledge production. The widespread underrepresentation of women in citations risks reinforcing biased perceptions of authority and expertise among

students. Furthermore, institutional differences in citation practices — with some universities approaching gender parity in certain courses and others remaining heavily skewed — highlight the need for coordinated efforts to establish more inclusive bibliographies across the consortium.

Similarly, explicit integration of gender-related considerations in the structural components of curricula remains extremely limited. The low proportions of plans mentioning these aspects in policies, objectives, methodologies, and evaluation criteria (all below 4%) indicate that such dimensions are not yet embedded in teaching design. Inclusive language is more prevalent, mentioned in about 46% (N=225) of plans. Nevertheless, this practice alone cannot compensate for the lack of substantive integration of gender-sensitive perspectives into learning objectives and content.

These findings carry important implications for institutional policy and practice. Universities should consider systematic reviews of teaching plans to identify and address gaps in gender equity, promote training for faculty on inclusive citation and teaching practices, and develop guidelines or targets for balanced bibliographies and curricula. The notable institutional variability observed suggests that best practices already exist within the consortium and could be shared and scaled.

Finally, the limitations of the current analysis should be acknowledged. The dataset reflects teaching plans at a specific point in time and may not capture recent updates or informal practices. Moreover, disciplinary differences between programmes may account for some of the observed variation. Future research could explore longitudinal trends, qualitative insights from instructors, and student perceptions of inclusivity in their learning experiences.

This analysis underscores the need for continued, deliberate efforts to achieve gender equity and diversity in higher education curricula, both in teaching teams and

in the knowledge, students are exposed to through their studies. A cross-sectional review of teaching plans revealed widespread absence of inclusive elements such as gender-sensitive policies, learning objectives, methodologies, and evaluation criteria. Most teaching plans, showed no evidence of inclusivity elements. A few universities demonstrated modest but inconsistent efforts to incorporate these dimensions. Institutional disparities were clear, reflecting differing policies and cultural contexts. These findings underline the need for targeted, coordinated improvements. These findings inform the practical recommendations outlined in Section 5, which aim to guide institutions towards more inclusive and equitable teaching practices.

4. Conclusions

The analysis of 490 teaching plans from eight European universities highlights the limited and uneven integration of gender-related considerations in Library and Information Science curricula. The findings reveal that the vast majority of teaching plans showed no evidence of gender-sensitive policies, objectives, methodologies, or assessment strategies. Inclusive language emerged as the most widely adopted practice, present in nearly half of the teaching plans, while other dimensions remained marginally addressed. Citation practices were also imbalanced, with approximately one-third of cited authors being women, and no significant correlation between citation patterns and overall curricular inclusivity. Institutional disparities were evident: Zadar, Sarajevo, TH Köln, and Villach demonstrated comparatively higher inclusivity scores and greater variability, suggesting pockets of good practice. In contrast, Hildesheim, Opava, and Barcelona performed markedly lower, with many teaching plans showing no evidence of inclusive elements. These results underscore the fragmented and inconsistent approaches to gender-related approaches across institutions and point to the pressing need for coordinated strategies to foster more equitable and inclusive curricula.

5. Recommendations: Actions for more inclusive teaching practices

Building on the findings of this study, we propose a set of targeted recommendations to improve the integration of gender-related perspectives in Library and Information Science education. These measures aim to address the gaps identified, promote

institutional change, and ensure that teaching practices reflect contemporary standards of equity and inclusion. They are intended for both institutional leadership and teaching staff, as actionable steps that can be adapted to local contexts.

1. **Systematic review of teaching plans**

Universities should regularly audit teaching plans to assess the integration of gender-related considerations. Reviews help identify gaps and prioritise measurable improvements to foster inclusive curricula.

2. **Enhance faculty awareness and training**

Professional development programmes should raise faculty awareness about implicit biases in teaching. Workshops should offer practical guidance on designing inclusive syllabi, defining fair assessments, and selecting balanced bibliographies.

3. **Develop and disseminate institutional guidelines**

Clear institutional policies and guidelines should mandate the inclusion of gender-related dimensions in course design, objectives, assessment strategies, and recommended readings. These should align with European and national equality frameworks and include benchmarks (e.g., at least one-third of cited authors being women).

4. **Promote inclusive citation practices where possible**

Faculties and departments should encourage instructors to critically evaluate the gender balance of their recommended bibliographies, to diversify the authors and perspectives represented in course materials, and to include the given names of authors where possible to enhance visibility and representation.

5. Share best practices within the consortium

Universities should document and share successful examples of inclusive practices with consortium partners. Peer learning can harmonise standards and foster collective improvement.

6. Monitor progress and report regularly

Institutions should monitor progress over time through regular equity reviews and public reports. Continuous monitoring provides accountability and sustains momentum for inclusivity initiatives.

7. Facilitate student engagement and feedback

Students' perceptions of gender-sensitive and inclusive environments. should inform teaching practices and materials. Surveys and focus groups can provide valuable input for ongoing improvement.

8. Address disciplinary and cultural contexts

Gender representation varies by academic discipline and national context. Policies and interventions should be adaptable, respecting both cultural sensitivities and the specific characteristics of each field of study.

Immediate Actions at Consortium Level

The following steps outline immediate actions to be taken at the consortium level, complementing the broader strategic recommendations described above.

Institutions should establish or update policies on gender inclusivity promptly.

Clear guidelines must be drafted and approved within the academic year. Faculty workshops on inclusive teaching should be held within six months. Teaching plans should be reviewed systematically using the GEDIS rubric tool.

Progress should be reported during the next scheduled consortium-wide meeting. A cross-institutional working group should coordinate monitoring and shared resources. Best practices must be documented, refined, and disseminated collaboratively among partners. These actions embed inclusivity into institutional culture and teaching practices. Partners are invited to commit, report results, and sustain ongoing collaboration. They align with the GEDIS consortium's shared mission to support gender equity and diversity in Library and Information Science education.

These recommendations represent a practical roadmap for fostering equity and diversity in teaching practices that promote gender equity and inclusion. Their implementation requires institutional commitment, sustained monitoring, and openness to change. By taking these steps, universities can create more inclusive learning environments that better reflect and serve the diversity of their academic and professional communities.